

New English Translation

Old Testament
(Psalms s.d. Malachi)

Psalms

1 ¹ How blessed is the one who does not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand in the pathway with sinners, or sit in the assembly of scoffers!

² Instead he finds pleasure in obeying the Lord's commands; he meditates on his commands day and night.

³ He is like a tree planted by flowing streams; it yields its fruit at the proper time, and its leaves never fall off. He succeeds in everything he attempts.

⁴ Not so with the wicked! Instead they are like wind-driven chaff.

⁵ For this reason the wicked cannot withstand judgment, nor can sinners join the assembly of the godly.

⁶ Certainly the Lord guards the way of the godly, but the way of the wicked ends in destruction.

2 ¹ Why do the nations rebel? Why are the countries devising plots that will fail?

²The kings of the earth form a united front; the rulers collaborate against the Lord and his anointed king.

³They say, "Let's tear off the shackles they've put on us! Let's free ourselves from their ropes!"

⁴The one enthroned in heaven laughs in disgust; the Lord taunts them.

⁵Then he angrily speaks to them and terrifies them in his rage, saying,

⁶"I myself have installed my king on Zion, my holy hill."

⁷The king says, "I will announce the Lord's decree. He said to me: 'You are my son! This very day I have become your father!'

⁸Ask me, and I will give you the nations as your inheritance, the ends of the earth as your personal property.

⁹You will break them with an iron scepter; you will smash them like a potter's jar!"

¹⁰So now, you kings, do what is wise; you rulers of the earth, submit to correction!

¹¹Serve the Lord in fear! Repent in terror!

¹²Give sincere homage! Otherwise he will be angry, and you will die because of your behavior, when his anger quickly ignites. How blessed are all who take shelter in him!

3¹A psalm of David, written when he fled from his son Absalom. Lord, how numerous are my enemies! Many attack me.

²Many say about me, "God will not deliver him." (Selah)

³But you, Lord, are a shield that protects me; you are my glory and the one who restores me.

⁴To the Lord I cried out, and he answered me from his holy hill. (Selah)

⁵I rested and slept; I awoke, for the Lord protects me.

⁶I am not afraid of the multitude of people who attack me from all directions.

⁷Rise up, Lord! Deliver me, my God! Yes, you will strike all my enemies on the jaw; you will break the teeth of the wicked.

⁸The Lord delivers; you show favor to your people. (Selah)

4¹For the music director, to be accompanied by stringed

instruments; a psalm of David. When I call out, answer me, O God who vindicates me! Though I am hemmed in, you will lead me into a wide, open place. Have mercy on me and respond to my prayer!

²You men, how long will you try to turn my honor into shame? How long will you love what is worthless and search for what is deceptive? (Selah)

³Realize that the Lord shows the godly special favor; the Lord responds when I cry out to him.

⁴Tremble with fear and do not sin! Meditate as you lie in bed, and repent of your ways! (Selah)

⁵Offer the prescribed sacrifices and trust in the Lord!

⁶Many say, "Who can show us anything good?" Smile upon us, Lord!

⁷You make me happier than those who have abundant grain and wine.

⁸I will lie down and sleep peacefully, for you, Lord, make me safe and secure.

5¹For the music director, to be accompanied by wind instruments; a psalm of David. Listen to what I say, Lord! Carefully consider my complaint!

² Pay attention to my cry for help, my king and my God, for I am praying to you!

³ Lord, in the morning you will hear me; in the morning I will present my case to you and then wait expectantly for an answer.

⁴ Certainly you are not a God who approves of evil; evil people cannot dwell with you.

⁵ Arrogant people cannot stand in your presence; you hate all who behave wickedly.

⁶ You destroy liars; the Lord despises violent and deceitful people.

⁷ But as for me, because of your great faithfulness I will enter your house; I will bow down toward your holy temple as I worship you.

⁸ Lord, lead me in your righteousness because of those who wait to ambush me, remove the obstacles in the way in which you are guiding me!

⁹ For they do not speak the truth; their stomachs are like the place of destruction, their throats like an open grave, their tongues like a steep slope leading into it.

¹⁰Condemn them, O God! May their own schemes be their downfall! Drive them away because of their many acts of insurrection, for they have rebelled against you.

¹¹But may all who take shelter in you be happy! May they continually shout for joy! Shelter them so that those who are loyal to you may rejoice!

¹²Certainly you reward the godly, Lord. Like a shield you protect them in your good favor.

6¹For the music director, to be accompanied by stringed instruments, according to the sheminith style; a psalm of David. Lord, do not rebuke me in your anger! Do not discipline me in your raging fury!

²Have mercy on me, Lord, for I am frail! Heal me, Lord, for my bones are shaking!

³I am absolutely terrified, and you, Lord – how long will this continue?

⁴Relent, Lord, rescue me! Deliver me because of your faithfulness!

⁵For no one remembers you in the realm of death, In Sheol who gives you thanks?

⁶I am exhausted as I groan; all night long I drench my bed in tears; my tears saturate the cushion beneath me.

⁷My eyes grow dim from suffering; they grow weak because of all my enemies.

⁸Turn back from me, all you who behave wickedly, for the Lord has heard the sound of my weeping!

⁹The Lord has heard my appeal for mercy; the Lord has accepted my prayer.

¹⁰May all my enemies be humiliated and absolutely terrified! May they turn back and be suddenly humiliated!

7¹A musical composition by David, which he sang to the Lord concerning a Benjaminite named Cush. O Lord my God, in you I have taken shelter. Deliver me from all who chase me! Rescue me!

²Otherwise they will rip me to shreds like a lion; they will tear me to bits and no one will be able to rescue me.

³O Lord my God, if I have done what they say, or am guilty of unjust actions,

⁴or have wronged my ally, or helped his lawless enemy,

⁵may an enemy relentlessly chase me and catch me; may he trample me to

death and leave me lying dishonored in the dust. (Selah)

⁶Stand up angrily, Lord! Rise up with raging fury against my enemies! Wake up for my sake and execute the judgment you have decreed for them!

⁷The countries are assembled all around you; take once more your rightful place over them!

⁸The Lord judges the nations. Vindicate me, Lord, because I am innocent, because I am blameless, O Exalted One!

⁹May the evil deeds of the wicked come to an end! But make the innocent secure, O righteous God, you who examine inner thoughts and motives!

¹⁰The Exalted God is my shield, the one who delivers the morally upright.

¹¹God is a just judge; he is angry throughout the day.

¹²If a person does not repent, God sharpens his sword and prepares to shoot his bow.

¹³He prepares to use deadly weapons against him; he gets ready to shoot flaming arrows.

¹⁴ See the one who is pregnant with wickedness, who conceives destructive plans, and gives birth to harmful lies –

¹⁵ he digs a pit and then falls into the hole he has made.

¹⁶ He becomes the victim of his own destructive plans and the violence he intended for others falls on his own head.

¹⁷ I will thank the Lord for his justice; I will sing praises to the sovereign Lord!

8¹ For the music director, according to the gittith style; a psalm of David. O Lord, our Lord, how magnificent is your reputation throughout the earth! You reveal your majesty in the heavens above!

² From the mouths of children and nursing babies you have ordained praise on account of your adversaries, so that you might put an end to the vindictive enemy.

³ When I look up at the heavens, which your fingers made, and see the moon and the stars, which you set in place,

⁴ Of what importance is the human race, that you should notice them? Of what importance is mankind, that you should pay attention to them,

⁵and make them a little less than the heavenly beings? You grant mankind honor and majesty;

⁶you appoint them to rule over your creation; you have placed everything under their authority,

⁷including all the sheep and cattle, as well as the wild animals,

⁸the birds in the sky, the fish in the sea and everything that moves through the currents of the seas.

⁹O Lord, our Lord, how magnificent is your reputation throughout the earth!

9¹For the music director; according to the alumoth-labben style; a psalm of David. I will thank the Lord with all my heart! I will tell about all your amazing deeds!

²I will be happy and rejoice in you! I will sing praises to you, O sovereign One!

³When my enemies turn back, they trip and are defeated before you.

⁴For you defended my just cause; from your throne you pronounced a just decision.

⁵You terrified the nations with your battle cry; you destroyed the wicked;

you permanently wiped out all memory of them.

⁶The enemy's cities have been reduced to permanent ruins; you destroyed their cities; all memory of the enemies has perished.

⁷But the Lord rules forever; he reigns in a just manner.

⁸He judges the world fairly; he makes just legal decisions for the nations.

⁹Consequently the Lord provides safety for the oppressed; he provides safety in times of trouble.

¹⁰Your loyal followers trust in you, for you, Lord, do not abandon those who seek your help.

¹¹Sing praises to the Lord, who rules in Zion! Tell the nations what he has done!

¹²For the one who takes revenge against murderers took notice of the oppressed; he did not overlook their cry for help

¹³when they prayed: "Have mercy on me, Lord! See how I am oppressed by those who hate me, O one who can snatch me away from the gates of death!

¹⁴Then I will tell about all your praiseworthy acts; in the gates of

Daughter Zion I will rejoice because of your deliverance."

¹⁵The nations fell into the pit they had made; their feet were caught in the net they had hidden.

¹⁶The Lord revealed himself; he accomplished justice; the wicked were ensnared by their own actions. (Higgaion. Selah)

¹⁷The wicked are turned back and sent to Sheol; this is the destiny of all the nations that ignore God,

¹⁸for the needy are not permanently ignored, the hopes of the oppressed are not forever dashed.

¹⁹Rise up, Lord! Don't let men be defiant! May the nations be judged in your presence!

²⁰Terrify them, Lord! Let the nations know they are mere mortals! (Selah)

10¹ Why, Lord, do you stand far off? Why do you pay no attention during times of trouble?

²The wicked arrogantly chase the oppressed; the oppressed are trapped by the schemes the wicked have dreamed up.

³Yes, the wicked man boasts because he gets what he wants; the one who robs others curses and rejects the Lord.

⁴The wicked man is so arrogant he always thinks, "God won't hold me accountable; he doesn't care."

⁵He is secure at all times. He has no regard for your commands; he disdains all his enemies.

⁶He says to himself, "I will never be upended, because I experience no calamity."

⁷His mouth is full of curses and deceptive, harmful words; his tongue injures and destroys.

⁸He waits in ambush near the villages; in hidden places he kills the innocent. His eyes look for some unfortunate victim.

⁹He lies in ambush in a hidden place, like a lion in a thicket; he lies in ambush, waiting to catch the oppressed; he catches the oppressed by pulling in his net.

¹⁰His victims are crushed and beaten down; they are trapped in his sturdy nets.

¹¹ He says to himself, "God overlooks it; he does not pay attention; he never notices."

¹² Rise up, Lord! O God, strike him down! Do not forget the oppressed!

¹³ Why does the wicked man reject God? He says to himself, "You will not hold me accountable."

¹⁴ You have taken notice, for you always see one who inflicts pain and suffering. The unfortunate victim entrusts his cause to you; you deliver the fatherless.

¹⁵ Break the arm of the wicked and evil man! Hold him accountable for his wicked deeds, which he thought you would not discover.

¹⁶ The Lord rules forever! The nations are driven out of his land.

¹⁷ Lord, you have heard the request of the oppressed; you make them feel secure because you listen to their prayer.

¹⁸ You defend the fatherless and oppressed, so that mere mortals may no longer terrorize them.

11 ¹ For the music director; by David.
In the Lord I have taken shelter.
How can you say to me, "Flee to a mountain like a bird!"

²For look, the wicked prepare their bows, they put their arrows on the strings, to shoot in the darkness at the morally upright.

³When the foundations are destroyed, what can the godly accomplish?"

⁴The Lord is in his holy temple; the Lord's throne is in heaven. His eyes watch; his eyes examine all people.

⁵The Lord approves of the godly, but he hates the wicked and those who love to do violence.

⁶May the Lord rain down burning coals and brimstone on the wicked! A whirlwind is what they deserve!

⁷Certainly the Lord is just; he rewards godly deeds; the upright will experience his favor.

12¹For the music director; according to the sheminith style; a psalm of David. Deliver, Lord! For the godly have disappeared; people of integrity have vanished.

²People lie to one another; they flatter and deceive.

³May the Lord cut off all flattering lips, and the tongue that boasts!

⁴They say, “We speak persuasively; we know how to flatter and boast. Who is our master?”

⁵“Because of the violence done to the oppressed, because of the painful cries of the needy, I will spring into action,” says the Lord. “I will provide the safety they so desperately desire.”

⁶The Lord’s words are absolutely reliable. They are as untainted as silver purified in a furnace on the ground, where it is thoroughly refined.

⁷You, Lord, will protect them; you will continually shelter each one from these evil people,

⁸for the wicked seem to be everywhere, when people promote evil.

13¹For the music director; a psalm of David. How long, Lord, will you continue to ignore me? How long will you pay no attention to me?

²How long must I worry, and suffer in broad daylight? How long will my enemy gloat over me?

³Look at me! Answer me, O Lord my God! Revive me, or else I will die!

⁴Then my enemy will say, "I have defeated him!" Then my foes will rejoice because I am upended.

⁵But I trust in your faithfulness. May I rejoice because of your deliverance!

⁶I will sing praises to the Lord when he vindicates me.

14¹For the music director; by David. Fools say to themselves, "There is no God." They sin and commit evil deeds; none of them does what is right.

²The Lord looks down from heaven at the human race, to see if there is anyone who is wise and seeks God.

³Everyone rejects God; they are all morally corrupt. None of them does what is right, not even one!

⁴All those who behave wickedly do not understand – those who devour my people as if they were eating bread, and do not call out to the Lord.

⁵They are absolutely terrified, for God defends the godly.

⁶You want to humiliate the oppressed, even though the Lord is their shelter.

⁷I wish the deliverance of Israel would come from Zion! When the Lord restores

the well-being of his people, may Jacob rejoice, may Israel be happy!

15¹ A psalm of David. Lord, who may be a guest in your home? Who may live on your holy hill?

² Whoever lives a blameless life, does what is right, and speaks honestly.

³ He does not slander, or do harm to others, or insult his neighbor.

⁴ He despises a reprobate, but honors the Lord's loyal followers. He makes firm commitments and does not renege on his promise.

⁵ He does not charge interest when he lends his money. He does not take bribes to testify against the innocent. The one who lives like this will never be upended.

16¹ A prayer of David. Protect me, O God, for I have taken shelter in you.

² I say to the Lord, "You are the Lord, my only source of well-being."

³ As for God's chosen people who are in the land, and the leading officials I admired so much -

⁴ their troubles multiply, they desire other gods. I will not pour out drink

offerings of blood to their gods, nor will I make vows in the name of their gods.

⁵Lord, you give me stability and prosperity; you make my future secure.

⁶It is as if I have been given fertile fields or received a beautiful tract of land.

⁷I will praise the Lord who guides me; yes, during the night I reflect and learn.

⁸I constantly trust in the Lord; because he is at my right hand, I will not be upended.

⁹So my heart rejoices and I am happy; My life is safe.

¹⁰You will not abandon me to Sheol; you will not allow your faithful follower to see the Pit.

¹¹You lead me in the path of life; I experience absolute joy in your presence; you always give me sheer delight.

17 ¹A prayer of David. Lord, consider my just cause! Pay attention to my cry for help! Listen to the prayer I sincerely offer!

²Make a just decision on my behalf! Decide what is right!

³You have scrutinized my inner motives; you have examined me during the night. You have carefully evaluated me, but you find no sin. I am determined I will say nothing sinful.

⁴As for the actions of people – just as you have commanded, I have not followed in the footsteps of violent men.

⁵I carefully obey your commands; I do not deviate from them.

⁶I call to you for you will answer me, O God. Listen to me! Hear what I say!

⁷Accomplish awesome, faithful deeds, you who powerfully deliver those who look to you for protection from their enemies.

⁸Protect me as you would protect the pupil of your eye! Hide me in the shadow of your wings!

⁹Protect me from the wicked men who attack me, my enemies who crowd around me for the kill.

¹⁰They are calloused; they speak arrogantly.

¹¹They attack me, now they surround me; they intend to throw me to the ground.

¹²He is like a lion that wants to tear its prey to bits, like a young lion crouching in hidden places.

¹³Rise up, Lord! Confront him! Knock him down! Use your sword to rescue me from the wicked man!

¹⁴Lord, use your power to deliver me from these murderers, from the murderers of this world! They enjoy prosperity; you overwhelm them with the riches they desire. They have many children, and leave their wealth to their offspring.

¹⁵As for me, because I am innocent I will see your face; when I awake you will reveal yourself to me.

18¹For the music director; by the Lord's servant David, who sang to the Lord the words of this song when the Lord rescued him from the power of all his enemies, including Saul. He said: "I love you, Lord, my source of strength!

²The Lord is my high ridge, my stronghold, my deliverer. My God is my rocky summit where I take shelter, my shield, the horn that saves me, and my refuge.

³I called to the Lord, who is worthy of praise, and I was delivered from my enemies.

⁴The waves of death engulfed me, the currents of chaos overwhelmed me.

⁵The ropes of Sheol tightened around me, the snares of death trapped me.

⁶In my distress I called to the Lord; I cried out to my God. From his heavenly temple he heard my voice; he listened to my cry for help.

⁷The earth heaved and shook; the roots of the mountains trembled; they heaved because he was angry.

⁸Smoke ascended from his nose; fire devoured as it came from his mouth; he hurled down fiery coals.

⁹He made the sky sink as he descended; a thick cloud was under his feet.

¹⁰He mounted a winged angel and flew; he glided on the wings of the wind.

¹¹He shrouded himself in darkness, in thick rain clouds.

¹²From the brightness in front of him came hail and fiery coals.

¹³The Lord thundered in the sky; the sovereign One shouted.

¹⁴He shot his arrows and scattered them, many lightning bolts and routed them.

¹⁵The depths of the sea were exposed; the inner regions of the world were uncovered by your battle cry, Lord, by the powerful breath from your nose.

¹⁶He reached down from above and took hold of me; he pulled me from the surging water.

¹⁷He rescued me from my strong enemy, from those who hate me, for they were too strong for me.

¹⁸They confronted me in my day of calamity, but the Lord helped me.

¹⁹He brought me out into a wide open place; he delivered me because he was pleased with me.

²⁰The Lord repaid me for my godly deeds; he rewarded my blameless behavior.

²¹For I have obeyed the Lord's commands; I have not rebelled against my God.

²²For I am aware of all his regulations, and I do not reject his rules.

²³I was innocent before him, and kept myself from sinning.

²⁴The Lord rewarded me for my godly deeds; he took notice of my blameless behavior.

²⁵You prove to be loyal to one who is faithful; you prove to be trustworthy to one who is innocent.

²⁶You prove to be reliable to one who is blameless, but you prove to be deceptive to one who is perverse.

²⁷For you deliver oppressed people, but you bring down those who have a proud look.

²⁸Indeed, you are my lamp, Lord. My God illuminates the darkness around me.

²⁹Indeed, with your help I can charge against an army; by my God's power I can jump over a wall.

³⁰The one true God acts in a faithful manner; the Lord's promise is reliable; he is a shield to all who take shelter in him.

³¹Indeed, who is God besides the Lord? Who is a protector besides our God?

³²The one true God gives me strength; he removes the obstacles in my way.

³³He gives me the agility of a deer; he enables me to negotiate the rugged terrain.

³⁴ He trains my hands for battle; my arms can bend even the strongest bow.

³⁵ You give me your protective shield; your right hand supports me; your willingness to help enables me to prevail.

³⁶ You widen my path; my feet do not slip.

³⁷ I chase my enemies and catch them; I do not turn back until I wipe them out.

³⁸ I beat them to death; they fall at my feet.

³⁹ You give me strength for battle; you make my foes kneel before me.

⁴⁰ You make my enemies retreat; I destroy those who hate me.

⁴¹ They cry out, but there is no one to help them; they cry out to the Lord, but he does not answer them.

⁴² I grind them as fine windblown dust; I beat them underfoot like clay in the streets.

⁴³ You rescue me from a hostile army; you make me a leader of nations; people over whom I had no authority are now my subjects.

⁴⁴ When they hear of my exploits, they submit to me. Foreigners are powerless before me;

⁴⁵ foreigners lose their courage; they shake with fear as they leave their strongholds.

⁴⁶ The Lord is alive! My protector is praiseworthy! The God who delivers me is exalted as king!

⁴⁷ The one true God completely vindicates me; he makes nations submit to me.

⁴⁸ He delivers me from my enemies; you snatch me away from those who attack me; you rescue me from violent men.

⁴⁹ So I will give you thanks before the nations, O Lord! I will sing praises to you!

⁵⁰ He gives his chosen king magnificent victories; he is faithful to his chosen ruler, to David and his descendants forever."

19¹ For the music director; a psalm of David. The heavens declare the glory of God; the sky displays his handiwork.

² Day after day it speaks out; night after night it reveals his greatness.

³ There is no actual speech or word, nor is its voice literally heard.

⁴ Yet its voice echoes throughout the earth; its words carry to the distant horizon. In the sky he has pitched a tent for the sun.

⁵ Like a bridegroom it emerges from its chamber; like a strong man it enjoys running its course.

⁶ It emerges from the distant horizon, and goes from one end of the sky to the other; nothing can escape its heat.

⁷ The law of the Lord is perfect and preserves one's life. The rules set down by the Lord are reliable and impart wisdom to the inexperienced.

⁸ The Lord's precepts are fair and make one joyful. The Lord's commands are pure and give insight for life.

⁹ The commands to fear the Lord are right and endure forever. The judgments given by the Lord are trustworthy and absolutely just.

¹⁰ They are of greater value than gold, than even a great amount of pure gold; they bring greater delight than honey, than even the sweetest honey from a honeycomb.

¹¹ Yes, your servant finds moral guidance there; those who obey them receive a rich reward.

¹² Who can know all his errors? Please do not punish me for sins I am unaware of.

¹³ Moreover, keep me from committing flagrant sins; do not allow such sins to control me. Then I will be blameless, and innocent of blatant rebellion.

¹⁴ May my words and my thoughts be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, my sheltering rock and my redeemer.

20¹ For the music director; a psalm of David. May the Lord answer you when you are in trouble; may the God of Jacob make you secure!

² May he send you help from his temple; from Zion may he give you support!

³ May he take notice of your offerings; may he accept your burnt sacrifice!
(Selah)

⁴ May he grant your heart's desire; may he bring all your plans to pass!

⁵ Then we will shout for joy over your victory; we will rejoice in the name of our God! May the Lord grant all your requests!

⁶Now I am sure that the Lord will deliver his chosen king; he will intervene for him from his holy heavenly temple, and display his mighty ability to deliver.

⁷Some trust in chariots and others in horses, but we depend on the Lord our God.

⁸They will fall down, but we will stand firm.

⁹The Lord will deliver the king; he will answer us when we call to him for help!

21 ¹For the music director; a psalm of David. O Lord, the king rejoices in the strength you give; he takes great delight in the deliverance you provide.

²You grant him his heart's desire; you do not refuse his request. (Selah)

³For you bring him rich blessings; you place a golden crown on his head.

⁴He asked you to sustain his life, and you have granted him long life and an enduring dynasty.

⁵Your deliverance brings him great honor; you give him majestic splendor.

⁶For you grant him lasting blessings; you give him great joy by allowing him into your presence.

⁷For the king trusts in the Lord,
and because of the sovereign Lord's
faithfulness he is not upended.

⁸You prevail over all your enemies;
your power is too great for those who
hate you.

⁹You burn them up like a fiery furnace
when you appear; the Lord angrily
devours them; the fire consumes them.

¹⁰You destroy their offspring from the
earth, their descendants from among
the human race.

¹¹Yes, they intend to do you harm;
they dream up a scheme, but they do
not succeed.

¹²For you make them retreat when you
shoot your arrows at them.

¹³Rise up, O Lord, in strength! We will
sing and praise your power!

22¹For the music director; according
to the tune "Morning Doe;" a
psalm of David. My God, my God, why
have you abandoned me? I groan in
prayer, but help seems far away.

²My God, I cry out during the day, but
you do not answer, and during the night
my prayers do not let up.

³You are holy; you sit as king receiving the praises of Israel.

⁴In you our ancestors trusted; they trusted in you and you rescued them.

⁵To you they cried out, and they were saved; in you they trusted and they were not disappointed.

⁶But I am a worm, not a man; people insult me and despise me.

⁷All who see me taunt me; they mock me and shake their heads.

⁸They say, "Commit yourself to the Lord! Let the Lord rescue him! Let the Lord deliver him, for he delights in him."

⁹Yes, you are the one who brought me out from the womb and made me feel secure on my mother's breasts.

¹⁰I have been dependent on you since birth; from the time I came out of my mother's womb you have been my God.

¹¹Do not remain far away from me, for trouble is near and I have no one to help me.

¹²Many bulls surround me; powerful bulls of Bashan hem me in.

¹³They open their mouths to devour me like a roaring lion that rips its prey.

¹⁴ My strength drains away like water; all my bones are dislocated; my heart is like wax; it melts away inside me.

¹⁵ The roof of my mouth is as dry as a piece of pottery; my tongue sticks to my gums. You set me in the dust of death.

¹⁶ Yes, wild dogs surround me – a gang of evil men crowd around me; like a lion they pin my hands and feet.

¹⁷ I can count all my bones; my enemies are gloating over me in triumph.

¹⁸ They are dividing up my clothes among themselves; they are rolling dice for my garments.

¹⁹ But you, O Lord, do not remain far away! You are my source of strength! Hurry and help me!

²⁰ Deliver me from the sword! Save my life from the claws of the wild dogs!

²¹ Rescue me from the mouth of the lion, and from the horns of the wild oxen! You have answered me!

²² I will declare your name to my countrymen! In the middle of the assembly I will praise you!

²³ You loyal followers of the Lord, praise him! All you descendants of Jacob, honor

him! All you descendants of Israel, stand in awe of him!

²⁴For he did not despise or detest the suffering of the oppressed; he did not ignore him; when he cried out to him, he responded.

²⁵You are the reason I offer praise in the great assembly; I will fulfill my promises before the Lord's loyal followers.

²⁶Let the oppressed eat and be filled! Let those who seek his help praise the Lord! May you live forever!

²⁷Let all the people of the earth acknowledge the Lord and turn to him! Let all the nations worship you!

²⁸For the Lord is king and rules over the nations.

²⁹All of the thriving people of the earth will join the celebration and worship; all those who are descending into the grave will bow before him, including those who cannot preserve their lives.

³⁰A whole generation will serve him; they will tell the next generation about the sovereign Lord.

³¹ They will come and tell about his saving deeds; they will tell a future generation what he has accomplished.

23 ¹ A psalm of David. The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.

² He takes me to lush pastures, he leads me to refreshing water.

³ He restores my strength. He leads me down the right paths for the sake of his reputation.

⁴ Even when I must walk through the darkest valley, I fear no danger, for you are with me; your rod and your staff reassure me.

⁵ You prepare a feast before me in plain sight of my enemies. You refresh my head with oil; my cup is completely full.

⁶ Surely your goodness and faithfulness will pursue me all my days, and I will live in the Lord's house for the rest of my life.

24 ¹ A psalm of David. The Lord owns the earth and all it contains, the world and all who live in it.

² For he set its foundation upon the seas, and established it upon the ocean currents.

³ Who is allowed to ascend the mountain of the Lord? Who may go up to his holy dwelling place?

⁴ The one whose deeds are blameless and whose motives are pure, who does not lie, or make promises with no intention of keeping them.

⁵ Such godly people are rewarded by the Lord, and vindicated by the God who delivers them.

⁶ Such purity characterizes the people who seek his favor, Jacob's descendants, who pray to him. (Selah)

⁷ Look up, you gates! Rise up, you eternal doors! Then the majestic king will enter!

⁸ Who is this majestic king? The Lord who is strong and mighty! The Lord who is mighty in battle!

⁹ Look up, you gates! Rise up, you eternal doors! Then the majestic king will enter!

¹⁰ Who is this majestic king? The Lord who commands armies! He is the majestic king! (Selah)

25¹ By David. O Lord, I come before you in prayer.

² My God, I trust in you. Please do not let me be humiliated; do not let my enemies triumphantly rejoice over me!

³ Certainly none who rely on you will be humiliated. Those who deal in treachery will be thwarted and humiliated.

⁴ Make me understand your ways, O Lord! Teach me your paths!

⁵ Guide me into your truth and teach me. For you are the God who delivers me; on you I rely all day long.

⁶ Remember your compassionate and faithful deeds, O Lord, for you have always acted in this manner.

⁷ Do not hold against me the sins of my youth or my rebellious acts! Because you are faithful to me, extend to me your favor, O Lord!

⁸ The Lord is both kind and fair; that is why he teaches sinners the right way to live.

⁹ May he show the humble what is right! May he teach the humble his way!

¹⁰ The Lord always proves faithful and reliable to those who follow the demands of his covenant.

¹¹ For the sake of your reputation, O Lord, forgive my sin, because it is great.

¹²The Lord shows his faithful followers the way they should live.

¹³They experience his favor; their descendants inherit the land.

¹⁴The Lord's loyal followers receive his guidance, and he reveals his covenantal demands to them.

¹⁵I continually look to the Lord for help, for he will free my feet from the enemy's net.

¹⁶Turn toward me and have mercy on me, for I am alone and oppressed!

¹⁷Deliver me from my distress; rescue me from my suffering!

¹⁸See my pain and suffering! Forgive all my sins!

¹⁹Watch my enemies, for they outnumber me; they hate me and want to harm me.

²⁰Protect me and deliver me! Please do not let me be humiliated, for I have taken shelter in you!

²¹May integrity and godliness protect me, for I rely on you!

²²O God, rescue Israel from all their distress!

26¹ By David. Vindicate me, O Lord,
for I have integrity, and I trust in
the Lord without wavering.

² Examine me, O Lord, and test me!
Evaluate my inner thoughts and motives!

³ For I am ever aware of your
faithfulness, and your loyalty continually
motivates me.

⁴ I do not associate with deceitful men,
or consort with those who are dishonest.

⁵ I hate the mob of evil men, and do not
associate with the wicked.

⁶ I maintain a pure lifestyle, so I can
appear before your altar, O Lord,

⁷ to give you thanks, and to tell about
all your amazing deeds.

⁸ O Lord, I love the temple where you
live, the place where your splendor is
revealed.

⁹ Do not sweep me away with sinners,
or execute me along with violent people,

¹⁰ who are always ready to do wrong or
offer a bribe.

¹¹ But I have integrity! Rescue me and
have mercy on me!

¹² I am safe, and among the worshipers
I will praise the Lord.

27 ¹ By David. The Lord delivers and vindicates me! I fear no one! The Lord protects my life! I am afraid of no one!

² When evil men attack me to devour my flesh, when my adversaries and enemies attack me, they stumble and fall.

³ Even when an army is deployed against me, I do not fear. Even when war is imminent, I remain confident.

⁴ I have asked the Lord for one thing – this is what I desire! I want to live in the Lord's house all the days of my life, so I can gaze at the splendor of the Lord and contemplate in his temple.

⁵ He will surely give me shelter in the day of danger; he will hide me in his home; he will place me on an inaccessible rocky summit.

⁶ Now I will triumph over my enemies who surround me! I will offer sacrifices in his dwelling place and shout for joy! I will sing praises to the Lord!

⁷ Hear me, O Lord, when I cry out! Have mercy on me and answer me!

⁸ My heart tells me to pray to you, and I do pray to you, O Lord.

⁹Do not reject me! Do not push your servant away in anger! You are my deliverer! Do not forsake or abandon me, O God who vindicates me!

¹⁰Even if my father and mother abandoned me, the Lord would take me in.

¹¹Teach me how you want me to live; lead me along a level path because of those who wait to ambush me!

¹²Do not turn me over to my enemies, for false witnesses who want to destroy me testify against me.

¹³Where would I be if I did not believe I would experience the Lord's favor in the land of the living?

¹⁴Rely on the Lord! Be strong and confident! Rely on the Lord!

28¹ By David. To you, O Lord, I cry out! My protector, do not ignore me! If you do not respond to me, I will join those who are descending into the grave.

²Hear my plea for mercy when I cry out to you for help, when I lift my hands toward your holy temple!

³Do not drag me away with evil men, with those who behave wickedly, who

talk so friendly to their neighbors, while they plan to harm them!

⁴Pay them back for their evil deeds! Pay them back for what they do! Punish them!

⁵For they do not understand the Lord's actions, or the way he carries out justice. The Lord will permanently demolish them.

⁶The Lord deserves praise, for he has heard my plea for mercy!

⁷The Lord strengthens and protects me; I trust in him with all my heart. I am rescued and my heart is full of joy; I will sing to him in gratitude.

⁸The Lord strengthens his people; he protects and delivers his chosen king.

⁹Deliver your people! Empower the nation that belongs to you! Care for them like a shepherd and carry them in your arms at all times!

29¹ A psalm of David. Acknowledge the Lord, you heavenly beings, acknowledge the Lord's majesty and power!

²Acknowledge the majesty of the Lord's reputation! Worship the Lord in holy attire!

³The Lord's shout is heard over the water; the majestic God thunders, the Lord appears over the surging water.

⁴The Lord's shout is powerful, the Lord's shout is majestic.

⁵The Lord's shout breaks the cedars, the Lord shatters the cedars of Lebanon.

⁶He makes Lebanon skip like a calf and Sirion like a young ox.

⁷The Lord's shout strikes with flaming fire.

⁸The Lord's shout shakes the wilderness, the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.

⁹The Lord's shout bends the large trees and strips the leaves from the forests. Everyone in his temple says, "Majestic!"

¹⁰The Lord sits enthroned over the engulfing waters, the Lord sits enthroned as the eternal king.

¹¹The Lord gives his people strength; the Lord grants his people security.

30¹A psalm – a song used at the dedication of the temple; by David. I will praise you, O Lord, for you lifted me up, and did not allow my enemies to gloat over me.

² O Lord my God, I cried out to you and you healed me.

³ O Lord, you pulled me up from Sheol; you rescued me from among those descending into the grave.

⁴ Sing to the Lord, you faithful followers of his; give thanks to his holy name.

⁵ For his anger lasts only a brief moment, and his good favor restores one's life. One may experience sorrow during the night, but joy arrives in the morning.

⁶ In my self-confidence I said, "I will never be upended."

⁷ O Lord, in your good favor you made me secure. Then you rejected me and I was terrified.

⁸ To you, O Lord, I cried out; I begged the Lord for mercy:

⁹ "What profit is there in taking my life, in my descending into the Pit? Can the dust of the grave praise you? Can it declare your loyalty?"

¹⁰ Hear, O Lord, and have mercy on me! O Lord, deliver me!"

¹¹ Then you turned my lament into dancing; you removed my sackcloth and covered me with joy.

¹²So now my heart will sing to you and not be silent; O Lord my God, I will always give thanks to you.

31 ¹For the music director; a psalm of David. In you, O Lord, I have taken shelter! Never let me be humiliated! Vindicate me by rescuing me!

²Listen to me! Quickly deliver me! Be my protector and refuge, a stronghold where I can be safe!

³For you are my high ridge and my stronghold; for the sake of your own reputation you lead me and guide me.

⁴You will free me from the net they hid for me, for you are my place of refuge.

⁵Into your hand I entrust my life; you will rescue me, O Lord, the faithful God.

⁶I hate those who serve worthless idols, but I trust in the Lord.

⁷I will be happy and rejoice in your faithfulness, because you notice my pain and you are aware of how distressed I am.

⁸You do not deliver me over to the power of the enemy; you enable me to stand in a wide open place.

⁹Have mercy on me, for I am in distress! My eyes grow dim from suffering. I have lost my strength.

¹⁰For my life nears its end in pain; my years draw to a close as I groan. My strength fails me because of my sin, and my bones become brittle.

¹¹Because of all my enemies, people disdain me; my neighbors are appalled by my suffering – those who know me are horrified by my condition; those who see me in the street run away from me.

¹²I am forgotten, like a dead man no one thinks about; I am regarded as worthless, like a broken jar.

¹³For I hear what so many are saying, the terrifying news that comes from every direction. When they plot together against me, they figure out how they can take my life.

¹⁴But I trust in you, O Lord! I declare, "You are my God!"

¹⁵You determine my destiny! Rescue me from the power of my enemies and those who chase me.

¹⁶Smile on your servant! Deliver me because of your faithfulness!

¹⁷ O Lord, do not let me be humiliated, for I call out to you! May evil men be humiliated! May they go wailing to the grave!

¹⁸ May lying lips be silenced – lips that speak defiantly against the innocent with arrogance and contempt!

¹⁹ How great is your favor, which you store up for your loyal followers! In plain sight of everyone you bestow it on those who take shelter in you.

²⁰ You hide them with you, where they are safe from the attacks of men; you conceal them in a shelter, where they are safe from slanderous attacks.

²¹ The Lord deserves praise for he demonstrated his amazing faithfulness to me when I was besieged by enemies.

²² I jumped to conclusions and said, “I am cut off from your presence!” But you heard my plea for mercy when I cried out to you for help.

²³ Love the Lord, all you faithful followers of his! The Lord protects those who have integrity, but he pays back in full the one who acts arrogantly.

²⁴ Be strong and confident, all you who wait on the Lord!

32¹ By David; a well-written song.
How blessed is the one whose rebellious acts are forgiven, whose sin is pardoned!

² How blessed is the one whose wrongdoing the Lord does not punish, in whose spirit there is no deceit.

³ When I refused to confess my sin, my whole body wasted away, while I groaned in pain all day long.

⁴ For day and night you tormented me; you tried to destroy me in the intense heat of summer. (Selah)

⁵ Then I confessed my sin; I no longer covered up my wrongdoing. I said, "I will confess my rebellious acts to the Lord." And then you forgave my sins. (Selah)

⁶ For this reason every one of your faithful followers should pray to you while there is a window of opportunity. Certainly when the surging water rises, it will not reach them.

⁷ You are my hiding place; you protect me from distress. You surround me with shouts of joy from those celebrating deliverance. (Selah)

⁸I will instruct and teach you about how you should live. I will advise you as I look you in the eye.

⁹Do not be like an unintelligent horse or mule, which will not obey you unless they are controlled by a bridle and bit.

¹⁰An evil person suffers much pain, but the Lord's faithfulness overwhelms the one who trusts in him.

¹¹Rejoice in the Lord and be happy, you who are godly! Shout for joy, all you who are morally upright!

33¹You godly ones, shout for joy because of the Lord! It is appropriate for the morally upright to offer him praise.

²Give thanks to the Lord with the harp! Sing to him to the accompaniment of a ten-stringed instrument!

³Sing to him a new song! Play skillfully as you shout out your praises to him!

⁴For the Lord's decrees are just, and everything he does is fair.

⁵The Lord promotes equity and justice; the Lord's faithfulness extends throughout the earth.

⁶By the Lord's decree the heavens were made; by a mere word from his mouth all the stars in the sky were created.

⁷He piles up the water of the sea; he puts the oceans in storehouses.

⁸Let the whole earth fear the Lord! Let all who live in the world stand in awe of him!

⁹For he spoke, and it came into existence, he issued the decree, and it stood firm.

¹⁰The Lord frustrates the decisions of the nations; he nullifies the plans of the peoples.

¹¹The Lord's decisions stand forever; his plans abide throughout the ages.

¹²How blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, the people whom he has chosen to be his special possession.

¹³The Lord watches from heaven; he sees all people.

¹⁴From the place where he lives he looks carefully at all the earth's inhabitants.

¹⁵He is the one who forms every human heart, and takes note of all their actions.

¹⁶No king is delivered by his vast army; a warrior is not saved by his great might.

¹⁷A horse disappoints those who trust in it for victory; despite its great strength, it cannot deliver.

¹⁸Look, the Lord takes notice of his loyal followers, those who wait for him to demonstrate his faithfulness

¹⁹by saving their lives from death and sustaining them during times of famine.

²⁰We wait for the Lord; he is our deliverer and shield.

²¹For our hearts rejoice in him, for we trust in his holy name.

²²May we experience your faithfulness, O Lord, for we wait for you.

34¹Written by David, when he pretended to be insane before Abimelech, causing the king to send him away. I will praise the Lord at all times; my mouth will continually praise him.

²I will boast in the Lord; let the oppressed hear and rejoice!

³Magnify the Lord with me! Let's praise his name together!

⁴I sought the Lord's help and he answered me; he delivered me from all my fears.

⁵Those who look to him for help are happy; their faces are not ashamed.

⁶This oppressed man cried out and the Lord heard; he saved him from all his troubles.

⁷The Lord's angel camps around the Lord's loyal followers and delivers them.

⁸Taste and see that the Lord is good! How blessed is the one who takes shelter in him!

⁹Remain loyal to the Lord, you chosen people of his, for his loyal followers lack nothing!

¹⁰Even young lions sometimes lack food and are hungry, but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing.

¹¹Come children! Listen to me! I will teach you what it means to fear the Lord.

¹²Do you want to really live? Would you love to live a long, happy life?

¹³Then make sure you don't speak evil words or use deceptive speech!

¹⁴Turn away from evil and do what is right! Strive for peace and promote it!

¹⁵The Lord pays attention to the godly and hears their cry for help.

¹⁶But the Lord opposes evildoers and wipes out all memory of them from the earth.

¹⁷ The godly cry out and the Lord hears; he saves them from all their troubles.

¹⁸ The Lord is near the brokenhearted; he delivers those who are discouraged.

¹⁹ The godly face many dangers, but the Lord saves them from each one of them.

²⁰ He protects all his bones; not one of them is broken.

²¹ Evil people self-destruct; those who hate the godly are punished.

²² The Lord rescues his servants; all who take shelter in him escape punishment.

35 ¹ By David. O Lord, fight those who fight with me! Attack those who attack me!

² Grab your small shield and large shield, and rise up to help me!

³ Use your spear and lance against those who chase me! Assure me with these words: "I am your deliverer!"

⁴ May those who seek my life be embarrassed and humiliated! May those who plan to harm me be turned back and ashamed!

⁵ May they be like wind-driven chaff, as the Lord's angel attacks them!

⁶May their path be dark and slippery,
as the Lord's angel chases them!

⁷I did not harm them, but they hid a
net to catch me and dug a pit to trap me.

⁸Let destruction take them by surprise!
Let the net they hid catch them! Let
them fall into destruction!

⁹Then I will rejoice in the Lord and be
happy because of his deliverance.

¹⁰With all my strength I will say, "O
Lord, who can compare to you? You
rescue the oppressed from those who try
to overpower them; the oppressed and
needy from those who try to rob them."

¹¹Violent men perjure themselves, and
falsely accuse me.

¹²They repay me evil for the good I
have done; I am overwhelmed with
sorrow.

¹³When they were sick, I wore
sackcloth, and refrained from eating
food. (If I am lying, may my prayers go
unanswered!)

¹⁴I mourned for them as I would for
a friend or my brother. I bowed down
in sorrow as if I were mourning for my
mother.

¹⁵ But when I stumbled, they rejoiced and gathered together; they gathered together to ambush me. They tore at me without stopping to rest.

¹⁶ When I tripped, they taunted me relentlessly, and tried to bite me.

¹⁷ O Lord, how long are you going to just stand there and watch this? Rescue me from their destructive attacks; guard my life from the young lions!

¹⁸ Then I will give you thanks in the great assembly; I will praise you before a large crowd of people!

¹⁹ Do not let those who are my enemies for no reason gloat over me! Do not let those who hate me without cause carry out their wicked schemes!

²⁰ For they do not try to make peace with others, but plan ways to deceive those who are unsuspecting.

²¹ They are ready to devour me; they say, "Aha! Aha! We've got you!"

²² But you take notice, Lord! O Lord, do not remain far away from me!

²³ Rouse yourself, wake up and vindicate me! My God and Lord, defend my just cause!

²⁴ Vindicate me by your justice, O Lord my God! Do not let them gloat over me!

²⁵ Do not let them say to themselves, "Aha! We have what we wanted!" Do not let them say, "We have devoured him!"

²⁶ May those who want to harm me be totally embarrassed and ashamed! May those who arrogantly taunt me be covered with shame and humiliation!

²⁷ May those who desire my vindication shout for joy and rejoice! May they continually say, "May the Lord be praised, for he wants his servant to be secure."

²⁸ Then I will tell others about your justice, and praise you all day long.

36¹ For the music director; written by the Lord's servant, David; an oracle. An evil man is rebellious to the core. He does not fear God,

² for he is too proud to recognize and give up his sin.

³ The words he speaks are sinful and deceitful; he does not care about doing what is wise and right.

⁴ He plans ways to sin while he lies in bed; he is committed to a sinful lifestyle; he does not reject what is evil.

⁵O Lord, your loyal love reaches to the sky; your faithfulness to the clouds.

⁶Your justice is like the highest mountains, your fairness like the deepest sea; you preserve mankind and the animal kingdom.

⁷How precious is your loyal love, O God! The human race finds shelter under your wings.

⁸They are filled with food from your house, and you allow them to drink from the river of your delicacies.

⁹For you are the one who gives and sustains life.

¹⁰Extend your loyal love to your faithful followers, and vindicate the morally upright!

¹¹Do not let arrogant men overtake me, or let evil men make me homeless!

¹²I can see the evildoers! They have fallen! They have been knocked down and are unable to get up!

37 ¹By David. Do not fret when wicked men seem to succeed! Do not envy evildoers!

²For they will quickly dry up like grass, and wither away like plants.

³Trust in the Lord and do what is right!
Settle in the land and maintain your integrity!

⁴Then you will take delight in the Lord,
and he will answer your prayers.

⁵Commit your future to the Lord! Trust
in him, and he will act on your behalf.

⁶He will vindicate you in broad daylight,
and publicly defend your just cause.

⁷Wait patiently for the Lord! Wait
confidently for him! Do not fret over the
apparent success of a sinner, a man who
carries out wicked schemes!

⁸Do not be angry and frustrated! Do
not fret! That only leads to trouble!

⁹Wicked men will be wiped out, but
those who rely on the Lord are the ones
who will possess the land.

¹⁰Evil men will soon disappear; you will
stare at the spot where they once were,
but they will be gone.

¹¹But the oppressed will possess the
land and enjoy great prosperity.

¹²Evil men plot against the godly and
viciously attack them.

¹³The Lord laughs in disgust at them,
for he knows that their day is coming.

¹⁴ Evil men draw their swords and prepare their bows, to bring down the oppressed and needy, and to slaughter those who are godly.

¹⁵ Their swords will pierce their own hearts, and their bows will be broken.

¹⁶ The little bit that a godly man owns is better than the wealth of many evil men,

¹⁷ for evil men will lose their power, but the Lord sustains the godly.

¹⁸ The Lord watches over the innocent day by day and they possess a permanent inheritance.

¹⁹ They will not be ashamed when hard times come; when famine comes they will have enough to eat.

²⁰ But evil men will die; the Lord's enemies will be incinerated – they will go up in smoke.

²¹ Evil men borrow, but do not repay their debt, but the godly show compassion and are generous.

²² Surely those favored by the Lord will possess the land, but those rejected by him will be wiped out.

²³ The Lord grants success to the one whose behavior he finds commendable.

²⁴ Even if he trips, he will not fall headlong, for the Lord holds his hand.

²⁵ I was once young, now I am old. I have never seen a godly man abandoned, or his children forced to search for food.

²⁶ All day long he shows compassion and lends to others, and his children are blessed.

²⁷ Turn away from evil! Do what is right! Then you will enjoy lasting security.

²⁸ For the Lord promotes justice, and never abandons his faithful followers. They are permanently secure, but the children of evil men are wiped out.

²⁹ The godly will possess the land and will dwell in it permanently.

³⁰ The godly speak wise words and promote justice.

³¹ The law of their God controls their thinking; their feet do not slip.

³² Evil men set an ambush for the godly and try to kill them.

³³ But the Lord does not surrender the godly, or allow them to be condemned in a court of law.

³⁴ Rely on the Lord! Obey his commands! Then he will permit you

to possess the land; you will see the demise of evil men.

³⁵I have seen ruthless evil men growing in influence, like a green tree grows in its native soil.

³⁶But then one passes by, and suddenly they have disappeared! I looked for them, but they could not be found.

³⁷Take note of the one who has integrity! Observe the godly! For the one who promotes peace has a future.

³⁸Sinful rebels are totally destroyed; evil men have no future.

³⁹But the Lord delivers the godly; he protects them in times of trouble.

⁴⁰The Lord helps them and rescues them; he rescues them from evil men and delivers them, for they seek his protection.

38¹ A psalm of David, written to get God's attention. O Lord, do not continue to rebuke me in your anger! Do not continue to punish me in your raging fury!

²For your arrows pierce me, and your hand presses me down.

³ My whole body is sick because of your judgment; I am deprived of health because of my sin.

⁴ For my sins overwhelm me; like a heavy load, they are too much for me to bear.

⁵ My wounds are infected and starting to smell, because of my foolish sins.

⁶ I am dazed and completely humiliated; all day long I walk around mourning.

⁷ For I am overcome with shame and my whole body is sick.

⁸ I am numb with pain and severely battered; I groan loudly because of the anxiety I feel.

⁹ O Lord, you understand my heart's desire; my groaning is not hidden from you.

¹⁰ My heart beats quickly; my strength leaves me; I can hardly see.

¹¹ Because of my condition, even my friends and acquaintances keep their distance; my neighbors stand far away.

¹² Those who seek my life try to entrap me; those who want to harm me speak destructive words; all day long they say deceitful things.

¹³But I am like a deaf man – I hear nothing; I am like a mute who cannot speak.

¹⁴I am like a man who cannot hear and is incapable of arguing his defense.

¹⁵Yet I wait for you, O Lord! You will respond, O Lord, my God!

¹⁶I have prayed for deliverance, because otherwise they will gloat over me; when my foot slips they will arrogantly taunt me.

¹⁷For I am about to stumble, and I am in constant pain.

¹⁸Yes, I confess my wrongdoing, and I am concerned about my sins.

¹⁹But those who are my enemies for no reason are numerous; those who hate me without cause outnumber me.

²⁰They repay me evil for the good I have done; though I have tried to do good to them, they hurl accusations at me.

²¹Do not abandon me, O Lord! My God, do not remain far away from me!

²²Hurry and help me, O Lord, my deliverer!

39¹ For the music director, Jeduthun; a psalm of David. I decided, "I will

watch what I say and make sure I do not sin with my tongue. I will put a muzzle over my mouth while in the presence of an evil man."

²I was stone silent; I held back the urge to speak. My frustration grew;

³my anxiety intensified. As I thought about it, I became impatient. Finally I spoke these words:

⁴"O Lord, help me understand my mortality and the brevity of life! Let me realize how quickly my life will pass!

⁵Look, you make my days short-lived, and my life span is nothing from your perspective. Surely all people, even those who seem secure, are nothing but vapor.

⁶Surely people go through life as mere ghosts. Surely they accumulate worthless wealth without knowing who will eventually haul it away."

⁷But now, O Lord, upon what am I relying? You are my only hope!

⁸Deliver me from all my sins of rebellion! Do not make me the object of fools' insults!

⁹I am silent and cannot open my mouth because of what you have done.

¹⁰Please stop wounding me! You have almost beaten me to death!

¹¹You severely discipline people for their sins; like a moth you slowly devour their strength. Surely all people are a mere vapor. (Selah)

¹²Hear my prayer, O Lord! Listen to my cry for help! Do not ignore my sobbing! For I am dependent on you, like one residing outside his native land; I am at your mercy, just as all my ancestors were.

¹³Turn your angry gaze away from me, so I can be happy before I pass away.

40¹For the music director; By David, a psalm. I relied completely on the Lord, and he turned toward me and heard my cry for help.

²He lifted me out of the watery pit, out of the slimy mud. He placed my feet on a rock and gave me secure footing.

³He gave me reason to sing a new song, praising our God. May many see what God has done, so that they might swear allegiance to him and trust in the Lord!

⁴ How blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord and does not seek help from the proud or from liars!

⁵ O Lord, my God, you have accomplished many things; you have done amazing things and carried out your purposes for us. No one can thwart you! I want to declare them and talk about them, but they are too numerous to recount!

⁶ Receiving sacrifices and offerings are not your primary concern. You make that quite clear to me! You do not ask for burnt sacrifices and sin offerings.

⁷ Then I say, "Look! I come! What is written in the scroll pertains to me.

⁸ I want to do what pleases you, my God. Your law dominates my thoughts."

⁹ I have told the great assembly about your justice. Look! I spare no words! O Lord, you know this is true.

¹⁰ I have not failed to tell about your justice; I spoke about your reliability and deliverance; I have not neglected to tell the great assembly about your loyal love and faithfulness.

¹¹ O Lord, you do not withhold your compassion from me. May your loyal

love and faithfulness continually protect me!

¹²For innumerable dangers surround me. My sins overtake me so I am unable to see; they outnumber the hairs of my head so my strength fails me.

¹³Please be willing, O Lord, to rescue me! O Lord, hurry and help me!

¹⁴May those who are trying to snatch away my life be totally embarrassed and ashamed! May those who want to harm me be turned back and ashamed!

¹⁵May those who say to me, "Aha! Aha!" be humiliated and disgraced!

¹⁶May all those who seek you be happy and rejoice in you! May those who love to experience your deliverance say continually, "May the Lord be praised!"

¹⁷I am oppressed and needy! May the Lord pay attention to me! You are my helper and my deliverer! O my God, do not delay!

41 ¹For the music director; a psalm of David. How blessed is the one who treats the poor properly! When trouble comes, the Lord delivers him.

² May the Lord protect him and save his life! May he be blessed in the land! Do not turn him over to his enemies!

³ The Lord supports him on his sickbed; you completely heal him from his illness.

⁴ As for me, I said: "O Lord, have mercy on me! Heal me, for I have sinned against you!

⁵ My enemies ask this cruel question about me, 'When will he finally die and be forgotten?'

⁶ When someone comes to visit, he pretends to be friendly; he thinks of ways to defame me, and when he leaves he slanders me.

⁷ All who hate me whisper insults about me to one another; they plan ways to harm me.

⁸ They say, 'An awful disease overwhelms him, and now that he is bed-ridden he will never recover.'

⁹ Even my close friend whom I trusted, he who shared meals with me, has turned against me.

¹⁰ As for you, O Lord, have mercy on me and raise me up, so I can pay them back!"

¹¹ By this I know that you are pleased with me, for my enemy does not triumph over me.

¹² As for me, you uphold me because of my integrity; you allow me permanent access to your presence.

¹³ The Lord God of Israel deserves praise in the future and forevermore! We agree! We agree!

42 ¹ For the music director; a well-written song by the Korahites. As a deer longs for streams of water, so I long for you, O God!

² I thirst for God, for the living God. I say, "When will I be able to go and appear in God's presence?"

³ I cannot eat, I weep day and night; all day long they say to me, "Where is your God?"

⁴ I will remember and weep! For I was once walking along with the great throng to the temple of God, shouting and giving thanks along with the crowd as we celebrated the holy festival.

⁵ Why are you depressed, O my soul? Why are you upset? Wait for God! For I will again give thanks to my God for his saving intervention.

⁶I am depressed, so I will pray to you while I am trapped here in the region of the upper Jordan, from Hermon, from Mount Mizar.

⁷One deep stream calls out to another at the sound of your waterfalls; all your billows and waves overwhelm me.

⁸By day the Lord decrees his loyal love, and by night he gives me a song, a prayer to the living God.

⁹I will pray to God, my high ridge: “Why do you ignore me? Why must I walk around mourning because my enemies oppress me?”

¹⁰My enemies’ taunts cut into me to the bone, as they say to me all day long, “Where is your God?”

¹¹Why are you depressed, O my soul? Why are you upset? Wait for God! For I will again give thanks to my God for his saving intervention.

43¹Vindicate me, O God! Fight for me against an ungodly nation! Deliver me from deceitful and evil men!

²For you are the God who shelters me. Why do you reject me? Why must I walk around mourning because my enemies oppress me?

³Reveal your light and your faithfulness! They will lead me, they will escort me back to your holy hill, and to the place where you live.

⁴Then I will go to the altar of God, to the God who gives me ecstatic joy, so that I express my thanks to you, O God, my God, with a harp.

⁵Why are you depressed, O my soul? Why are you upset? Wait for God! For I will again give thanks to my God for his saving intervention.

44¹For the music director; by the Korahites, a well-written song. O God, we have clearly heard; our ancestors have told us what you did in their days, in ancient times.

²You, by your power, defeated nations and settled our fathers on their land; you crushed the people living there and enabled our ancestors to occupy it.

³For they did not conquer the land by their swords, and they did not prevail by their strength, but rather by your power, strength and good favor, for you were partial to them.

⁴You are my king, O God! Decree Jacob's deliverance!

⁵By your power we will drive back our enemies; by your strength we will trample down our foes!

⁶For I do not trust in my bow, and I do not prevail by my sword.

⁷For you deliver us from our enemies; you humiliate those who hate us.

⁸In God I boast all day long, and we will continually give thanks to your name.
(Selah)

⁹But you rejected and embarrassed us! You did not go into battle with our armies.

¹⁰You made us retreat from the enemy. Those who hate us take whatever they want from us.

¹¹You handed us over like sheep to be eaten; you scattered us among the nations.

¹²You sold your people for a pittance; you did not ask a high price for them.

¹³You made us an object of disdain to our neighbors; those who live on our borders taunt and insult us.

¹⁴You made us an object of ridicule among the nations; foreigners treat us with contempt.

¹⁵All day long I feel humiliated and am overwhelmed with shame,

¹⁶before the vindictive enemy who ridicules and insults me.

¹⁷All this has happened to us, even though we have not rejected you or violated your covenant with us.

¹⁸We have not been unfaithful, nor have we disobeyed your commands.

¹⁹Yet you have battered us, leaving us a heap of ruins overrun by wild dogs; you have covered us with darkness.

²⁰If we had rejected our God, and spread out our hands in prayer to another god,

²¹would not God discover it, for he knows one's thoughts?

²²Yet because of you we are killed all day long; we are treated like sheep at the slaughtering block.

²³Rouse yourself! Why do you sleep, O Lord? Wake up! Do not reject us forever!

²⁴Why do you look the other way, and ignore the way we are oppressed and mistreated?

²⁵For we lie in the dirt, with our bellies pressed to the ground.

²⁶Rise up and help us! Rescue us because of your loyal love!

45 ¹For the music director; according to the tune of "Lilies;" by the Korahites, a well-written poem, a love song. My heart is stirred by a beautiful song. I say, "I have composed this special song for the king; my tongue is as skilled as the stylus of an experienced scribe."

²You are the most handsome of all men! You speak in an impressive and fitting manner! For this reason God grants you continual blessings.

³Strap your sword to your thigh, O warrior! Appear in your majestic splendor!

⁴Appear in your majesty and be victorious! Ride forth for the sake of what is right, on behalf of justice! Then your right hand will accomplish mighty acts!

⁵Your arrows are sharp and penetrate the hearts of the king's enemies. Nations fall at your feet.

⁶Your throne, O God, is permanent. The scepter of your kingdom is a scepter of justice.

⁷ You love justice and hate evil. For this reason God, your God has anointed you with the oil of joy, elevating you above your companions.

⁸ All your garments are perfumed with myrrh, aloes, and cassia. From the luxurious palaces comes the music of stringed instruments that makes you happy.

⁹ Princesses are among your honored guests, your bride stands at your right hand, wearing jewelry made with gold from Ophir.

¹⁰ Listen, O princess! Observe and pay attention! Forget your homeland and your family!

¹¹ Then the king will be attracted by your beauty. After all, he is your master! Submit to him!

¹² Rich people from Tyre will seek your favor by bringing a gift.

¹³ The princess looks absolutely magnificent, decked out in pearls and clothed in a brocade trimmed with gold.

¹⁴ In embroidered robes she is escorted to the king. Her attendants, the maidens of honor who follow her, are led before you.

¹⁵They are bubbling with joy as they walk in procession and enter the royal palace.

¹⁶Your sons will carry on the dynasty of your ancestors; you will make them princes throughout the land.

¹⁷I will proclaim your greatness through the coming years, then the nations will praise you forever.

46 ¹For the music director; by the Korahites; according to the alamothe style; a song. God is our strong refuge; he is truly our helper in times of trouble.

²For this reason we do not fear when the earth shakes, and the mountains tumble into the depths of the sea,

³when its waves crash and foam, and the mountains shake before the surging sea. (Selah)

⁴The river's channels bring joy to the city of God, the special, holy dwelling place of the sovereign One.

⁵God lives within it, it cannot be moved. God rescues it at the break of dawn.

⁶Nations are in uproar, kingdoms are overthrown. God gives a shout, the earth dissolves.

⁷The Lord who commands armies is on our side! The God of Jacob is our protector! (Selah)

⁸Come! Witness the exploits of the Lord, who brings devastation to the earth!

⁹He brings an end to wars throughout the earth; he shatters the bow and breaks the spear; he burns the shields with fire.

¹⁰He says, "Stop your striving and recognize that I am God! I will be exalted over the nations! I will be exalted over the earth!"

¹¹The Lord who commands armies is on our side! The God of Jacob is our protector! (Selah)

47 ¹For the music director; by the Korahites; a psalm. All you nations, clap your hands! Shout out to God in celebration!

²For the sovereign Lord is awe-inspiring; he is the great king who rules the whole earth!

³He subdued nations beneath us and countries under our feet.

⁴ He picked out for us a special land to be a source of pride for Jacob, whom he loves. (Selah)

⁵ God has ascended his throne amid loud shouts; the Lord has ascended his throne amid the blaring of ram's horns.

⁶ Sing to God! Sing! Sing to our king! Sing!

⁷ For God is king of the whole earth! Sing a well-written song!

⁸ God reigns over the nations! God sits on his holy throne!

⁹ The nobles of the nations assemble, along with the people of the God of Abraham, for God has authority over the rulers of the earth. He is highly exalted!

48¹ A song, a psalm by the Korahites. The Lord is great and certainly worthy of praise in the city of our God, his holy hill.

² It is lofty and pleasing to look at, a source of joy to the whole earth. Mount Zion resembles the peaks of Zaphon; it is the city of the great king.

³ God is in its fortresses; he reveals himself as its defender.

⁴ For look, the kings assemble; they advance together.

⁵As soon as they see, they are shocked; they are terrified, they quickly retreat.

⁶Look at them shake uncontrollably, like a woman writhing in childbirth.

⁷With an east wind you shatter the large ships.

⁸We heard about God's mighty deeds, now we have seen them, in the city of the Lord, the invincible Warrior, in the city of our God. God makes it permanently secure. (Selah)

⁹We reflect on your loyal love, O God, within your temple.

¹⁰The praise you receive as far away as the ends of the earth is worthy of your reputation, O God. You execute justice!

¹¹Mount Zion rejoices; the towns of Judah are happy, because of your acts of judgment.

¹²Walk around Zion! Encircle it! Count its towers!

¹³Consider its defenses! Walk through its fortresses, so you can tell the next generation about it!

¹⁴For God, our God, is our defender forever! He guides us!

49¹For the music director, a psalm by the Korahites. Listen to this,

all you nations! Pay attention, all you inhabitants of the world!

²Pay attention, all you people, both rich and poor!

³I will declare a wise saying; I will share my profound thoughts.

⁴I will learn a song that imparts wisdom; I will then sing my insightful song to the accompaniment of a harp.

⁵Why should I be afraid in times of trouble, when the sinful deeds of deceptive men threaten to overwhelm me?

⁶They trust in their wealth and boast in their great riches.

⁷Certainly a man cannot rescue his brother; he cannot pay God an adequate ransom price

⁸(the ransom price for a human life is too high, and people go to their final destiny),

⁹so that he might continue to live forever and not experience death.

¹⁰Surely one sees that even wise people die; fools and spiritually insensitive people all pass away and leave their wealth to others.

¹¹ Their grave becomes their permanent residence, their eternal dwelling place.

They name their lands after themselves,

¹² but, despite their wealth, people do not last, they are like animals that perish.

¹³ This is the destiny of fools, and of those who approve of their philosophy. (Selah)

¹⁴ They will travel to Sheol like sheep, with death as their shepherd. The godly will rule over them when the day of vindication dawns; Sheol will consume their bodies and they will no longer live in impressive houses.

¹⁵ But God will rescue my life from the power of Sheol; certainly he will pull me to safety. (Selah)

¹⁶ Do not be afraid when a man becomes rich and his wealth multiplies!

¹⁷ For he will take nothing with him when he dies; his wealth will not follow him down into the grave.

¹⁸ He pronounces this blessing on himself while he is alive: "May men praise you, for you have done well!"

¹⁹ But he will join his ancestors; they will never again see the light of day.

²⁰Wealthy people do not understand; they are like animals that perish.

50¹A psalm by Asaph. El, God, the Lord speaks, and summons the earth to come from the east and west.

²From Zion, the most beautiful of all places, God comes in splendor.

³Our God approaches and is not silent; consuming fire goes ahead of him and all around him a storm rages.

⁴He summons the heavens above, as well as the earth, so that he might judge his people.

⁵He says: "Assemble my covenant people before me, those who ratified a covenant with me by sacrifice!"

⁶The heavens declare his fairness, for God is judge. (Selah)

⁷He says: "Listen my people! I am speaking! Listen Israel! I am accusing you! I am God, your God!"

⁸I am not condemning you because of your sacrifices, or because of your burnt sacrifices that you continually offer me.

⁹I do not need to take a bull from your household or goats from your sheepfolds.

¹⁰For every wild animal in the forest belongs to me, as well as the cattle that graze on a thousand hills.

¹¹I keep track of every bird in the hills, and the insects of the field are mine.

¹²Even if I were hungry, I would not tell you, for the world and all it contains belong to me.

¹³Do I eat the flesh of bulls? Do I drink the blood of goats?

¹⁴Present to God a thank-offering!
Repay your vows to the sovereign One!

¹⁵Pray to me when you are in trouble! I will deliver you, and you will honor me!"

¹⁶God says this to the evildoer: "How can you declare my commands, and talk about my covenant?"

¹⁷For you hate instruction and reject my words.

¹⁸When you see a thief, you join him; you associate with men who are unfaithful to their wives.

¹⁹You do damage with words, and use your tongue to deceive.

²⁰You plot against your brother; you slander your own brother.

²¹When you did these things, I was silent, so you thought I was exactly like

you. But now I will condemn you and state my case against you!

²²Carefully consider this, you who reject God! Otherwise I will rip you to shreds and no one will be able to rescue you.

²³Whoever presents a thank-offering honors me. To whoever obeys my commands, I will reveal my power to deliver.”

51 ¹For the music director; a psalm of David, written when Nathan the prophet confronted him after David’s affair with Bathsheba. Have mercy on me, O God, because of your loyal love! Because of your great compassion, wipe away my rebellious acts!

²Wash away my wrongdoing! Cleanse me of my sin!

³For I am aware of my rebellious acts; I am forever conscious of my sin.

⁴Against you – you above all – I have sinned; I have done what is evil in your sight. So you are just when you confront me; you are right when you condemn me.

⁵Look, I was guilty of sin from birth, a sinner the moment my mother conceived me.

⁶Look, you desire integrity in the inner man; you want me to possess wisdom.

⁷Sprinkle me with water and I will be pure; wash me and I will be whiter than snow.

⁸Grant me the ultimate joy of being forgiven! May the bones you crushed rejoice!

⁹Hide your face from my sins! Wipe away all my guilt!

¹⁰Create for me a pure heart, O God! Renew a resolute spirit within me!

¹¹Do not reject me! Do not take your Holy Spirit away from me!

¹²Let me again experience the joy of your deliverance! Sustain me by giving me the desire to obey!

¹³Then I will teach rebels your merciful ways, and sinners will turn to you.

¹⁴Rescue me from the guilt of murder, O God, the God who delivers me! Then my tongue will shout for joy because of your deliverance.

¹⁵O Lord, give me the words! Then my mouth will praise you.

¹⁶Certainly you do not want a sacrifice, or else I would offer it; you do not desire a burnt sacrifice.

¹⁷The sacrifices God desires are a humble spirit – O God, a humble and repentant heart you will not reject.

¹⁸Because you favor Zion, do what is good for her! Fortify the walls of Jerusalem!

¹⁹Then you will accept the proper sacrifices, burnt sacrifices and whole offerings; then bulls will be sacrificed on your altar.

52¹For the music director; a well-written song by David. It was written when Doeg the Edomite went and informed Saul: “David has arrived at the home of Ahimelech.” Why do you boast about your evil plans, O powerful man? God’s loyal love protects me all day long!

²Your tongue carries out your destructive plans; it is as effective as a sharp razor, O deceiver.

³You love evil more than good, lies more than speaking the truth. (Selah)

⁴You love to use all the words that destroy, and the tongue that deceives.

⁵ Yet God will make you a permanent heap of ruins. He will scoop you up and remove you from your home; he will uproot you from the land of the living. (Selah)

⁶ When the godly see this, they will be filled with awe, and will mock the evildoer, saying:

⁷ "Look, here is the man who would not make God his protector! He trusted in his great wealth and was confident about his plans to destroy others."

⁸ But I am like a flourishing olive tree in the house of God; I continually trust in God's loyal love.

⁹ I will continually thank you when you execute judgment; I will rely on you, for your loyal followers know you are good.

53¹ For the music director; according to the machalath style; a well-written song by David. Fools say to themselves, "There is no God." They sin and commit evil deeds; none of them does what is right.

² God looks down from heaven at the human race, to see if there is anyone who is wise and seeks God.

³Everyone rejects God; they are all morally corrupt. None of them does what is right, not even one!

⁴All those who behave wickedly do not understand – those who devour my people as if they were eating bread, and do not call out to God.

⁵They are absolutely terrified, even by things that do not normally cause fear. For God annihilates those who attack you. You are able to humiliate them because God has rejected them.

⁶I wish the deliverance of Israel would come from Zion! When God restores the well-being of his people, may Jacob rejoice, may Israel be happy!

54¹For the music director, to be accompanied by stringed instruments; a well-written song by David. It was written when the Ziphites came and informed Saul: "David is hiding with us." O God, deliver me by your name! Vindicate me by your power!

²O God, listen to my prayer! Pay attention to what I say!

³For foreigners attack me; ruthless men, who do not respect God, seek my life. (Selah)

⁴ Look, God is my deliverer! The Lord is among those who support me.

⁵ May those who wait to ambush me be repaid for their evil! As a demonstration of your faithfulness, destroy them!

⁶ With a freewill offering I will sacrifice to you! I will give thanks to your name, O Lord, for it is good!

⁷ Surely he rescues me from all trouble, and I triumph over my enemies.

55 ¹ For the music director, to be accompanied by stringed instruments; a well-written song by David. Listen, O God, to my prayer! Do not ignore my appeal for mercy!

² Pay attention to me and answer me! I am so upset and distressed, I am beside myself,

³ because of what the enemy says, and because of how the wicked pressure me, for they hurl trouble down upon me and angrily attack me.

⁴ My heart beats violently within me; the horrors of death overcome me.

⁵ Fear and panic overpower me; terror overwhelms me.

⁶ I say, "I wish I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and settle in a safe place!

⁷ Look, I will escape to a distant place;
I will stay in the wilderness. (Selah)

⁸ I will hurry off to a place that is safe
from the strong wind and the gale."

⁹ Confuse them, O Lord! Frustrate their
plans! For I see violence and conflict in
the city.

¹⁰ Day and night they walk around on its
walls, while wickedness and destruction
are within it.

¹¹ Disaster is within it; violence and
deceit do not depart from its public
square.

¹² Indeed, it is not an enemy who
insults me, or else I could bear it; it is
not one who hates me who arrogantly
taunts me, or else I could hide from him.

¹³ But it is you, a man like me, my close
friend in whom I confided.

¹⁴ We would share personal thoughts
with each other; in God's temple we
would walk together among the crowd.

¹⁵ May death destroy them! May they
go down alive into Sheol! For evil is in
their dwelling place and in their midst.

¹⁶ As for me, I will call out to God, and
the Lord will deliver me.

¹⁷ During the evening, morning, and noontime I will lament and moan, and he will hear me.

¹⁸ He will rescue me and protect me from those who attack me, even though they greatly outnumber me.

¹⁹ God, the one who has reigned as king from long ago, will hear and humiliate them. (Selah) They refuse to change, and do not fear God.

²⁰ He attacks his friends; he breaks his solemn promises to them.

²¹ His words are as smooth as butter, but he harbors animosity in his heart. His words seem softer than oil, but they are really like sharp swords.

²² Throw your burden upon the Lord, and he will sustain you. He will never allow the godly to be upended.

²³ But you, O God, will bring them down to the deep Pit. Violent and deceitful people will not live even half a normal lifespan. But as for me, I trust in you.

56 ¹ For the music director; according to the yonath-elem-rechovim style; a prayer of David, written when the Philistines captured him in Gath. Have mercy on me, O God, for men

are attacking me! All day long hostile enemies are tormenting me.

²Those who anticipate my defeat attack me all day long. Indeed, many are fighting against me, O Exalted One.

³When I am afraid, I trust in you.

⁴In God – I boast in his promise – in God I trust, I am not afraid. What can mere men do to me?

⁵All day long they cause me trouble; they make a habit of plotting my demise.

⁶They stalk and lurk; they watch my every step, as they prepare to take my life.

⁷Because they are bent on violence, do not let them escape! In your anger bring down the nations, O God!

⁸You keep track of my misery. Put my tears in your leather container! Are they not recorded in your scroll?

⁹My enemies will turn back when I cry out to you for help; I know that God is on my side.

¹⁰In God – I boast in his promise – in the Lord – I boast in his promise –

¹¹in God I trust, I am not afraid. What can mere men do to me?

¹²I am obligated to fulfill the vows I made to you, O God; I will give you the thank-offerings you deserve,

¹³when you deliver my life from death. You keep my feet from stumbling, so that I might serve God as I enjoy life.

57 ¹For the music director; according to the al-tashcheth style; a prayer of David, written when he fled from Saul into the cave. Have mercy on me, O God! Have mercy on me! For in you I have taken shelter. In the shadow of your wings I take shelter until trouble passes.

²I cry out for help to the sovereign God, to the God who vindicates me.

³May he send help from heaven and deliver me from my enemies who hurl insults! (Selah) May God send his loyal love and faithfulness!

⁴I am surrounded by lions; I lie down among those who want to devour me; men whose teeth are spears and arrows, whose tongues are a sharp sword.

⁵Rise up above the sky, O God! May your splendor cover the whole earth!

⁶They have prepared a net to trap me; I am discouraged. They have dug a pit for me. They will fall into it! (Selah)

⁷I am determined, O God! I am determined! I will sing and praise you!

⁸Awake, my soul! Awake, O stringed instrument and harp! I will wake up at dawn!

⁹I will give you thanks before the nations, O Master! I will sing praises to you before foreigners!

¹⁰For your loyal love extends beyond the sky, and your faithfulness reaches the clouds.

¹¹Rise up above the sky, O God! May your splendor cover the whole earth!

58 ¹For the music director; according to the al-tashcheth style; a prayer of David. Do you rulers really pronounce just decisions? Do you judge people fairly?

²No! You plan how to do what is unjust; you deal out violence in the earth.

³The wicked turn aside from birth; liars go astray as soon as they are born.

⁴Their venom is like that of a snake, like a deaf serpent that does not hear,

⁵that does not respond to the magicians, or to a skilled snake-charmer.

⁶O God, break the teeth in their mouths! Smash the jawbones of the lions, O Lord!

⁷Let them disappear like water that flows away! Let them wither like grass!

⁸Let them be like a snail that melts away as it moves along! Let them be like stillborn babies that never see the sun!

⁹Before the kindling is even placed under your pots, he will sweep it away along with both the raw and cooked meat.

¹⁰The godly will rejoice when they see vengeance carried out; they will bathe their feet in the blood of the wicked.

¹¹Then observers will say, "Yes indeed, the godly are rewarded! Yes indeed, there is a God who judges in the earth!"

59¹ For the music director; according to the al-tashcheth style; a prayer of David, written when Saul sent men to surround his house and murder him. Deliver me from my enemies, my God! Protect me from those who attack me!

²Deliver me from evildoers! Rescue me from violent men!

³For look, they wait to ambush me; powerful men stalk me, but not because I have rebelled or sinned, O Lord.

⁴Though I have done nothing wrong, they are anxious to attack. Spring into action and help me! Take notice of me!

⁵You, O Lord God, the invincible warrior, the God of Israel, rouse yourself and punish all the nations! Have no mercy on any treacherous evildoers! (Selah)

⁶They return in the evening; they growl like a dog and prowl around outside the city.

⁷Look, they hurl insults at me and openly threaten to kill me, for they say, "Who hears?"

⁸But you, O Lord, laugh in disgust at them; you taunt all the nations.

⁹You are my source of strength! I will wait for you! For God is my refuge.

¹⁰The God who loves me will help me; God will enable me to triumph over my enemies.

¹¹Do not strike them dead suddenly, because then my people might forget the lesson. Use your power to make them homeless vagabonds and then bring them down, O Lord who shields us!

¹²They speak sinful words. So let them be trapped by their own pride and by the curses and lies they speak!

¹³Angrily wipe them out! Wipe them out so they vanish! Let them know that God rules in Jacob and to the ends of the earth! (Selah)

¹⁴They return in the evening; they growl like a dog and prowl around outside the city.

¹⁵They wander around looking for something to eat; they refuse to sleep until they are full.

¹⁶As for me, I will sing about your strength; I will praise your loyal love in the morning. For you are my refuge and my place of shelter when I face trouble.

¹⁷You are my source of strength! I will sing praises to you! For God is my refuge, the God who loves me.

60¹ For the music director; according to the shushan-eduth style; a prayer of David written to instruct others. It was written when he fought against Aram Naharaim and Aram-Zobah. That was when Joab turned back and struck down 12,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt. O God, you have rejected us. You

suddenly turned on us in your anger.
Please restore us!

²You made the earth quake; you split it open. Repair its breaches, for it is ready to fall.

³You have made your people experience hard times; you have made us drink intoxicating wine.

⁴You have given your loyal followers a rallying flag, so that they might seek safety from the bow. (Selah)

⁵Deliver by your power and answer me, so that the ones you love may be safe.

⁶God has spoken in his sanctuary: "I will triumph! I will parcel out Shechem; the Valley of Succoth I will measure off.

⁷Gilead belongs to me, as does Manasseh! Ephraim is my helmet, Judah my royal scepter.

⁸Moab is my washbasin. I will make Edom serve me. I will shout in triumph over Philistia."

⁹Who will lead me into the fortified city? Who will bring me to Edom?

¹⁰Have you not rejected us, O God? O God, you do not go into battle with our armies.

¹¹ Give us help against the enemy, for any help men might offer is futile.

¹² By God's power we will conquer; he will trample down our enemies.

61 ¹ For the music director; to be played on a stringed instrument; written by David. O God, hear my cry for help! Pay attention to my prayer!

² From the most remote place on earth I call out to you in my despair. Lead me up to an inaccessible rocky summit!

³ Indeed, you are my shelter, a strong tower that protects me from the enemy.

⁴ I will be a permanent guest in your home; I will find shelter in the protection of your wings. (Selah)

⁵ For you, O God, hear my vows; you grant me the reward that belongs to your loyal followers.

⁶ Give the king long life! Make his lifetime span several generations!

⁷ May he reign forever before God! Decree that your loyal love and faithfulness should protect him.

⁸ Then I will sing praises to your name continually, as I fulfill my vows day after day.

62¹ For the music director, Jeduthun; a psalm of David. For God alone I patiently wait; he is the one who delivers me.

² He alone is my protector and deliverer. He is my refuge; I will not be upended.

³ How long will you threaten a man? All of you are murderers, as dangerous as a leaning wall or an unstable fence.

⁴ They spend all their time planning how to bring him down. They love to use deceit; they pronounce blessings with their mouths, but inwardly they utter curses. (Selah)

⁵ Patiently wait for God alone, my soul! For he is the one who gives me confidence.

⁶ He alone is my protector and deliverer. He is my refuge; I will not be upended.

⁷ God delivers me and exalts me; God is my strong protector and my shelter.

⁸ Trust in him at all times, you people! Pour out your hearts before him! God is our shelter! (Selah)

⁹ Men are nothing but a mere breath; human beings are unreliable. When they are weighed in the scales, all of them together are lighter than air.

¹⁰ Do not trust in what you can gain by oppression! Do not put false confidence in what you can gain by robbery! If wealth increases, do not become attached to it!

¹¹ God has declared one principle; two principles I have heard: God is strong,
¹² and you, O Lord, demonstrate loyal love. For you repay men for what they do.

63¹ A psalm of David, written when he was in the Judean wilderness. O God, you are my God! I long for you! My soul thirsts for you, my flesh yearns for you, in a dry and parched land where there is no water.

² Yes, in the sanctuary I have seen you, and witnessed your power and splendor.

³ Because experiencing your loyal love is better than life itself, my lips will praise you.

⁴ For this reason I will praise you while I live; in your name I will lift up my hands.

⁵ As if with choice meat you satisfy my soul. My mouth joyfully praises you,

⁶ whenever I remember you on my bed, and think about you during the nighttime hours.

⁷ For you are my deliverer; under your wings I rejoice.

⁸ My soul pursues you; your right hand upholds me.

⁹ Enemies seek to destroy my life, but they will descend into the depths of the earth.

¹⁰ Each one will be handed over to the sword; their corpses will be eaten by jackals.

¹¹ But the king will rejoice in God; everyone who takes oaths in his name will boast, for the mouths of those who speak lies will be shut up.

64 ¹ For the music director; a psalm of David. Listen to me, O God, as I offer my lament! Protect my life from the enemy's terrifying attacks.

² Hide me from the plots of evil men, from the crowd of evildoers.

³ They sharpen their tongues like a sword; they aim their arrow, a slanderous charge,

⁴ in order to shoot down the innocent in secluded places. They shoot at him suddenly and are unafraid of retaliation.

⁵ They encourage one another to carry out their evil deed. They plan how to

hide snares, and boast, "Who will see them?"

⁶They devise unjust schemes; they disguise a well-conceived plot. Man's inner thoughts cannot be discovered.

⁷But God will shoot at them; suddenly they will be wounded by an arrow.

⁸Their slander will bring about their demise. All who see them will shudder,

⁹and all people will fear. They will proclaim what God has done, and reflect on his deeds.

¹⁰The godly will rejoice in the Lord and take shelter in him. All the morally upright will boast.

65 ¹For the music director; a psalm of David, a song. Praise awaits you, O God, in Zion. Vows made to you are fulfilled.

²You hear prayers; all people approach you.

³Our record of sins overwhelms me, but you forgive our acts of rebellion.

⁴How blessed is the one whom you choose, and allow to live in your palace courts. May we be satisfied with the good things of your house – your holy palace.

⁵You answer our prayers by performing awesome acts of deliverance, O God, our savior. All the ends of the earth trust in you, as well as those living across the wide seas.

⁶You created the mountains by your power, and demonstrated your strength.

⁷You calm the raging seas and their roaring waves, as well as the commotion made by the nations.

⁸Even those living in the most remote areas are awestruck by your acts; you cause those living in the east and west to praise you.

⁹You visit the earth and give it rain; you make it rich and fertile with overflowing streams full of water. You provide grain for them, for you prepare the earth to yield its crops.

¹⁰You saturate its furrows, and soak its plowed ground. With rain showers you soften its soil, and make its crops grow.

¹¹You crown the year with your good blessings, and you leave abundance in your wake.

¹²The pastures in the wilderness glisten with moisture, and the hills are clothed with joy.

¹³The meadows are clothed with sheep, and the valleys are covered with grain. They shout joyfully, yes, they sing.

66 ¹For the music director; a song, a psalm. Shout out praise to God, all the earth!

²Sing praises about the majesty of his reputation! Give him the honor he deserves!

³Say to God: "How awesome are your deeds! Because of your great power your enemies cover in fear before you.

⁴All the earth worships you and sings praises to you! They sing praises to your name!" (Selah)

⁵Come and witness God's exploits! His acts on behalf of people are awesome!

⁶He turned the sea into dry land; they passed through the river on foot. Let us rejoice in him there!

⁷He rules by his power forever; he watches the nations. Stubborn rebels should not exalt themselves. (Selah)

⁸Praise our God, you nations! Loudly proclaim his praise!

⁹He preserves our lives and does not allow our feet to slip.

¹⁰For you, O God, tested us; you purified us like refined silver.

¹¹You led us into a trap; you caused us to suffer.

¹²You allowed men to ride over our heads; we passed through fire and water, but you brought us out into a wide open place.

¹³I will enter your temple with burnt sacrifices; I will fulfill the vows I made to you,

¹⁴which my lips uttered and my mouth spoke when I was in trouble.

¹⁵I will offer up to you fattened animals as burnt sacrifices, along with the smell of sacrificial rams. I will offer cattle and goats. (Selah)

¹⁶Come! Listen, all you who are loyal to God! I will declare what he has done for me.

¹⁷I cried out to him for help and praised him with my tongue.

¹⁸If I had harbored sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.

¹⁹However, God heard; he listened to my prayer.

²⁰God deserves praise, for he did not reject my prayer or abandon his love for me!

67 ¹For the music director; to be accompanied by stringed instruments; a psalm, a song. May God show us his favor and bless us! May he smile on us! (Selah)

²Then those living on earth will know what you are like; all nations will know how you deliver your people.

³Let the nations thank you, O God! Let all the nations thank you!

⁴Let foreigners rejoice and celebrate! For you execute justice among the nations, and govern the people living on earth. (Selah)

⁵Let the nations thank you, O God! Let all the nations thank you!

⁶The earth yields its crops. May God, our God, bless us!

⁷May God bless us! Then all the ends of the earth will give him the honor he deserves.

68 ¹For the music director; by David, a psalm, a song. God springs into action! His enemies scatter; his adversaries run from him.

²As smoke is driven away by the wind, so you drive them away. As wax melts before fire, so the wicked are destroyed before God.

³But the godly are happy; they rejoice before God and are overcome with joy.

⁴Sing to God! Sing praises to his name! Exalt the one who rides on the clouds! For the Lord is his name! Rejoice before him!

⁵He is a father to the fatherless and an advocate for widows. God rules from his holy palace.

⁶God settles those who have been deserted in their own homes; he frees prisoners and grants them prosperity. But sinful rebels live in the desert.

⁷O God, when you lead your people into battle, when you march through the desert, (Selah)

⁸the earth shakes, yes, the heavens pour down rain before God, the God of Sinai, before God, the God of Israel.

⁹O God, you cause abundant showers to fall on your chosen people. When they are tired, you sustain them,

¹⁰for you live among them. You sustain the oppressed with your good blessings, O God.

¹¹The Lord speaks; many, many women spread the good news.

¹²Kings leading armies run away – they run away! The lovely lady of the house divides up the loot.

¹³When you lie down among the sheepfolds, the wings of the dove are covered with silver and with glittering gold.

¹⁴When the sovereign judge scatters kings, let it snow on Zalmon!

¹⁵The mountain of Bashan is a towering mountain; the mountain of Bashan is a mountain with many peaks.

¹⁶Why do you look with envy, O mountains with many peaks, at the mountain where God has decided to live? Indeed the Lord will live there permanently!

¹⁷God has countless chariots; they number in the thousands. The Lord comes from Sinai in holy splendor.

¹⁸You ascend on high, you have taken many captives. You receive tribute from

men, including even sinful rebels. Indeed the Lord God lives there!

¹⁹The Lord deserves praise! Day after day he carries our burden, the God who delivers us. (Selah)

²⁰Our God is a God who delivers; the Lord, the sovereign Lord, can rescue from death.

²¹Indeed God strikes the heads of his enemies, the hairy foreheads of those who persist in rebellion.

²²The Lord says, "I will retrieve them from Bashan, I will bring them back from the depths of the sea,

²³so that your feet may stomp in their blood, and your dogs may eat their portion of the enemies' corpses."

²⁴They see your processions, O God – the processions of my God, my king, who marches along in holy splendor.

²⁵Singers walk in front; musicians follow playing their stringed instruments, in the midst of young women playing tambourines.

²⁶In your large assemblies praise God, the Lord, in the assemblies of Israel!

²⁷There is little Benjamin, their ruler, and the princes of Judah in their robes,

along with the princes of Zebulun and the princes of Naphtali.

²⁸God has decreed that you will be powerful. O God, you who have acted on our behalf, demonstrate your power,

²⁹as you come out of your temple in Jerusalem! Kings bring tribute to you.

³⁰Sound your battle cry against the wild beast of the reeds, and the nations that assemble like a herd of calves led by bulls! They humble themselves and offer gold and silver as tribute. God scatters the nations that like to do battle.

³¹They come with red cloth from Egypt, Ethiopia voluntarily offers tribute to God.

³²O kingdoms of the earth, sing to God! Sing praises to the Lord, (Selah)

³³to the one who rides through the sky from ancient times! Look! He thunders loudly.

³⁴Acknowledge God's power, his sovereignty over Israel, and the power he reveals in the skies!

³⁵You are awe-inspiring, O God, as you emerge from your holy temple! It is the God of Israel who gives the people power and strength. God deserves praise!

69¹ For the music director; according to the tune of "Lilies;" by David. Deliver me, O God, for the water has reached my neck.

²I sink into the deep mire where there is no solid ground; I am in deep water, and the current overpowers me.

³I am exhausted from shouting for help; my throat is sore; my eyes grow tired of looking for my God.

⁴Those who hate me without cause are more numerous than the hairs of my head. Those who want to destroy me, my enemies for no reason, outnumber me. They make me repay what I did not steal!

⁵O God, you are aware of my foolish sins; my guilt is not hidden from you.

⁶Let none who rely on you be disgraced because of me, O sovereign Lord and king! Let none who seek you be ashamed because of me, O God of Israel!

⁷For I suffer humiliation for your sake and am thoroughly disgraced.

⁸My own brothers treat me like a stranger; they act as if I were a foreigner.

⁹Certainly zeal for your house consumes me; I endure the insults of those who insult you.

¹⁰I weep and refrain from eating food, which causes others to insult me.

¹¹I wear sackcloth and they ridicule me.

¹²Those who sit at the city gate gossip about me; drunkards mock me in their songs.

¹³O Lord, may you hear my prayer and be favorably disposed to me! O God, because of your great loyal love, answer me with your faithful deliverance!

¹⁴Rescue me from the mud! Don't let me sink! Deliver me from those who hate me, from the deep water!

¹⁵Don't let the current overpower me! Don't let the deep swallow me up! Don't let the pit devour me!

¹⁶Answer me, O Lord, for your loyal love is good! Because of your great compassion, turn toward me!

¹⁷Do not ignore your servant, for I am in trouble! Answer me right away!

¹⁸Come near me and redeem me! Because of my enemies, rescue me!

¹⁹You know how I am insulted, humiliated and disgraced; you can see all my enemies.

²⁰Their insults are painful and make me lose heart; I look for sympathy, but receive none, for comforters, but find none.

²¹They put bitter poison into my food, and to quench my thirst they give me vinegar to drink.

²²May their dining table become a trap before them! May it be a snare for that group of friends!

²³May their eyes be blinded! Make them shake violently!

²⁴Pour out your judgment on them! May your raging anger overtake them!

²⁵May their camp become desolate, their tents uninhabited!

²⁶For they harass the one whom you discipline; they spread the news about the suffering of those whom you punish.

²⁷Hold them accountable for all their sins! Do not vindicate them!

²⁸May their names be deleted from the scroll of the living! Do not let their names be listed with the godly!

²⁹ I am oppressed and suffering! O God, deliver and protect me!

³⁰ I will sing praises to God's name! I will magnify him as I give him thanks!

³¹ That will please the Lord more than an ox or a bull with horns and hooves.

³² The oppressed look on – let them rejoice! You who seek God, may you be encouraged!

³³ For the Lord listens to the needy; he does not despise his captive people.

³⁴ Let the heavens and the earth praise him, along with the seas and everything that swims in them!

³⁵ For God will deliver Zion and rebuild the cities of Judah, and his people will again live in them and possess Zion.

³⁶ The descendants of his servants will inherit it, and those who are loyal to him will live in it.

70¹ For the music director; by David; written to get God's attention. O God, please be willing to rescue me! O Lord, hurry and help me!

² May those who are trying to take my life be embarrassed and ashamed! May those who want to harm me be turned back and ashamed!

³ May those who say, “Aha! Aha!” be driven back and disgraced!

⁴ May all those who seek you be happy and rejoice in you! May those who love to experience your deliverance say continually, “May God be praised!”

⁵ I am oppressed and needy! O God, hurry to me! You are my helper and my deliverer! O Lord, do not delay!

71 ¹ In you, O Lord, I have taken shelter! Never let me be humiliated!

² Vindicate me by rescuing me! Listen to me! Deliver me!

³ Be my protector and refuge, a stronghold where I can be safe! For you are my high ridge and my stronghold.

⁴ My God, rescue me from the power of the wicked, from the hand of the cruel oppressor!

⁵ For you give me confidence, O Lord; O Lord, I have trusted in you since I was young.

⁶ I have leaned on you since birth; you pulled me from my mother’s womb. I praise you continually.

⁷ Many are appalled when they see me, but you are my secure shelter.

⁸I praise you constantly and speak of your splendor all day long.

⁹Do not reject me in my old age! When my strength fails, do not abandon me!

¹⁰For my enemies talk about me; those waiting for a chance to kill me plot my demise.

¹¹They say, "God has abandoned him. Run and seize him, for there is no one who will rescue him!"

¹²O God, do not remain far away from me! My God, hurry and help me!

¹³May my accusers be humiliated and defeated! May those who want to harm me be covered with scorn and disgrace!

¹⁴As for me, I will wait continually, and will continue to praise you.

¹⁵I will tell about your justice, and all day long proclaim your salvation, though I cannot fathom its full extent.

¹⁶I will come and tell about the mighty acts of the sovereign Lord. I will proclaim your justice – yours alone.

¹⁷O God, you have taught me since I was young, and I am still declaring your amazing deeds.

¹⁸Even when I am old and gray, O God, do not abandon me, until I tell the next

generation about your strength, and those coming after me about your power.

¹⁹Your justice, O God, extends to the skies above; you have done great things. O God, who can compare to you?

²⁰Though you have allowed me to experience much trouble and distress, revive me once again! Bring me up once again from the depths of the earth!

²¹Raise me to a position of great honor! Turn and comfort me!

²²I will express my thanks to you with a stringed instrument, praising your faithfulness, O my God! I will sing praises to you accompanied by a harp, O Holy One of Israel!

²³My lips will shout for joy! Yes, I will sing your praises! I will praise you when you rescue me!

²⁴All day long my tongue will also tell about your justice, for those who want to harm me will be embarrassed and ashamed.

72¹For Solomon. O God, grant the king the ability to make just decisions! Grant the king's son the ability to make fair decisions!

²Then he will judge your people fairly, and your oppressed ones equitably.

³The mountains will bring news of peace to the people, and the hills will announce justice.

⁴He will defend the oppressed among the people; he will deliver the children of the poor and crush the oppressor.

⁵People will fear you as long as the sun and moon remain in the sky, for generation after generation.

⁶He will descend like rain on the mown grass, like showers that drench the earth.

⁷During his days the godly will flourish; peace will prevail as long as the moon remains in the sky.

⁸May he rule from sea to sea, and from the Euphrates River to the ends of the earth!

⁹Before him the coastlands will bow down, and his enemies will lick the dust.

¹⁰The kings of Tarshish and the coastlands will offer gifts; the kings of Sheba and Seba will bring tribute.

¹¹All kings will bow down to him; all nations will serve him.

¹²For he will rescue the needy when they cry out for help, and the oppressed who have no defender.

¹³He will take pity on the poor and needy; the lives of the needy he will save.

¹⁴From harm and violence he will defend them; he will value their lives.

¹⁵May he live! May they offer him gold from Sheba! May they continually pray for him! May they pronounce blessings on him all day long!

¹⁶May there be an abundance of grain in the earth; on the tops of the mountains may it sway! May its fruit trees flourish like the forests of Lebanon! May its crops be as abundant as the grass of the earth!

¹⁷May his fame endure! May his dynasty last as long as the sun remains in the sky! May they use his name when they formulate their blessings! May all nations consider him to be favored by God!

¹⁸The Lord God, the God of Israel, deserves praise! He alone accomplishes amazing things!

¹⁹His glorious name deserves praise forevermore! May his majestic splendor fill the whole earth! We agree! We agree!

²⁰This collection of the prayers of David son of Jesse ends here.

73¹A psalm by Asaph. Certainly God is good to Israel, and to those whose motives are pure!

²But as for me, my feet almost slipped; my feet almost slid out from under me.

³For I envied those who are proud, as I observed the prosperity of the wicked.

⁴For they suffer no pain; their bodies are strong and well-fed.

⁵They are immune to the trouble common to men; they do not suffer as other men do.

⁶Arrogance is their necklace, and violence their clothing.

⁷Their prosperity causes them to do wrong; their thoughts are sinful.

⁸They mock and say evil things; they proudly threaten violence.

⁹They speak as if they rule in heaven, and lay claim to the earth.

¹⁰Therefore they have more than enough food to eat, and even suck up the water of the sea.

¹¹ They say, "How does God know what we do? Is the sovereign one aware of what goes on?"

¹² Take a good look! This is what the wicked are like, those who always have it so easy and get richer and richer.

¹³ I concluded, "Surely in vain I have kept my motives pure and maintained a pure lifestyle.

¹⁴ I suffer all day long, and am punished every morning."

¹⁵ If I had publicized these thoughts, I would have betrayed your loyal followers.

¹⁶ When I tried to make sense of this, it was troubling to me.

¹⁷ Then I entered the precincts of God's temple, and understood the destiny of the wicked.

¹⁸ Surely you put them in slippery places; you bring them down to ruin.

¹⁹ How desolate they become in a mere moment! Terrifying judgments make their demise complete!

²⁰ They are like a dream after one wakes up. O Lord, when you awake you will despise them.

²¹ Yes, my spirit was bitter, and my insides felt sharp pain.

²²I was ignorant and lacked insight; I was as senseless as an animal before you.

²³But I am continually with you; you hold my right hand.

²⁴You guide me by your wise advice, and then you will lead me to a position of honor.

²⁵Whom do I have in heaven but you? I desire no one but you on earth.

²⁶My flesh and my heart may grow weak, but God always protects my heart and gives me stability.

²⁷Yes, look! Those far from you die; you destroy everyone who is unfaithful to you.

²⁸But as for me, God's presence is all I need. I have made the sovereign Lord my shelter, as I declare all the things you have done.

74¹A well-written song by Asaph. Why, O God, have you permanently rejected us? Why does your anger burn against the sheep of your pasture?

²Remember your people whom you acquired in ancient times, whom you rescued so they could be your very own

nation, as well as Mount Zion, where you dwell!

³Hurry and look at the permanent ruins, and all the damage the enemy has done to the temple!

⁴Your enemies roar in the middle of your sanctuary; they set up their battle flags.

⁵They invade like lumberjacks swinging their axes in a thick forest.

⁶And now they are tearing down all its engravings with axes and crowbars.

⁷They set your sanctuary on fire; they desecrate your dwelling place by knocking it to the ground.

⁸They say to themselves, "We will oppress all of them." They burn down all the places where people worship God in the land.

⁹We do not see any signs of God's presence; there are no longer any prophets and we have no one to tell us how long this will last.

¹⁰How long, O God, will the adversary hurl insults? Will the enemy blaspheme your name forever?

¹¹Why do you remain inactive? Intervene and destroy him!

¹²But God has been my king from ancient times, performing acts of deliverance on the earth.

¹³You destroyed the sea by your strength; you shattered the heads of the sea monster in the water.

¹⁴You crushed the heads of Leviathan; you fed him to the people who live along the coast.

¹⁵You broke open the spring and the stream; you dried up perpetually flowing rivers.

¹⁶You established the cycle of day and night; you put the moon and sun in place.

¹⁷You set up all the boundaries of the earth; you created the cycle of summer and winter.

¹⁸Remember how the enemy hurls insults, O Lord, and how a foolish nation blasphemes your name!

¹⁹Do not hand the life of your dove over to a wild animal! Do not continue to disregard the lives of your oppressed people!

²⁰Remember your covenant promises, for the dark regions of the earth are full of places where violence rules.

²¹ Do not let the afflicted be turned back in shame! Let the oppressed and poor praise your name!

²² Rise up, O God! Defend your honor! Remember how fools insult you all day long!

²³ Do not disregard what your enemies say, or the unceasing shouts of those who defy you.

75 ¹ For the music director; according to the al-tashcheth style; a psalm of Asaph; a song. We give thanks to you, O God! We give thanks! You reveal your presence; people tell about your amazing deeds.

² God says, "At the appointed times, I judge fairly.

³ When the earth and all its inhabitants dissolve in fear, I make its pillars secure." (Selah)

⁴ I say to the proud, "Do not be proud," and to the wicked, "Do not be so confident of victory!

⁵ Do not be so certain you have won! Do not speak with your head held so high!

⁶ For victory does not come from the east or west, or from the wilderness.

⁷For God is the judge! He brings one down and exalts another.

⁸For the Lord holds in his hand a cup full of foaming wine mixed with spices, and pours it out. Surely all the wicked of the earth will slurp it up and drink it to its very last drop."

⁹As for me, I will continually tell what you have done; I will sing praises to the God of Jacob!

¹⁰God says, "I will bring down all the power of the wicked; the godly will be victorious."

76¹For the music director; to be accompanied by stringed instruments; a psalm of Asaph, a song. God has revealed himself in Judah; in Israel his reputation is great.

²He lives in Salem; he dwells in Zion.

³There he shattered the arrows, the shield, the sword, and the rest of the weapons of war. (Selah)

⁴You shine brightly and reveal your majesty, as you descend from the hills where you killed your prey.

⁵The bravehearted were plundered; they "fell asleep." All the warriors were helpless.

⁶At the sound of your battle cry, O God of Jacob, both rider and horse “fell asleep.”

⁷You are awesome! Yes, you! Who can withstand your intense anger?

⁸From heaven you announced what their punishment would be. The earth was afraid and silent

⁹when God arose to execute judgment, and to deliver all the oppressed of the earth. (Selah)

¹⁰Certainly your angry judgment upon men will bring you praise; you reveal your anger in full measure.

¹¹Make vows to the Lord your God and repay them! Let all those who surround him bring tribute to the awesome one!

¹²He humbles princes; the kings of the earth regard him as awesome.

77 ¹For the music director, Jeduthun; a psalm of Asaph. I will cry out to God and call for help! I will cry out to God and he will pay attention to me.

²In my time of trouble I sought the Lord. I kept my hand raised in prayer throughout the night. I refused to be comforted.

³I said, "I will remember God while I groan; I will think about him while my strength leaves me." (Selah)

⁴You held my eyelids open; I was troubled and could not speak.

⁵I thought about the days of old, about ancient times.

⁶I said, "During the night I will remember the song I once sang; I will think very carefully." I tried to make sense of what was happening.

⁷I asked, "Will the Lord reject me forever? Will he never again show me his favor?"

⁸Has his loyal love disappeared forever? Has his promise failed forever?

⁹Has God forgotten to be merciful? Has his anger stifled his compassion?"

¹⁰Then I said, "I am sickened by the thought that the sovereign One might become inactive.

¹¹I will remember the works of the Lord. Yes, I will remember the amazing things you did long ago!

¹²I will think about all you have done; I will reflect upon your deeds!"

¹³O God, your deeds are extraordinary! What god can compare to our great God?

¹⁴You are the God who does amazing things; you have revealed your strength among the nations.

¹⁵You delivered your people by your strength – the children of Jacob and Joseph. (Selah)

¹⁶The waters saw you, O God, the waters saw you and trembled. Yes, the depths of the sea shook with fear.

¹⁷The clouds poured down rain; the skies thundered. Yes, your arrows flashed about.

¹⁸Your thunderous voice was heard in the wind; the lightning bolts lit up the world; the earth trembled and shook.

¹⁹You walked through the sea; you passed through the surging waters, but left no footprints.

²⁰You led your people like a flock of sheep, by the hand of Moses and Aaron.

78¹A well-written song by Asaph.
Pay attention, my people, to my instruction! Listen to the words I speak!

²I will sing a song that imparts wisdom; I will make insightful observations about the past.

³What we have heard and learned – that which our ancestors have told us –

⁴we will not hide from their descendants. We will tell the next generation about the Lord's praiseworthy acts, about his strength and the amazing things he has done.

⁵He established a rule in Jacob; he set up a law in Israel. He commanded our ancestors to make his deeds known to their descendants,

⁶so that the next generation, children yet to be born, might know about them. They will grow up and tell their descendants about them.

⁷Then they will place their confidence in God. They will not forget the works of God, and they will obey his commands.

⁸Then they will not be like their ancestors, who were a stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation that was not committed and faithful to God.

⁹The Ephraimites were armed with bows, but they retreated in the day of battle.

¹⁰They did not keep their covenant with God, and they refused to obey his law.

¹¹They forgot what he had done, the amazing things he had shown them.

¹²He did amazing things in the sight of their ancestors, in the land of Egypt, in the region of Zoan.

¹³He divided the sea and led them across it; he made the water stand in a heap.

¹⁴He led them with a cloud by day, and with the light of a fire all night long.

¹⁵He broke open rocks in the wilderness, and gave them enough water to fill the depths of the sea.

¹⁶He caused streams to flow from the rock, and made the water flow like rivers.

¹⁷Yet they continued to sin against him, and rebelled against the sovereign One in the desert.

¹⁸They willfully challenged God by asking for food to satisfy their appetite.

¹⁹They insulted God, saying, "Is God really able to give us food in the wilderness?"

²⁰Yes, he struck a rock and water flowed out, streams gushed forth. But can he also give us food? Will he provide meat for his people?"

²¹ When the Lord heard this, he was furious. A fire broke out against Jacob, and his anger flared up against Israel,

²² because they did not have faith in God, and did not trust his ability to deliver them.

²³ He gave a command to the clouds above, and opened the doors in the sky.

²⁴ He rained down manna for them to eat; he gave them the grain of heaven.

²⁵ Man ate the food of the mighty ones. He sent them more than enough to eat.

²⁶ He brought the east wind through the sky, and by his strength led forth the south wind.

²⁷ He rained down meat on them like dust, birds as numerous as the sand on the seashores.

²⁸ He caused them to fall right in the middle of their camp, all around their homes.

²⁹ They ate until they were stuffed; he gave them what they desired.

³⁰ They were not yet filled up, their food was still in their mouths,

³¹ when the anger of God flared up against them. He killed some of the

strongest of them; he brought the young men of Israel to their knees.

³² Despite all this, they continued to sin, and did not trust him to do amazing things.

³³ So he caused them to die unsatisfied and filled with terror.

³⁴ When he struck them down, they sought his favor; they turned back and longed for God.

³⁵ They remembered that God was their protector, and that the sovereign God was their deliverer.

³⁶ But they deceived him with their words, and lied to him.

³⁷ They were not really committed to him, and they were unfaithful to his covenant.

³⁸ Yet he is compassionate. He forgives sin and does not destroy. He often holds back his anger, and does not stir up his fury.

³⁹ He remembered that they were made of flesh, and were like a wind that blows past and does not return.

⁴⁰ How often they rebelled against him in the wilderness, and insulted him in the desert!

⁴¹ They again challenged God, and offended the Holy One of Israel.

⁴² They did not remember what he had done, how he delivered them from the enemy,

⁴³ when he performed his awesome deeds in Egypt, and his acts of judgment in the region of Zoan.

⁴⁴ He turned their rivers into blood, and they could not drink from their streams.

⁴⁵ He sent swarms of biting insects against them, as well as frogs that overran their land.

⁴⁶ He gave their crops to the grasshopper, the fruit of their labor to the locust.

⁴⁷ He destroyed their vines with hail, and their sycamore-fig trees with driving rain.

⁴⁸ He rained hail down on their cattle, and hurled lightning bolts down on their livestock.

⁴⁹ His raging anger lashed out against them, He sent fury, rage, and trouble as messengers who bring disaster.

⁵⁰ He sent his anger in full force; he did not spare them from death; he handed their lives over to destruction.

⁵¹ He struck down all the firstborn in Egypt, the firstfruits of their reproductive power in the tents of Ham.

⁵² Yet he brought out his people like sheep; he led them through the wilderness like a flock.

⁵³ He guided them safely along, while the sea covered their enemies.

⁵⁴ He brought them to the border of his holy land, to this mountainous land which his right hand acquired.

⁵⁵ He drove the nations out from before them; he assigned them their tribal allotments and allowed the tribes of Israel to settle down.

⁵⁶ Yet they challenged and defied the sovereign God, and did not obey his commands.

⁵⁷ They were unfaithful and acted as treacherously as their ancestors; they were as unreliable as a malfunctioning bow.

⁵⁸ They made him angry with their pagan shrines, and made him jealous with their idols.

⁵⁹ God heard and was angry; he completely rejected Israel.

⁶⁰He abandoned the sanctuary at Shiloh, the tent where he lived among men.

⁶¹He allowed the symbol of his strong presence to be captured; he gave the symbol of his splendor into the hand of the enemy.

⁶²He delivered his people over to the sword, and was angry with his chosen nation.

⁶³Fire consumed their young men, and their virgins remained unmarried.

⁶⁴Their priests fell by the sword, but their widows did not weep.

⁶⁵But then the Lord awoke from his sleep; he was like a warrior in a drunken rage.

⁶⁶He drove his enemies back; he made them a permanent target for insults.

⁶⁷He rejected the tent of Joseph; he did not choose the tribe of Ephraim.

⁶⁸He chose the tribe of Judah, and Mount Zion, which he loves.

⁶⁹He made his sanctuary as enduring as the heavens above; as secure as the earth, which he established permanently.

⁷⁰He chose David, his servant, and took him from the sheepfolds.

⁷¹ He took him away from following the mother sheep, and made him the shepherd of Jacob, his people, and of Israel, his chosen nation.

⁷² David cared for them with pure motives; he led them with skill.

79¹ A psalm of Asaph. O God, foreigners have invaded your chosen land; they have polluted your holy temple and turned Jerusalem into a heap of ruins.

² They have given the corpses of your servants to the birds of the sky; the flesh of your loyal followers to the beasts of the earth.

³ They have made their blood flow like water all around Jerusalem, and there is no one to bury them.

⁴ We have become an object of disdain to our neighbors; those who live on our borders taunt and insult us.

⁵ How long will this go on, O Lord? Will you stay angry forever? How long will your rage burn like fire?

⁶ Pour out your anger on the nations that do not acknowledge you, on the kingdoms that do not pray to you!

⁷ For they have devoured Jacob and destroyed his home.

⁸ Do not hold us accountable for the sins of earlier generations! Quickly send your compassion our way, for we are in serious trouble!

⁹ Help us, O God, our deliverer! For the sake of your glorious reputation, rescue us! Forgive our sins for the sake of your reputation!

¹⁰ Why should the nations say, "Where is their God?" Before our very eyes may the shed blood of your servants be avenged among the nations!

¹¹ Listen to the painful cries of the prisoners! Use your great strength to set free those condemned to die!

¹² Pay back our neighbors in full! May they be insulted the same way they insulted you, O Lord!

¹³ Then we, your people, the sheep of your pasture, will continually thank you. We will tell coming generations of your praiseworthy acts.

80¹ For the music director; according to the shushan-eduth style; a psalm of Asaph. O shepherd of Israel, pay attention, you who lead Joseph like

a flock of sheep! You who sit enthroned above the winged angels, reveal your splendor!

²In the sight of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh reveal your power! Come and deliver us!

³O God, restore us! Smile on us! Then we will be delivered!

⁴O Lord God, invincible warrior! How long will you remain angry at your people while they pray to you?

⁵You have given them tears as food; you have made them drink tears by the measure.

⁶You have made our neighbors dislike us, and our enemies insult us.

⁷O God, invincible warrior, restore us! Smile on us! Then we will be delivered!

⁸You uprooted a vine from Egypt; you drove out nations and transplanted it.

⁹You cleared the ground for it; it took root, and filled the land.

¹⁰The mountains were covered by its shadow, the highest cedars by its branches.

¹¹Its branches reached the Mediterranean Sea, and its shoots the Euphrates River.

¹²Why did you break down its walls, so that all who pass by pluck its fruit?

¹³The wild boars of the forest ruin it; the insects of the field feed on it.

¹⁴O God, invincible warrior, come back! Look down from heaven and take notice! Take care of this vine,

¹⁵the root your right hand planted, the shoot you made to grow!

¹⁶It is burned and cut down. They die because you are displeased with them.

¹⁷May you give support to the one you have chosen, to the one whom you raised up for yourself!

¹⁸Then we will not turn away from you. Revive us and we will pray to you!

¹⁹O Lord God, invincible warrior, restore us! Smile on us! Then we will be delivered!

81 ¹For the music director; according to the gittith style; by Asaph. Shout for joy to God, our source of strength! Shout out to the God of Jacob!

²Sing a song and play the tambourine, the pleasant sounding harp, and the ten-stringed instrument!

³Sound the ram's horn on the day of the new moon, and on the day of the full moon when our festival begins.

⁴For observing the festival is a requirement for Israel; it is an ordinance given by the God of Jacob.

⁵He decreed it as a regulation in Joseph, when he attacked the land of Egypt. I heard a voice I did not recognize.

⁶It said: "I removed the burden from his shoulder; his hands were released from holding the basket.

⁷In your distress you called out and I rescued you. I answered you from a dark thundercloud. I tested you at the waters of Meribah. (Selah)

⁸I said, 'Listen, my people! I will warn you! O Israel, if only you would obey me!

⁹There must be no other god among you. You must not worship a foreign god.

¹⁰I am the Lord, your God, the one who brought you out of the land of Egypt. Open your mouth wide and I will fill it!

¹¹But my people did not obey me; Israel did not submit to me.

¹²I gave them over to their stubborn desires; they did what seemed right to them.

¹³If only my people would obey me! If only Israel would keep my commands!

¹⁴Then I would quickly subdue their enemies, and attack their adversaries."

¹⁵(May those who hate the Lord cover in fear before him! May they be permanently humiliated!)

¹⁶"I would feed Israel the best wheat, and would satisfy your appetite with honey from the rocky cliffs."

82 ¹A psalm of Asaph. God stands in the assembly of El; in the midst of the gods he renders judgment.

²He says, "How long will you make unjust legal decisions and show favoritism to the wicked? (Selah)

³Defend the cause of the poor and the fatherless! Vindicate the oppressed and suffering!

⁴Rescue the poor and needy! Deliver them from the power of the wicked!

⁵They neither know nor understand. They stumble around in the dark, while all the foundations of the earth crumble.

⁶I thought, 'You are gods; all of you are sons of the Most High.'

⁷Yet you will die like mortals; you will fall like all the other rulers."

⁸Rise up, O God, and execute judgment on the earth! For you own all the nations.

83 ¹A song, a psalm of Asaph. O God, do not be silent! Do not ignore us! Do not be inactive, O God!

²For look, your enemies are making a commotion; those who hate you are hostile.

³They carefully plot against your people, and make plans to harm the ones you cherish.

⁴They say, "Come on, let's annihilate them so they are no longer a nation! Then the name of Israel will be remembered no more."

⁵Yes, they devise a unified strategy; they form an alliance against you.

⁶It includes the tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites, Moab and the Hagrites,

⁷Gebal, Ammon, and Amalek, Philistia and the inhabitants of Tyre.

⁸Even Assyria has allied with them, lending its strength to the descendants of Lot. (Selah)

⁹Do to them as you did to Midian – as you did to Sisera and Jabin at the Kishon River!

¹⁰They were destroyed at Endor; their corpses were like manure on the ground.

¹¹Make their nobles like Oreb and Zeeb, and all their rulers like Zebah and Zalmunna,

¹²who said, “Let’s take over the pastures of God!”

¹³O my God, make them like dead thistles, like dead weeds blown away by the wind!

¹⁴Like the fire that burns down the forest, or the flames that consume the mountainsides,

¹⁵chase them with your gale winds, and terrify them with your windstorm.

¹⁶Cover their faces with shame, so they might seek you, O Lord.

¹⁷May they be humiliated and continually terrified! May they die in shame!

¹⁸Then they will know that you alone are the Lord, the sovereign king over all the earth.

84¹ For the music director; according to the gittith style; written by the

Korahites, a psalm. How lovely is the place where you live, O Lord who rules over all!

²I desperately want to be in the courts of the Lord's temple. My heart and my entire being shout for joy to the living God.

³Even the birds find a home there, and the swallow builds a nest, where she can protect her young near your altars, O Lord who rules over all, my king and my God.

⁴How blessed are those who live in your temple and praise you continually! (Selah)

⁵How blessed are those who find their strength in you, and long to travel the roads that lead to your temple!

⁶As they pass through the Baca Valley, he provides a spring for them. The rain even covers it with pools of water.

⁷They are sustained as they travel along; each one appears before God in Zion.

⁸O Lord, sovereign God, hear my prayer! Listen, O God of Jacob! (Selah)

⁹O God, take notice of our shield! Show concern for your chosen king!

¹⁰Certainly spending just one day in your temple courts is better than spending a thousand elsewhere. I would rather stand at the entrance to the temple of my God than live in the tents of the wicked.

¹¹For the Lord God is our sovereign protector. The Lord bestows favor and honor; he withholds no good thing from those who have integrity.

¹²O Lord who rules over all, how blessed are those who trust in you!

85 ¹For the music director; written by the Korahites, a psalm. O Lord, you showed favor to your land; you restored the well-being of Jacob.

²You pardoned the wrongdoing of your people; you forgave all their sin. (Selah)

³You withdrew all your fury; you turned back from your raging anger.

⁴Restore us, O God our deliverer! Do not be displeased with us!

⁵Will you stay mad at us forever? Will you remain angry throughout future generations?

⁶Will you not revive us once more? Then your people will rejoice in you!

⁷O Lord, show us your loyal love!
Bestow on us your deliverance!

⁸I will listen to what God the Lord says.
For he will make peace with his people,
his faithful followers. Yet they must not
return to their foolish ways.

⁹Certainly his loyal followers will soon
experience his deliverance; then his
splendor will again appear in our land.

¹⁰Loyal love and faithfulness meet;
deliverance and peace greet each other
with a kiss.

¹¹Faithfulness grows from the ground,
and deliverance looks down from the
sky.

¹²Yes, the Lord will bestow his good
blessings, and our land will yield its
crops.

¹³Deliverance goes before him, and
prepares a pathway for him.

86 ¹A prayer of David. Listen O Lord!
Answer me! For I am oppressed
and needy.

²Protect me, for I am loyal! O my God,
deliver your servant, who trusts in you!

³Have mercy on me, O Lord, for I cry
out to you all day long!

⁴ Make your servant glad, for to you, O Lord, I pray!

⁵ Certainly O Lord, you are kind and forgiving, and show great faithfulness to all who cry out to you.

⁶ O Lord, hear my prayer! Pay attention to my plea for mercy!

⁷ In my time of trouble I cry out to you, for you will answer me.

⁸ None can compare to you among the gods, O Lord! Your exploits are incomparable!

⁹ All the nations, whom you created, will come and worship you, O Lord. They will honor your name.

¹⁰ For you are great and do amazing things. You alone are God.

¹¹ O Lord, teach me how you want me to live! Then I will obey your commands. Make me wholeheartedly committed to you!

¹² O Lord, my God, I will give you thanks with my whole heart! I will honor your name continually!

¹³ For you will extend your great loyal love to me, and will deliver my life from the depths of Sheol.

¹⁴ O God, arrogant men attack me; a gang of ruthless men, who do not respect you, seek my life.

¹⁵ But you, O Lord, are a compassionate and merciful God. You are patient and demonstrate great loyal love and faithfulness.

¹⁶ Turn toward me and have mercy on me! Give your servant your strength! Deliver your slave!

¹⁷ Show me evidence of your favor! Then those who hate me will see it and be ashamed, for you, O Lord, will help me and comfort me.

87 ¹ Written by the Korahites; a psalm, a song. The Lord's city is in the holy hills.

² The Lord loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwelling places of Jacob.

³ People say wonderful things about you, O city of God. (Selah)

⁴ I mention Rahab and Babylon to my followers. Here are Philistia and Tyre, along with Ethiopia. It is said of them, "This one was born there."

⁵ But it is said of Zion's residents, "Each one of these was born in her, and the sovereign One makes her secure."

⁶The Lord writes in the census book of the nations, "This one was born there."
(Selah)

⁷As for the singers, as well as the pipers – all of them sing within your walls.

88¹ A song, a psalm written by the Korahites; for the music director; according to the machalath-leannoth style; a well-written song by Heman the Ezrachite. O Lord God who delivers me! By day I cry out and at night I pray before you.

²Listen to my prayer! Pay attention to my cry for help!

³For my life is filled with troubles and I am ready to enter Sheol.

⁴They treat me like those who descend into the grave. I am like a helpless man,

⁵adrift among the dead, like corpses lying in the grave, whom you remember no more, and who are cut off from your power.

⁶You place me in the lowest regions of the pit, in the dark places, in the watery depths.

⁷Your anger bears down on me, and you overwhelm me with all your waves. (Selah)

⁸You cause those who know me to keep their distance; you make me an appalling sight to them. I am trapped and cannot get free.

⁹My eyes grow weak because of oppression. I call out to you, O Lord, all day long; I spread out my hands in prayer to you.

¹⁰Do you accomplish amazing things for the dead? Do the departed spirits rise up and give you thanks? (Selah)

¹¹Is your loyal love proclaimed in the grave, or your faithfulness in the place of the dead?

¹²Are your amazing deeds experienced in the dark region, or your deliverance in the land of oblivion?

¹³As for me, I cry out to you, O Lord; in the morning my prayer confronts you.

¹⁴O Lord, why do you reject me, and pay no attention to me?

¹⁵I am oppressed and have been on the verge of death since my youth. I have been subjected to your horrors and am numb with pain.

¹⁶Your anger overwhelms me; your terrors destroy me.

¹⁷They surround me like water all day long; they join forces and encircle me.

¹⁸You cause my friends and neighbors to keep their distance; those who know me leave me alone in the darkness.

89¹ A well-written song by Ethan the Ezrachite. I will sing continually about the Lord's faithful deeds; to future generations I will proclaim your faithfulness.

²For I say, "Loyal love is permanently established; in the skies you set up your faithfulness."

³The Lord said, "I have made a covenant with my chosen one; I have made a promise on oath to David, my servant:

⁴"I will give you an eternal dynasty and establish your throne throughout future generations.'" (Selah)

⁵O Lord, the heavens praise your amazing deeds, as well as your faithfulness in the angelic assembly.

⁶For who in the skies can compare to the Lord? Who is like the Lord among the heavenly beings,

⁷ a God who is honored in the great angelic assembly, and more awesome than all who surround him?

⁸ O Lord, sovereign God! Who is strong like you, O Lord? Your faithfulness surrounds you.

⁹ You rule over the proud sea. When its waves surge, you calm them.

¹⁰ You crushed the Proud One and killed it; with your strong arm you scattered your enemies.

¹¹ The heavens belong to you, as does the earth. You made the world and all it contains.

¹² You created the north and the south. Tabor and Hermon rejoice in your name.

¹³ Your arm is powerful, your hand strong, your right hand victorious.

¹⁴ Equity and justice are the foundation of your throne. Loyal love and faithfulness characterize your rule.

¹⁵ How blessed are the people who worship you! O Lord, they experience your favor.

¹⁶ They rejoice in your name all day long, and are vindicated by your justice.

¹⁷ For you give them splendor and strength. By your favor we are victorious.

¹⁸For our shield belongs to the Lord,
our king to the Holy One of Israel.

¹⁹Then you spoke through a vision to
your faithful followers and said: "I have
energized a warrior; I have raised up a
young man from the people.

²⁰I have discovered David, my servant.
With my holy oil I have anointed him as
king.

²¹My hand will support him, and my
arm will strengthen him.

²²No enemy will be able to exact tribute
from him; a violent oppressor will not be
able to humiliate him.

²³I will crush his enemies before him; I
will strike down those who hate him.

²⁴He will experience my faithfulness
and loyal love, and by my name he will
win victories.

²⁵I will place his hand over the sea, his
right hand over the rivers.

²⁶He will call out to me, 'You are my
father, my God, and the protector who
delivers me.'

²⁷I will appoint him to be my firstborn
son, the most exalted of the earth's
kings.

²⁸I will always extend my loyal love to him, and my covenant with him is secure.

²⁹I will give him an eternal dynasty, and make his throne as enduring as the skies above.

³⁰If his sons reject my law and disobey my regulations,

³¹if they break my rules and do not keep my commandments,

³²I will punish their rebellion by beating them with a club, their sin by inflicting them with bruises.

³³But I will not remove my loyal love from him, nor be unfaithful to my promise.

³⁴I will not break my covenant or go back on what I promised.

³⁵Once and for all I have vowed by my own holiness, I will never deceive David.

³⁶His dynasty will last forever. His throne will endure before me, like the sun,

³⁷it will remain stable, like the moon, his throne will endure like the skies."
(Selah)

³⁸ But you have spurned and rejected him; you are angry with your chosen king.

³⁹ You have repudiated your covenant with your servant; you have thrown his crown to the ground.

⁴⁰ You have broken down all his walls; you have made his strongholds a heap of ruins.

⁴¹ All who pass by have robbed him; he has become an object of disdain to his neighbors.

⁴² You have allowed his adversaries to be victorious, and all his enemies to rejoice.

⁴³ You turn back his sword from the adversary, and have not sustained him in battle.

⁴⁴ You have brought to an end his splendor, and have knocked his throne to the ground.

⁴⁵ You have cut short his youth, and have covered him with shame. (Selah)

⁴⁶ How long, O Lord, will this last? Will you remain hidden forever? Will your anger continue to burn like fire?

⁴⁷ Take note of my brief lifespan! Why do you make all people so mortal?

⁴⁸No man can live on without experiencing death, or deliver his life from the power of Sheol. (Selah)

⁴⁹Where are your earlier faithful deeds, O Lord, the ones performed in accordance with your reliable oath to David?

⁵⁰Take note, O Lord, of the way your servants are taunted, and of how I must bear so many insults from people!

⁵¹Your enemies, O Lord, hurl insults; they insult your chosen king as they dog his footsteps.

⁵²The Lord deserves praise forevermore! We agree! We agree!

90¹A prayer of Moses, the man of God. O Lord, you have been our protector through all generations!

²Even before the mountains came into existence, or you brought the world into being, you were the eternal God.

³You make mankind return to the dust, and say, "Return, O people!"

⁴Yes, in your eyes a thousand years are like yesterday that quickly passes, or like one of the divisions of the nighttime.

⁵You bring their lives to an end and they “fall asleep.” In the morning they are like the grass that sprouts up;

⁶in the morning it glistens and sprouts up; at evening time it withers and dries up.

⁷Yes, we are consumed by your anger; we are terrified by your wrath.

⁸You are aware of our sins; you even know about our hidden sins.

⁹Yes, throughout all our days we experience your raging fury; the years of our lives pass quickly, like a sigh.

¹⁰The days of our lives add up to seventy years, or eighty, if one is especially strong. But even one’s best years are marred by trouble and oppression. Yes, they pass quickly and we fly away.

¹¹Who can really fathom the intensity of your anger? Your raging fury causes people to fear you.

¹²So teach us to consider our mortality, so that we might live wisely.

¹³Turn back toward us, O Lord! How long must this suffering last? Have pity on your servants!

¹⁴ Satisfy us in the morning with your loyal love! Then we will shout for joy and be happy all our days!

¹⁵ Make us happy in proportion to the days you have afflicted us, in proportion to the years we have experienced trouble!

¹⁶ May your servants see your work! May their sons see your majesty!

¹⁷ May our sovereign God extend his favor to us! Make our endeavors successful! Yes, make them successful!

91 ¹ As for you, the one who lives in the shelter of the sovereign One, and resides in the protective shadow of the mighty king –

² I say this about the Lord, my shelter and my stronghold, my God in whom I trust –

³ he will certainly rescue you from the snare of the hunter and from the destructive plague.

⁴ He will shelter you with his wings; you will find safety under his wings. His faithfulness is like a shield or a protective wall.

⁵ You need not fear the terrors of the night, the arrow that flies by day,

⁶ the plague that comes in the darkness,
or the disease that comes at noon.

⁷ Though a thousand may fall beside
you, and a multitude on your right side,
it will not reach you.

⁸ Certainly you will see it with your very
own eyes – you will see the wicked paid
back.

⁹ For you have taken refuge in the Lord,
my shelter, the sovereign One.

¹⁰ No harm will overtake you; no illness
will come near your home.

¹¹ For he will order his angels to protect
you in all you do.

¹² They will lift you up in their hands, so
you will not slip and fall on a stone.

¹³ You will subdue a lion and a snake;
you will trample underfoot a young lion
and a serpent.

¹⁴ The Lord says, “Because he is
devoted to me, I will deliver him; I will
protect him because he is loyal to me.

¹⁵ When he calls out to me, I will answer
him. I will be with him when he is in
trouble; I will rescue him and bring him
honor.

¹⁶ I will satisfy him with long life, and
will let him see my salvation.

92¹ A psalm; a song for the Sabbath day. It is fitting to thank the Lord, and to sing praises to your name, O sovereign One!

² It is fitting to proclaim your loyal love in the morning, and your faithfulness during the night,

³ to the accompaniment of a ten-stringed instrument and a lyre, to the accompaniment of the meditative tone of the harp.

⁴ For you, O Lord, have made me happy by your work. I will sing for joy because of what you have done.

⁵ How great are your works, O Lord! Your plans are very intricate!

⁶ The spiritually insensitive do not recognize this; the fool does not understand this.

⁷ When the wicked sprout up like grass, and all the evildoers glisten, it is so that they may be annihilated.

⁸ But you, O Lord, reign forever!

⁹ Indeed, look at your enemies, O Lord! Indeed, look at how your enemies perish! All the evildoers are scattered!

¹⁰ You exalt my horn like that of a wild ox. I am covered with fresh oil.

¹¹ I gloat in triumph over those who tried to ambush me; I hear the defeated cries of the evil foes who attacked me.

¹² The godly grow like a palm tree; they grow high like a cedar in Lebanon.

¹³ Planted in the Lord's house, they grow in the courts of our God.

¹⁴ They bear fruit even when they are old; they are filled with vitality and have many leaves.

¹⁵ So they proclaim that the Lord, my protector, is just and never unfair.

93 ¹ The Lord reigns! He is robed in majesty, the Lord is robed, he wears strength around his waist. Indeed, the world is established, it cannot be moved.

² Your throne has been secure from ancient times; you have always been king.

³ The waves roar, O Lord, the waves roar, the waves roar and crash.

⁴ Above the sound of the surging water, and the mighty waves of the sea, the Lord sits enthroned in majesty.

⁵ The rules you set down are completely reliable. Holiness aptly adorns your house, O Lord, forever.

94¹ O Lord, the God who avenges!
O God who avenges, reveal your
splendor!

² Rise up, O judge of the earth! Pay
back the proud!

³ O Lord, how long will the wicked, how
long will the wicked celebrate?

⁴ They spew out threats and speak
defiantly; all the evildoers boast.

⁵ O Lord, they crush your people; they
oppress the nation that belongs to you.

⁶ They kill the widow and the one
residing outside his native land, and they
murder the fatherless.

⁷ Then they say, "The Lord does not
see this; the God of Jacob does not take
notice of it."

⁸ Take notice of this, you ignorant
people! You fools, when will you ever
understand?

⁹ Does the one who makes the human
ear not hear? Does the one who forms
the human eye not see?

¹⁰ Does the one who disciplines the
nations not punish? He is the one who
imparts knowledge to human beings!

¹¹ The Lord knows that peoples'
thoughts are morally bankrupt.

¹²How blessed is the one whom you instruct, O Lord, the one whom you teach from your law,

¹³in order to protect him from times of trouble, until the wicked are destroyed.

¹⁴Certainly the Lord does not forsake his people; he does not abandon the nation that belongs to him.

¹⁵For justice will prevail, and all the morally upright will be vindicated.

¹⁶Who will rise up to defend me against the wicked? Who will stand up for me against the evildoers?

¹⁷If the Lord had not helped me, I would have laid down in the silence of death.

¹⁸If I say, "My foot is slipping," your loyal love, O Lord, supports me.

¹⁹When worries threaten to overwhelm me, your soothing touch makes me happy.

²⁰Cruel rulers are not your allies, those who make oppressive laws.

²¹They conspire against the blameless, and condemn to death the innocent.

²²But the Lord will protect me, and my God will shelter me.

²³ He will pay them back for their sin. He will destroy them because of their evil; the Lord our God will destroy them.

95 ¹ Come! Let's sing for joy to the Lord! Let's shout out praises to our protector who delivers us!

² Let's enter his presence with thanksgiving! Let's shout out to him in celebration!

³ For the Lord is a great God, a great king who is superior to all gods.

⁴ The depths of the earth are in his hand, and the mountain peaks belong to him.

⁵ The sea is his, for he made it. His hands formed the dry land.

⁶ Come! Let's bow down and worship! Let's kneel before the Lord, our creator!

⁷ For he is our God; we are the people of his pasture, the sheep he owns. Today, if only you would obey him!

⁸ He says, "Do not be stubborn like they were at Meribah, like they were that day at Massah in the wilderness,

⁹ where your ancestors challenged my authority, and tried my patience, even though they had seen my work.

¹⁰For forty years I was continually disgusted with that generation, and I said, 'These people desire to go astray; they do not obey my commands.'

¹¹So I made a vow in my anger, 'They will never enter into the resting place I had set aside for them.'"

96 ¹Sing to the Lord a new song!
Sing to the Lord, all the earth!

²Sing to the Lord! Praise his name!
Announce every day how he delivers!

³Tell the nations about his splendor!
Tell all the nations about his amazing
deeds!

⁴For the Lord is great and certainly
worthy of praise; he is more awesome
than all gods.

⁵For all the gods of the nations are
worthless, but the Lord made the sky.

⁶Majestic splendor emanates from him;
his sanctuary is firmly established and
beautiful.

⁷Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the
nations, ascribe to the Lord splendor and
strength!

⁸Ascribe to the Lord the splendor he
deserves! Bring an offering and enter his
courts!

⁹Worship the Lord in holy attire!
Tremble before him, all the earth!

¹⁰Say among the nations, "The Lord reigns! The world is established, it cannot be moved. He judges the nations fairly."

¹¹Let the sky rejoice, and the earth be happy! Let the sea and everything in it shout!

¹²Let the fields and everything in them celebrate! Then let the trees of the forest shout with joy

¹³before the Lord, for he comes! For he comes to judge the earth! He judges the world fairly, and the nations in accordance with his justice.

97 ¹The Lord reigns! Let the earth be happy! Let the many coastlands rejoice!

²Dark clouds surround him; equity and justice are the foundation of his throne.

³Fire goes before him; on every side it burns up his enemies.

⁴His lightning bolts light up the world; the earth sees and trembles.

⁵The mountains melt like wax before the Lord, before the Lord of the whole earth.

⁶The sky declares his justice, and all the nations see his splendor.

⁷All who worship idols are ashamed, those who boast about worthless idols. All the gods bow down before him.

⁸Zion hears and rejoices, the towns of Judah are happy, because of your judgments, O Lord.

⁹For you, O Lord, are the sovereign king over the whole earth; you are elevated high above all gods.

¹⁰You who love the Lord, hate evil! He protects the lives of his faithful followers; he delivers them from the power of the wicked.

¹¹The godly bask in the light; the morally upright experience joy.

¹²You godly ones, rejoice in the Lord! Give thanks to his holy name.

98¹ A psalm. Sing to the Lord a new song, for he performs amazing deeds! His right hand and his mighty arm accomplish deliverance.

²The Lord demonstrates his power to deliver; in the sight of the nations he reveals his justice.

³ He remains loyal and faithful to the family of Israel. All the ends of the earth see our God deliver us.

⁴ Shout out praises to the Lord, all the earth! Break out in a joyful shout and sing!

⁵ Sing to the Lord accompanied by a harp, accompanied by a harp and the sound of music!

⁶ With trumpets and the blaring of the ram's horn, shout out praises before the king, the Lord!

⁷ Let the sea and everything in it shout, along with the world and those who live in it!

⁸ Let the rivers clap their hands! Let the mountains sing in unison

⁹ before the Lord! For he comes to judge the earth! He judges the world fairly, and the nations in a just manner.

99 ¹ The Lord reigns! The nations tremble. He sits enthroned above the winged angels; the earth shakes.

² The Lord is elevated in Zion; he is exalted over all the nations.

³ Let them praise your great and awesome name! He is holy!

⁴The king is strong; he loves justice. You ensure that legal decisions will be made fairly; you promote justice and equity in Jacob.

⁵Praise the Lord our God! Worship before his footstool! He is holy!

⁶Moses and Aaron were among his priests; Samuel was one of those who prayed to him. They prayed to the Lord and he answered them.

⁷He spoke to them from a pillar of cloud; they obeyed his regulations and the ordinance he gave them.

⁸O Lord our God, you answered them. They found you to be a forgiving God, but also one who punished their sinful deeds.

⁹Praise the Lord our God! Worship on his holy hill, for the Lord our God is holy!

100¹A thanksgiving psalm. Shout out praises to the Lord, all the earth!

²Worship the Lord with joy! Enter his presence with joyful singing!

³Acknowledge that the Lord is God! He made us and we belong to him; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture.

⁴Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give him thanks! Praise his name!

⁵For the Lord is good. His loyal love endures, and he is faithful through all generations.

101 ¹A psalm of David. I will sing about loyalty and justice! To you, O Lord, I will sing praises!

²I will walk in the way of integrity. When will you come to me? I will conduct my business with integrity in the midst of my palace.

³I will not even consider doing what is dishonest. I hate doing evil; I will have no part of it.

⁴I will have nothing to do with a perverse person; I will not permit evil.

⁵I will destroy anyone who slanders his neighbor in secret. I will not tolerate anyone who has a cocky demeanor and an arrogant attitude.

⁶I will favor the honest people of the land, and allow them to live with me. Those who walk in the way of integrity will attend me.

⁷ Deceitful people will not live in my palace. Liars will not be welcome in my presence.

⁸ Each morning I will destroy all the wicked people in the land, and remove all evildoers from the city of the Lord.

102¹ The prayer of an oppressed man, as he grows faint and pours out his lament before the Lord. O Lord, hear my prayer! Pay attention to my cry for help!

² Do not ignore me in my time of trouble! Listen to me! When I call out to you, quickly answer me!

³ For my days go up in smoke, and my bones are charred like a fireplace.

⁴ My heart is parched and withered like grass, for I am unable to eat food.

⁵ Because of the anxiety that makes me groan, my bones protrude from my skin.

⁶ I am like an owl in the wilderness; I am like a screech owl among the ruins.

⁷ I stay awake; I am like a solitary bird on a roof.

⁸ All day long my enemies taunt me; those who mock me use my name in their curses.

⁹For I eat ashes as if they were bread,
and mix my drink with my tears,

¹⁰because of your anger and raging
fury. Indeed, you pick me up and throw
me away.

¹¹My days are coming to an end, and I
am withered like grass.

¹²But you, O Lord, rule forever, and
your reputation endures.

¹³You will rise up and have compassion
on Zion. For it is time to have mercy on
her, for the appointed time has come.

¹⁴Indeed, your servants take delight in
her stones, and feel compassion for the
dust of her ruins.

¹⁵The nations will respect the reputation
of the Lord, and all the kings of the earth
will respect his splendor,

¹⁶when the Lord rebuilds Zion, and
reveals his splendor,

¹⁷when he responds to the prayer of
the destitute, and does not reject their
request.

¹⁸The account of his intervention will be
recorded for future generations; people
yet to be born will praise the Lord.

¹⁹For he will look down from his sanctuary above; from heaven the Lord will look toward earth,

²⁰in order to hear the painful cries of the prisoners, and to set free those condemned to die,

²¹so they may proclaim the name of the Lord in Zion, and praise him in Jerusalem,

²²when the nations gather together, and the kingdoms pay tribute to the Lord.

²³He has taken away my strength in the middle of life; he has cut short my days.

²⁴I say, "O my God, please do not take me away in the middle of my life! You endure through all generations.

²⁵In earlier times you established the earth; the skies are your handiwork.

²⁶They will perish, but you will endure. They will wear out like a garment; like clothes you will remove them and they will disappear.

²⁷But you remain; your years do not come to an end.

²⁸The children of your servants will settle down here, and their descendants will live securely in your presence.”

103¹ By David. Praise the Lord, O my soul! With all that is within me, praise his holy name!

² Praise the Lord, O my soul! Do not forget all his kind deeds!

³ He is the one who forgives all your sins, who heals all your diseases,

⁴ who delivers your life from the Pit, who crowns you with his loyal love and compassion,

⁵ who satisfies your life with good things, so your youth is renewed like an eagle's.

⁶ The Lord does what is fair, and executes justice for all the oppressed.

⁷ The Lord revealed his faithful acts to Moses, his deeds to the Israelites.

⁸ The Lord is compassionate and merciful; he is patient and demonstrates great loyal love.

⁹ He does not always accuse, and does not stay angry.

¹⁰ He does not deal with us as our sins deserve; he does not repay us as our misdeeds deserve.

¹¹ For as the skies are high above the earth, so his loyal love towers over his faithful followers.

¹² As far as the eastern horizon is from the west, so he removes the guilt of our rebellious actions from us.

¹³ As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on his faithful followers.

¹⁴ For he knows what we are made of; he realizes we are made of clay.

¹⁵ A person's life is like grass. Like a flower in the field it flourishes,

¹⁶ but when the hot wind blows by, it disappears, and one can no longer even spot the place where it once grew.

¹⁷ But the Lord continually shows loyal love to his faithful followers, and is faithful to their descendants,

¹⁸ to those who keep his covenant, who are careful to obey his commands.

¹⁹ The Lord has established his throne in heaven; his kingdom extends over everything.

²⁰ Praise the Lord, you angels of his, you powerful warriors who carry out his decrees and obey his orders!

²¹ Praise the Lord, all you warriors of his, you servants of his who carry out his desires!

²² Praise the Lord, all that he has made, in all the regions of his kingdom! Praise the Lord, O my soul!

104 ¹ Praise the Lord, O my soul!
O Lord my God, you are magnificent. You are robed in splendor and majesty.

² He covers himself with light as if it were a garment. He stretches out the skies like a tent curtain,

³ and lays the beams of the upper rooms of his palace on the rain clouds. He makes the clouds his chariot, and travels along on the wings of the wind.

⁴ He makes the winds his messengers, and the flaming fire his attendant.

⁵ He established the earth on its foundations; it will never be upended.

⁶ The watery deep covered it like a garment; the waters reached above the mountains.

⁷ Your shout made the waters retreat; at the sound of your thunderous voice they hurried off –

⁸as the mountains rose up, and the valleys went down – to the place you appointed for them.

⁹You set up a boundary for them that they could not cross, so that they would not cover the earth again.

¹⁰He turns springs into streams; they flow between the mountains.

¹¹They provide water for all the animals in the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst.

¹²The birds of the sky live beside them; they chirp among the bushes.

¹³He waters the mountains from the upper rooms of his palace; the earth is full of the fruit you cause to grow.

¹⁴He provides grass for the cattle, and crops for people to cultivate, so they can produce food from the ground,

¹⁵as well as wine that makes people feel so good, and so they can have oil to make their faces shine, as well as food that sustains people's lives.

¹⁶The trees of the Lord receive all the rain they need, the cedars of Lebanon which he planted,

¹⁷where the birds make nests, near the evergreens in which the herons live.

¹⁸The wild goats live in the high mountains; the rock badgers find safety in the cliffs.

¹⁹He made the moon to mark the months, and the sun sets according to a regular schedule.

²⁰You make it dark and night comes, during which all the beasts of the forest prowl around.

²¹The lions roar for prey, seeking their food from God.

²²When the sun rises, they withdraw and sleep in their dens.

²³Men then go out to do their work, and labor away until evening.

²⁴How many living things you have made, O Lord! You have exhibited great skill in making all of them; the earth is full of the living things you have made.

²⁵Over here is the deep, wide sea, which teems with innumerable swimming creatures, living things both small and large.

²⁶The ships travel there, and over here swims the whale you made to play in it.

²⁷All of your creatures wait for you to provide them with food on a regular basis.

²⁸You give food to them and they receive it; you open your hand and they are filled with food.

²⁹When you ignore them, they panic. When you take away their life's breath, they die and return to dust.

³⁰When you send your life-giving breath, they are created, and you replenish the surface of the ground.

³¹May the splendor of the Lord endure! May the Lord find pleasure in the living things he has made!

³²He looks down on the earth and it shakes; he touches the mountains and they start to smolder.

³³I will sing to the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God as long as I exist!

³⁴May my thoughts be pleasing to him! I will rejoice in the Lord.

³⁵May sinners disappear from the earth, and the wicked vanish! Praise the Lord, O my soul! Praise the Lord!

105¹ Give thanks to the Lord! Call on his name! Make known his accomplishments among the nations!

² Sing to him! Make music to him! Tell about all his miraculous deeds!

³Boast about his holy name! Let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice!

⁴Seek the Lord and the strength he gives! Seek his presence continually!

⁵Recall the miraculous deeds he performed, his mighty acts and the judgments he decreed,

⁶O children of Abraham, God's servant, you descendants of Jacob, God's chosen ones!

⁷He is the Lord our God; he carries out judgment throughout the earth.

⁸He always remembers his covenantal decree, the promise he made to a thousand generations -

⁹the promise he made to Abraham, the promise he made by oath to Isaac!

¹⁰He gave it to Jacob as a decree, to Israel as a lasting promise,

¹¹saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan as the portion of your inheritance."

¹²When they were few in number, just a very few, and resident aliens within it,

¹³they wandered from nation to nation, and from one kingdom to another.

¹⁴He let no one oppress them; he disciplined kings for their sake,

¹⁵saying, "Don't touch my chosen ones! Don't harm my prophets!"

¹⁶He called down a famine upon the earth; he cut off all the food supply.

¹⁷He sent a man ahead of them - Joseph was sold as a servant.

¹⁸The shackles hurt his feet; his neck was placed in an iron collar,

¹⁹until the time when his prediction came true. The Lord's word proved him right.

²⁰The king authorized his release; the ruler of nations set him free.

²¹He put him in charge of his palace, and made him manager of all his property,

²²giving him authority to imprison his officials and to teach his advisers.

²³Israel moved to Egypt; Jacob lived for a time in the land of Ham.

²⁴The Lord made his people very fruitful, and made them more numerous than their enemies.

²⁵He caused them to hate his people, and to mistreat his servants.

²⁶He sent his servant Moses, and Aaron, whom he had chosen.

²⁷They executed his miraculous signs among them, and his amazing deeds in the land of Ham.

²⁸He made it dark; they did not disobey his orders.

²⁹He turned their water into blood, and killed their fish.

³⁰Their land was overrun by frogs, which even got into the rooms of their kings.

³¹He ordered flies to come; gnats invaded their whole territory.

³²He sent hail along with the rain; there was lightning in their land.

³³He destroyed their vines and fig trees, and broke the trees throughout their territory.

³⁴He ordered locusts to come, innumerable grasshoppers.

³⁵They ate all the vegetation in their land, and devoured the crops of their fields.

³⁶He struck down all the firstborn in their land, the firstfruits of their reproductive power.

³⁷ He brought his people out enriched with silver and gold; none of his tribes stumbled.

³⁸ Egypt was happy when they left, for they were afraid of them.

³⁹ He spread out a cloud for a cover, and provided a fire to light up the night.

⁴⁰ They asked for food, and he sent quails; he satisfied them with food from the sky.

⁴¹ He opened up a rock and water flowed out; a river ran through dry regions.

⁴² Yes, he remembered the sacred promise he made to Abraham his servant.

⁴³ When he led his people out, they rejoiced; his chosen ones shouted with joy.

⁴⁴ He handed the territory of nations over to them, and they took possession of what other peoples had produced,

⁴⁵ so that they might keep his commands and obey his laws. Praise the Lord!

106 ¹ Praise the Lord! Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, and his loyal love endures!

²Who can adequately recount the Lord's mighty acts, or relate all his praiseworthy deeds?

³How blessed are those who promote justice, and do what is right all the time!

⁴Remember me, O Lord, when you show favor to your people! Pay attention to me, when you deliver,

⁵so I may see the prosperity of your chosen ones, rejoice along with your nation, and boast along with the people who belong to you.

⁶We have sinned like our ancestors; we have done wrong, we have done evil.

⁷Our ancestors in Egypt failed to appreciate your miraculous deeds, they failed to remember your many acts of loyal love, and they rebelled at the sea, by the Red Sea.

⁸Yet he delivered them for the sake of his reputation, that he might reveal his power.

⁹He shouted at the Red Sea and it dried up; he led them through the deep water as if it were a desert.

¹⁰He delivered them from the power of the one who hated them, and rescued them from the power of the enemy.

¹¹ The water covered their enemies; not even one of them survived.

¹² They believed his promises; they sang praises to him.

¹³ They quickly forgot what he had done; they did not wait for his instructions.

¹⁴ In the wilderness they had an insatiable craving for meat; they challenged God in the desert.

¹⁵ He granted their request, then struck them with a disease.

¹⁶ In the camp they resented Moses, and Aaron, the Lord's holy priest.

¹⁷ The earth opened up and swallowed Dathan; it engulfed the group led by Abiram.

¹⁸ Fire burned their group; the flames scorched the wicked.

¹⁹ They made an image of a calf at Horeb, and worshiped a metal idol.

²⁰ They traded their majestic God for the image of an ox that eats grass.

²¹ They rejected the God who delivered them, the one who performed great deeds in Egypt,

²² amazing feats in the land of Ham, mighty acts by the Red Sea.

²³ He threatened to destroy them, but Moses, his chosen one, interceded with him and turned back his destructive anger.

²⁴ They rejected the fruitful land; they did not believe his promise.

²⁵ They grumbled in their tents; they did not obey the Lord.

²⁶ So he made a solemn vow that he would make them die in the desert,

²⁷ make their descendants die among the nations, and scatter them among foreign lands.

²⁸ They worshiped Baal of Peor, and ate sacrifices offered to the dead.

²⁹ They made the Lord angry by their actions, and a plague broke out among them.

³⁰ Phinehas took a stand and intervened, and the plague subsided.

³¹ This brought him a reward, an eternal gift.

³² They made him angry by the waters of Meribah, and Moses suffered because of them,

³³ for they aroused his temper, and he spoke rashly.

³⁴ They did not destroy the nations, as the Lord had commanded them to do.

³⁵ They mixed in with the nations and learned their ways.

³⁶ They worshiped their idols, which became a snare to them.

³⁷ They sacrificed their sons and daughters to demons.

³⁸ They shed innocent blood – the blood of their sons and daughters, whom they sacrificed to the idols of Canaan. The land was polluted by bloodshed.

³⁹ They were defiled by their deeds, and unfaithful in their actions.

⁴⁰ So the Lord was angry with his people and despised the people who belong to him.

⁴¹ He handed them over to the nations, and those who hated them ruled over them.

⁴² Their enemies oppressed them; they were subject to their authority.

⁴³ Many times he delivered them, but they had a rebellious attitude, and degraded themselves by their sin.

⁴⁴ Yet he took notice of their distress, when he heard their cry for help.

⁴⁵ He remembered his covenant with them, and relented because of his great loyal love.

⁴⁶ He caused all their conquerors to have pity on them.

⁴⁷ Deliver us, O Lord, our God! Gather us from among the nations! Then we will give thanks to your holy name, and boast about your praiseworthy deeds.

⁴⁸ The Lord God of Israel deserves praise, in the future and forevermore. Let all the people say, "We agree! Praise the Lord!"

107 ¹ Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, and his loyal love endures!

² Let those delivered by the Lord speak out, those whom he delivered from the power of the enemy,

³ and gathered from foreign lands, from east and west, from north and south.

⁴ They wandered through the wilderness on a desert road; they found no city in which to live.

⁵ They were hungry and thirsty; they fainted from exhaustion.

⁶They cried out to the Lord in their distress; he delivered them from their troubles.

⁷He led them on a level road, that they might find a city in which to live.

⁸Let them give thanks to the Lord for his loyal love, and for the amazing things he has done for people!

⁹For he has satisfied those who thirst, and those who hunger he has filled with food.

¹⁰They sat in utter darkness, bound in painful iron chains,

¹¹because they had rebelled against God's commands, and rejected the instructions of the sovereign king.

¹²So he used suffering to humble them; they stumbled and no one helped them up.

¹³They cried out to the Lord in their distress; he delivered them from their troubles.

¹⁴He brought them out of the utter darkness, and tore off their shackles.

¹⁵Let them give thanks to the Lord for his loyal love, and for the amazing things he has done for people!

¹⁶For he shattered the bronze gates,
and hacked through the iron bars.

¹⁷They acted like fools in their rebellious
ways, and suffered because of their sins.

¹⁸They lost their appetite for all food,
and they drew near the gates of death.

¹⁹They cried out to the Lord in their
distress; he delivered them from their
troubles.

²⁰He sent them an assuring word and
healed them; he rescued them from the
pits where they were trapped.

²¹Let them give thanks to the Lord for
his loyal love, and for the amazing things
he has done for people!

²²Let them present thank offerings,
and loudly proclaim what he has done!

²³Some traveled on the sea in ships,
and carried cargo over the vast waters.

²⁴They witnessed the acts of the Lord,
his amazing feats on the deep water.

²⁵He gave the order for a windstorm,
and it stirred up the waves of the sea.

²⁶They reached up to the sky, then
dropped into the depths. The sailors'
strength left them because the danger
was so great.

²⁷ They swayed and staggered like a drunk, and all their skill proved ineffective.

²⁸ They cried out to the Lord in their distress; he delivered them from their troubles.

²⁹ He calmed the storm, and the waves grew silent.

³⁰ The sailors rejoiced because the waves grew quiet, and he led them to the harbor they desired.

³¹ Let them give thanks to the Lord for his loyal love, and for the amazing things he has done for people!

³² Let them exalt him in the assembly of the people! Let them praise him in the place where the leaders preside!

³³ He turned streams into a desert, springs of water into arid land,

³⁴ and a fruitful land into a barren place, because of the sin of its inhabitants.

³⁵ As for his people, he turned a desert into a pool of water, and a dry land into springs of water.

³⁶ He allowed the hungry to settle there, and they established a city in which to live.

³⁷ They cultivated fields, and planted vineyards, which yielded a harvest of fruit.

³⁸ He blessed them so that they became very numerous. He would not allow their cattle to decrease in number.

³⁹ As for their enemies, they decreased in number and were beaten down, because of painful distress and suffering.

⁴⁰ He would pour contempt upon princes, and he made them wander in a wasteland with no road.

⁴¹ Yet he protected the needy from oppression, and cared for his families like a flock of sheep.

⁴² When the godly see this, they rejoice, and every sinner shuts his mouth.

⁴³ Whoever is wise, let him take note of these things! Let them consider the Lord's acts of loyal love!

108¹ A song, a psalm of David. I am determined, O God! I will sing and praise you with my whole heart.

² Awake, O stringed instrument and harp! I will wake up at dawn!

³ I will give you thanks before the nations, O Lord! I will sing praises to you before foreigners!

⁴For your loyal love extends beyond the sky, and your faithfulness reaches the clouds.

⁵Rise up above the sky, O God! May your splendor cover the whole earth!

⁶Deliver by your power and answer me, so that the ones you love may be safe.

⁷God has spoken in his sanctuary: "I will triumph! I will parcel out Shechem, the valley of Succoth I will measure off.

⁸Gilead belongs to me, as does Manasseh! Ephraim is my helmet, Judah my royal scepter.

⁹Moab is my wash basin. I will make Edom serve me. I will shout in triumph over Philistia."

¹⁰Who will lead me into the fortified city? Who will bring me to Edom?

¹¹Have you not rejected us, O God? O God, you do not go into battle with our armies.

¹²Give us help against the enemy, for any help men might offer is futile.

¹³By God's power we will conquer; he will trample down our enemies.

109¹For the music director, a psalm of David. O God whom I praise, do not ignore me!

²For they say cruel and deceptive things to me; they lie to me.

³They surround me and say hateful things; they attack me for no reason.

⁴They repay my love with accusations, but I continue to pray.

⁵They repay me evil for good, and hate for love.

⁶Appoint an evil man to testify against him! May an accuser stand at his right side!

⁷When he is judged, he will be found guilty! Then his prayer will be regarded as sinful.

⁸May his days be few! May another take his job!

⁹May his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow!

¹⁰May his children roam around begging, asking for handouts as they leave their ruined home!

¹¹May the creditor seize all he owns! May strangers loot his property!

¹²May no one show him kindness! May no one have compassion on his fatherless children!

¹³ May his descendants be cut off! May the memory of them be wiped out by the time the next generation arrives!

¹⁴ May his ancestors' sins be remembered by the Lord! May his mother's sin not be forgotten!

¹⁵ May the Lord be constantly aware of them, and cut off the memory of his children from the earth!

¹⁶ For he never bothered to show kindness; he harassed the oppressed and needy, and killed the disheartened.

¹⁷ He loved to curse others, so those curses have come upon him. He had no desire to bless anyone, so he has experienced no blessings.

¹⁸ He made cursing a way of life, so curses poured into his stomach like water and seeped into his bones like oil.

¹⁹ May a curse attach itself to him, like a garment one puts on, or a belt one wears continually!

²⁰ May the Lord repay my accusers in this way, those who say evil things about me!

²¹ O sovereign Lord, intervene on my behalf for the sake of your reputation!

Because your loyal love is good, deliver me!

²²For I am oppressed and needy, and my heart beats violently within me.

²³I am fading away like a shadow at the end of the day; I am shaken off like a locust.

²⁴I am so starved my knees shake; I have turned into skin and bones.

²⁵I am disdained by them. When they see me, they shake their heads.

²⁶Help me, O Lord my God! Because you are faithful to me, deliver me!

²⁷Then they will realize this is your work, and that you, Lord, have accomplished it.

²⁸They curse, but you will bless. When they attack, they will be humiliated, but your servant will rejoice.

²⁹My accusers will be covered with shame, and draped in humiliation as if it were a robe.

³⁰I will thank the Lord profusely, in the middle of a crowd I will praise him,

³¹because he stands at the right hand of the needy, to deliver him from those who threaten his life.

110¹ A psalm of David. Here is the Lord's proclamation to my lord: "Sit down at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool!"

² The Lord extends your dominion from Zion. Rule in the midst of your enemies!

³ Your people willingly follow you when you go into battle. On the holy hills at sunrise the dew of your youth belongs to you.

⁴ The Lord makes this promise on oath and will not revoke it: "You are an eternal priest after the pattern of Melchizedek."

⁵ O sovereign Lord, at your right hand he strikes down kings in the day he unleashes his anger.

⁶ He executes judgment against the nations; he fills the valleys with corpses; he shatters their heads over the vast battlefield.

⁷ From the stream along the road he drinks; then he lifts up his head.

111¹ Praise the Lord! I will give thanks to the Lord with my whole heart, in the assembly of the godly and the congregation.

² The Lord's deeds are great, eagerly awaited by all who desire them.

³ His work is majestic and glorious, and his faithfulness endures forever.

⁴ He does amazing things that will be remembered; the Lord is merciful and compassionate.

⁵ He gives food to his faithful followers; he always remembers his covenant.

⁶ He announced that he would do mighty deeds for his people, giving them a land that belonged to other nations.

⁷ His acts are characterized by faithfulness and justice; all his precepts are reliable.

⁸ They are forever firm, and should be faithfully and properly carried out.

⁹ He delivered his people; he ordained that his covenant be observed forever. His name is holy and awesome.

¹⁰ To obey the Lord is the fundamental principle for wise living; all who carry out his precepts acquire good moral insight. He will receive praise forever.

112¹ Praise the Lord! How blessed is the one who obeys the Lord, who takes great delight in keeping his commands.

² His descendants will be powerful on the earth; the godly will be blessed.

³ His house contains wealth and riches; his integrity endures.

⁴ In the darkness a light shines for the godly, for each one who is merciful, compassionate, and just.

⁵ It goes well for the one who generously lends money, and conducts his business honestly.

⁶ For he will never be upended; others will always remember one who is just.

⁷ He does not fear bad news. He is confident; he trusts in the Lord.

⁸ His resolve is firm; he will not succumb to fear before he looks in triumph on his enemies.

⁹ He generously gives to the needy; his integrity endures. He will be vindicated and honored.

¹⁰ When the wicked see this, they will worry; they will grind their teeth in frustration and melt away; the desire of the wicked will perish.

113 ¹ Praise the Lord! Praise, you servants of the Lord, praise the name of the Lord!

² May the Lord's name be praised now and forevermore!

³From east to west the Lord's name is deserving of praise.

⁴The Lord is exalted over all the nations; his splendor reaches beyond the sky.

⁵Who can compare to the Lord our God, who sits on a high throne?

⁶He bends down to look at the sky and the earth.

⁷He raises the poor from the dirt, and lifts up the needy from the garbage pile,

⁸that he might seat him with princes, with the princes of his people.

⁹He makes the barren woman of the family a happy mother of children. Praise the Lord!

114 ¹When Israel left Egypt, when the family of Jacob left a foreign nation behind,

²Judah became his sanctuary, Israel his kingdom.

³The sea looked and fled; the Jordan River turned back.

⁴The mountains skipped like rams, the hills like lambs.

⁵Why do you flee, O sea? Why do you turn back, O Jordan River?

⁶Why do you skip like rams, O mountains, like lambs, O hills?

⁷Tremble, O earth, before the Lord – before the God of Jacob,

⁸who turned a rock into a pool of water, a hard rock into springs of water!

115¹Not to us, O Lord, not to us! But to your name bring honor, for the sake of your loyal love and faithfulness.

²Why should the nations say, “Where is their God?”

³Our God is in heaven! He does whatever he pleases!

⁴Their idols are made of silver and gold – they are man-made.

⁵They have mouths, but cannot speak, eyes, but cannot see,

⁶ears, but cannot hear, noses, but cannot smell,

⁷hands, but cannot touch, feet, but cannot walk. They cannot even clear their throats.

⁸Those who make them will end up like them, as will everyone who trusts in them.

⁹O Israel, trust in the Lord! He is their deliverer and protector.

¹⁰O family of Aaron, trust in the Lord!
He is their deliverer and protector.

¹¹You loyal followers of the Lord, trust
in the Lord! He is their deliverer and
protector.

¹²The Lord takes notice of us, he will
bless – he will bless the family of Israel,
he will bless the family of Aaron.

¹³He will bless his loyal followers, both
young and old.

¹⁴May he increase your numbers, yours
and your children's!

¹⁵May you be blessed by the Lord, the
creator of heaven and earth!

¹⁶The heavens belong to the Lord, but
the earth he has given to mankind.

¹⁷The dead do not praise the Lord, nor
do any of those who descend into the
silence of death.

¹⁸But we will praise the Lord now and
forevermore. Praise the Lord!

116 ¹I love the Lord because he
heard my plea for mercy,
²and listened to me. As long as I live, I
will call to him when I need help.

³The ropes of death tightened around
me, the snares of Sheol confronted me. I
was confronted with trouble and sorrow.

⁴I called on the name of the Lord,
“Please Lord, rescue my life!”

⁵The Lord is merciful and fair; our God
is compassionate.

⁶The Lord protects the untrained; I was
in serious trouble and he delivered me.

⁷Rest once more, my soul, for the Lord
has vindicated you.

⁸Yes, Lord, you rescued my life from
death, and kept my feet from stumbling.

⁹I will serve the Lord in the land of the
living.

¹⁰I had faith when I said, “I am severely
oppressed.”

¹¹I rashly declared, “All men are liars.”

¹²How can I repay the Lord for all his
acts of kindness to me?

¹³I will celebrate my deliverance, and
call on the name of the Lord.

¹⁴I will fulfill my vows to the Lord
before all his people.

¹⁵The Lord values the lives of his
faithful followers.

¹⁶Yes, Lord! I am indeed your servant;
I am your lowest slave. You saved me
from death.

¹⁷I will present a thank offering to you,
and call on the name of the Lord.

¹⁸I will fulfill my vows to the Lord
before all his people,

¹⁹in the courts of the Lord's temple,
in your midst, O Jerusalem. Praise the
Lord!

117 ¹Praise the Lord, all you
nations! Applaud him, all you
foreigners!

²For his loyal love towers over us, and
the Lord's faithfulness endures. Praise
the Lord!

118 ¹Give thanks to the Lord, for
he is good and his loyal love
endures!

²Let Israel say, "Yes, his loyal love
endures!"

³Let the family of Aaron say, "Yes, his
loyal love endures!"

⁴Let the loyal followers of the Lord say,
"Yes, his loyal love endures!"

⁵In my distress I cried out to the Lord.
The Lord answered me and put me in a
wide open place.

⁶The Lord is on my side, I am not
afraid! What can people do to me?

⁷The Lord is on my side as my helper. I
look in triumph on those who hate me.

⁸It is better to take shelter in the Lord than to trust in people.

⁹It is better to take shelter in the Lord than to trust in princes.

¹⁰All the nations surrounded me. Indeed, in the name of the Lord I pushed them away.

¹¹They surrounded me, yes, they surrounded me. Indeed, in the name of the Lord I pushed them away.

¹²They surrounded me like bees. But they disappeared as quickly as a fire among thorns. Indeed, in the name of the Lord I pushed them away.

¹³"You aggressively attacked me and tried to knock me down, but the Lord helped me.

¹⁴The Lord gives me strength and protects me; he has become my deliverer."

¹⁵They celebrate deliverance in the tents of the godly. The Lord's right hand conquers,

¹⁶the Lord's right hand gives victory, the Lord's right hand conquers.

¹⁷I will not die, but live, and I will proclaim what the Lord has done.

¹⁸The Lord severely punished me, but he did not hand me over to death.

¹⁹Open for me the gates of the just king's temple! I will enter through them and give thanks to the Lord.

²⁰This is the Lord's gate - the godly enter through it.

²¹I will give you thanks, for you answered me, and have become my deliverer.

²²The stone which the builders discarded has become the cornerstone.

²³This is the Lord's work. We consider it amazing!

²⁴This is the day the Lord has brought about. We will be happy and rejoice in it.

²⁵Please Lord, deliver! Please Lord, grant us success!

²⁶May the one who comes in the name of the Lord be blessed! We will pronounce blessings on you in the Lord's temple.

²⁷The Lord is God and he has delivered us. Tie the offering with ropes to the horns of the altar!

²⁸You are my God and I will give you thanks! You are my God and I will praise you!

²⁹ Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good and his loyal love endures!

119¹ (Alef) How blessed are those whose actions are blameless, who obey the law of the Lord.

² How blessed are those who observe his rules, and seek him with all their heart,

³ who, moreover, do no wrong, but follow in his footsteps.

⁴ You demand that your precepts be carefully kept.

⁵ If only I were predisposed to keep your statutes!

⁶ Then I would not be ashamed, if I were focused on all your commands.

⁷ I will give you sincere thanks, when I learn your just regulations.

⁸ I will keep your statutes. Do not completely abandon me!

⁹ (Bet) How can a young person maintain a pure life? By guarding it according to your instructions!

¹⁰ With all my heart I seek you. Do not allow me to stray from your commands!

¹¹ In my heart I store up your words, so I might not sin against you.

¹²You deserve praise, O Lord! Teach me your statutes!

¹³With my lips I proclaim all the regulations you have revealed.

¹⁴I rejoice in the lifestyle prescribed by your rules as if they were riches of all kinds.

¹⁵I will meditate on your precepts and focus on your behavior.

¹⁶I find delight in your statutes; I do not forget your instructions.

¹⁷ (Gimel) Be kind to your servant! Then I will live and keep your instructions.

¹⁸Open my eyes so I can truly see the marvelous things in your law!

¹⁹I am like a foreigner in this land. Do not hide your commands from me!

²⁰I desperately long to know your regulations at all times.

²¹You reprimand arrogant people. Those who stray from your commands are doomed.

²²Spare me shame and humiliation, for I observe your rules.

²³Though rulers plot and slander me, your servant meditates on your statutes.

²⁴ Yes, I find delight in your rules; they give me guidance.

²⁵ (Dalet) I collapse in the dirt.
Revive me with your word!

²⁶ I told you about my ways and you answered me. Teach me your statutes!

²⁷ Help me to understand what your precepts mean! Then I can meditate on your marvelous teachings.

²⁸ I collapse from grief. Sustain me by your word!

²⁹ Remove me from the path of deceit!
Graciously give me your law!

³⁰ I choose the path of faithfulness; I am committed to your regulations.

³¹ I hold fast to your rules. O Lord, do not let me be ashamed!

³² I run along the path of your commands, for you enable me to do so.

³³ (He) Teach me, O Lord, the lifestyle prescribed by your statutes, so that I might observe it continually.

³⁴ Give me understanding so that I might observe your law, and keep it with all my heart.

³⁵ Guide me in the path of your commands, for I delight to walk in it.

³⁶ Give me a desire for your rules,
rather than for wealth gained unjustly.

³⁷ Turn my eyes away from what is
worthless! Revive me with your word!

³⁸ Confirm to your servant your
promise, which you made to the one who
honors you.

³⁹ Take away the insults that I dread!
Indeed, your regulations are good.

⁴⁰ Look, I long for your precepts. Revive
me with your deliverance!

⁴¹ (Vav) May I experience your loyal
love, O Lord, and your deliverance, as
you promised.

⁴² Then I will have a reply for the one
who insults me, for I trust in your word.

⁴³ Do not completely deprive me of
a truthful testimony, for I await your
justice.

⁴⁴ Then I will keep your law continually
now and for all time.

⁴⁵ I will be secure, for I seek your
precepts.

⁴⁶ I will speak about your regulations
before kings and not be ashamed.

⁴⁷ I will find delight in your commands,
which I love.

⁴⁸I will lift my hands to your commands, which I love, and I will meditate on your statutes.

⁴⁹ (Zayin) Remember your word to your servant, for you have given me hope.

⁵⁰This is what comforts me in my trouble, for your promise revives me.

⁵¹Arrogant people do nothing but scoff at me. Yet I do not turn aside from your law.

⁵²I remember your ancient regulations, O Lord, and console myself.

⁵³Rage takes hold of me because of the wicked, those who reject your law.

⁵⁴Your statutes have been my songs in the house where I live.

⁵⁵I remember your name during the night, O Lord, and I will keep your law.

⁵⁶This has been my practice, for I observe your precepts.

⁵⁷ (Khet) The Lord is my source of security. I have determined to follow your instructions.

⁵⁸I seek your favor with all my heart. Have mercy on me as you promised!

⁵⁹I consider my actions and follow your rules.

⁶⁰I keep your commands eagerly and without delay.

⁶¹The ropes of the wicked tighten around me, but I do not forget your law.

⁶²In the middle of the night I arise to thank you for your just regulations.

⁶³I am a friend to all your loyal followers, and to those who keep your precepts.

⁶⁴O Lord, your loyal love fills the earth. Teach me your statutes!

⁶⁵ (Tet) You are good to your servant, O Lord, just as you promised.

⁶⁶Teach me proper discernment and understanding! For I consider your commands to be reliable.

⁶⁷Before I was afflicted I used to stray off, but now I keep your instructions.

⁶⁸You are good and you do good. Teach me your statutes!

⁶⁹Arrogant people smear my reputation with lies, but I observe your precepts with all my heart.

⁷⁰Their hearts are calloused, but I find delight in your law.

⁷¹It was good for me to suffer, so that I might learn your statutes.

⁷²The law you have revealed is more important to me than thousands of pieces of gold and silver.

⁷³ (Yod) Your hands made me and formed me. Give me understanding so that I might learn your commands.

⁷⁴Your loyal followers will be glad when they see me, for I find hope in your word.

⁷⁵I know, Lord, that your regulations are just. You disciplined me because of your faithful devotion to me.

⁷⁶May your loyal love console me, as you promised your servant.

⁷⁷May I experience your compassion, so I might live! For I find delight in your law.

⁷⁸May the arrogant be humiliated, for they have slandered me! But I meditate on your precepts.

⁷⁹May your loyal followers turn to me, those who know your rules.

⁸⁰May I be fully committed to your statutes, so that I might not be ashamed.

⁸¹ (Kaf) I desperately long for your deliverance. I find hope in your word.

⁸² My eyes grow tired as I wait for your promise to be fulfilled. I say, "When will you comfort me?"

⁸³ For I am like a wineskin dried up in smoke. I do not forget your statutes.

⁸⁴ How long must your servant endure this? When will you judge those who pursue me?

⁸⁵ The arrogant dig pits to trap me, which violates your law.

⁸⁶ All your commands are reliable. I am pursued without reason. Help me!

⁸⁷ They have almost destroyed me here on the earth, but I do not reject your precepts.

⁸⁸ Revive me with your loyal love, that I might keep the rules you have revealed.

⁸⁹ (Lamed) O Lord, your instructions endure; they stand secure in heaven.

⁹⁰ You demonstrate your faithfulness to all generations. You established the earth and it stood firm.

⁹¹ Today they stand firm by your decrees, for all things are your servants.

⁹² If I had not found encouragement in your law, I would have died in my sorrow.

⁹³ I will never forget your precepts, for by them you have revived me.

⁹⁴ I belong to you. Deliver me! For I seek your precepts.

⁹⁵ The wicked prepare to kill me, yet I concentrate on your rules.

⁹⁶ I realize that everything has its limits, but your commands are beyond full comprehension.

⁹⁷ (Mem) O how I love your law! All day long I meditate on it.

⁹⁸ Your commandments make me wiser than my enemies, for I am always aware of them.

⁹⁹ I have more insight than all my teachers, for I meditate on your rules.

¹⁰⁰ I am more discerning than those older than I, for I observe your precepts.

¹⁰¹ I stay away from the evil path, so that I might keep your instructions.

¹⁰² I do not turn aside from your regulations, for you teach me.

¹⁰³ Your words are sweeter in my mouth than honey!

¹⁰⁴ Your precepts give me discernment. Therefore I hate all deceitful actions.

¹⁰⁵ (Nun) Your word is a lamp to walk by, and a light to illumine my path.

¹⁰⁶I have vowed and solemnly sworn to keep your just regulations.

¹⁰⁷I am suffering terribly. O Lord, revive me with your word!

¹⁰⁸O Lord, please accept the freewill offerings of my praise! Teach me your regulations!

¹⁰⁹My life is in continual danger, but I do not forget your law.

¹¹⁰The wicked lay a trap for me, but I do not wander from your precepts.

¹¹¹I claim your rules as my permanent possession, for they give me joy.

¹¹²I am determined to obey your statutes at all times, to the very end.

¹¹³ (Samek) I hate people with divided loyalties, but I love your law.

¹¹⁴You are my hiding place and my shield. I find hope in your word.

¹¹⁵Turn away from me, you evil men, so that I can observe the commands of my God.

¹¹⁶Sustain me as you promised, so that I will live. Do not disappoint me!

¹¹⁷Support me, so that I will be delivered. Then I will focus on your statutes continually.

¹¹⁸You despise all who stray from your statutes, for they are deceptive and unreliable.

¹¹⁹You remove all the wicked of the earth like slag. Therefore I love your rules.

¹²⁰My body trembles because I fear you; I am afraid of your judgments.

¹²¹ (Ayin) I do what is fair and right. Do not abandon me to my oppressors!

¹²²Guarantee the welfare of your servant! Do not let the arrogant oppress me!

¹²³My eyes grow tired as I wait for your deliverance, for your reliable promise to be fulfilled.

¹²⁴Show your servant your loyal love! Teach me your statutes!

¹²⁵I am your servant. Give me insight, so that I can understand your rules.

¹²⁶It is time for the Lord to act - they break your law!

¹²⁷For this reason I love your commands more than gold, even purest gold.

¹²⁸For this reason I carefully follow all your precepts. I hate all deceitful actions.

¹²⁹ (Pe) Your rules are marvelous.
Therefore I observe them.

¹³⁰ Your instructions are a doorway
through which light shines. They give
insight to the untrained.

¹³¹ I open my mouth and pant, because
I long for your commands.

¹³² Turn toward me and extend mercy
to me, as you typically do to your loyal
followers.

¹³³ Direct my steps by your word! Do
not let any sin dominate me!

¹³⁴ Deliver me from oppressive men, so
that I can keep your precepts.

¹³⁵ Smile on your servant! Teach me
your statutes!

¹³⁶ Tears stream down from my eyes,
because people do not keep your law.

¹³⁷ (Tsade) You are just, O Lord, and
your judgments are fair.

¹³⁸ The rules you impose are just, and
absolutely reliable.

¹³⁹ My zeal consumes me, for my
enemies forget your instructions.

¹⁴⁰ Your word is absolutely pure, and
your servant loves it!

¹⁴¹ I am insignificant and despised, yet
I do not forget your precepts.

¹⁴²Your justice endures, and your law is reliable.

¹⁴³Distress and hardship confront me, yet I find delight in your commands.

¹⁴⁴Your rules remain just. Give me insight so that I can live.

¹⁴⁵ (Qof) I cried out with all my heart, "Answer me, O Lord! I will observe your statutes."

¹⁴⁶I cried out to you, "Deliver me, so that I can keep your rules."

¹⁴⁷I am up before dawn crying for help. I find hope in your word.

¹⁴⁸My eyes anticipate the nighttime hours, so that I can meditate on your word.

¹⁴⁹Listen to me because of your loyal love! O Lord, revive me, as you typically do!

¹⁵⁰Those who are eager to do wrong draw near; they are far from your law.

¹⁵¹You are near, O Lord, and all your commands are reliable.

¹⁵²I learned long ago that you ordained your rules to last.

¹⁵³ (Resh) See my pain and rescue me! For I do not forget your law.

¹⁵⁴ Fight for me and defend me! Revive me with your word!

¹⁵⁵ The wicked have no chance for deliverance, for they do not seek your statutes.

¹⁵⁶ Your compassion is great, O Lord. Revive me, as you typically do!

¹⁵⁷ The enemies who chase me are numerous. Yet I do not turn aside from your rules.

¹⁵⁸ I take note of the treacherous and despise them, because they do not keep your instructions.

¹⁵⁹ See how I love your precepts! O Lord, revive me with your loyal love!

¹⁶⁰ Your instructions are totally reliable; all your just regulations endure.

¹⁶¹ / (Sin/Shin) Rulers pursue me for no reason, yet I am more afraid of disobeying your instructions.

¹⁶² I rejoice in your instructions, like one who finds much plunder.

¹⁶³ I hate and despise deceit; I love your law.

¹⁶⁴ Seven times a day I praise you because of your just regulations.

¹⁶⁵ Those who love your law are completely secure; nothing causes them to stumble.

¹⁶⁶ I hope for your deliverance, O Lord, and I obey your commands.

¹⁶⁷ I keep your rules; I love them greatly.

¹⁶⁸ I keep your precepts and rules, for you are aware of everything I do.

¹⁶⁹ (Tav) Listen to my cry for help, O Lord! Give me insight by your word!

¹⁷⁰ Listen to my appeal for mercy! Deliver me, as you promised.

¹⁷¹ May praise flow freely from my lips, for you teach me your statutes.

¹⁷² May my tongue sing about your instructions, for all your commands are just.

¹⁷³ May your hand help me, for I choose to obey your precepts.

¹⁷⁴ I long for your deliverance, O Lord; I find delight in your law.

¹⁷⁵ May I live and praise you! May your regulations help me!

¹⁷⁶ I have wandered off like a lost sheep. Come looking for your servant, for I do not forget your commands.

120¹ A song of ascents. In my distress I cried out to the Lord and he answered me.

² I said, "O Lord, rescue me from those who lie with their lips and those who deceive with their tongue.

³ How will he severely punish you, you deceptive talker?

⁴ Here's how! With the sharp arrows of warriors, with arrowheads forged over the hot coals.

⁵ How miserable I am! For I have lived temporarily in Meshech; I have resided among the tents of Kedar.

⁶ For too long I have had to reside with those who hate peace.

⁷ I am committed to peace, but when I speak, they want to make war.

121¹ A song of ascents. I look up toward the hills. From where does my help come?

² My help comes from the Lord, the Creator of heaven and earth!

³ May he not allow your foot to slip! May your protector not sleep!

⁴ Look! Israel's protector does not sleep or slumber!

⁵The Lord is your protector; the Lord is the shade at your right hand.

⁶The sun will not harm you by day, or the moon by night.

⁷The Lord will protect you from all harm; he will protect your life.

⁸The Lord will protect you in all you do, now and forevermore.

122¹ A song of ascents, by David.
I was glad because they said to me, "We will go to the Lord's temple."

²Our feet are standing inside your gates, O Jerusalem.

³Jerusalem is a city designed to accommodate an assembly.

⁴The tribes go up there, the tribes of the Lord, where it is required that Israel give thanks to the name of the Lord.

⁵Indeed, the leaders sit there on thrones and make legal decisions, on the thrones of the house of David.

⁶Pray for the peace of Jerusalem! May those who love her prosper!

⁷May there be peace inside your defenses, and prosperity inside your fortresses!

⁸For the sake of my brothers and my neighbors I will say, "May there be peace in you!"

⁹For the sake of the temple of the Lord our God I will pray for you to prosper.

123¹A song of ascents. I look up toward you, the one enthroned in heaven.

²Look, as the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a female servant look to the hand of her mistress, so my eyes will look to the Lord, our God, until he shows us favor.

³Show us favor, O Lord, show us favor! For we have had our fill of humiliation, and then some.

⁴We have had our fill of the taunts of the self-assured, of the contempt of the proud.

124¹A song of ascents, by David. "If the Lord had not been on our side" – let Israel say this! –

²if the Lord had not been on our side, when men attacked us,

³they would have swallowed us alive, when their anger raged against us.

⁴The water would have overpowered us; the current would have overwhelmed us.

⁵The raging water would have overwhelmed us.

⁶The Lord deserves praise, for he did not hand us over as prey to their teeth.

⁷We escaped with our lives, like a bird from a hunter's snare. The snare broke, and we escaped.

⁸Our deliverer is the Lord, the Creator of heaven and earth.

125¹ A song of ascents. Those who trust in the Lord are like Mount Zion; it cannot be upended and will endure forever.

²As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the Lord surrounds his people, now and forevermore.

³Indeed, the scepter of a wicked king will not settle upon the allotted land of the godly. Otherwise the godly might do what is wrong.

⁴Do good, O Lord, to those who are good, to the morally upright!

⁵As for those who are bent on traveling a sinful path, may the Lord remove

them, along with those who behave wickedly! May Israel experience peace!

126 ¹A song of ascents. When the Lord restored the well-being of Zion, we thought we were dreaming.

²At that time we laughed loudly and shouted for joy. At that time the nations said, “The Lord has accomplished great things for these people.”

³The Lord did indeed accomplish great things for us. We were happy.

⁴O Lord, restore our well-being, just as the streams in the arid south are replenished.

⁵Those who shed tears as they plant will shout for joy when they reap the harvest.

⁶The one who weeps as he walks along, carrying his bag of seed, will certainly come in with a shout of joy, carrying his sheaves of grain.

127 ¹A song of ascents, by Solomon. If the Lord does not build a house, then those who build it work in vain. If the Lord does not guard a city, then the watchman stands guard in vain.

²It is vain for you to rise early, come home late, and work so hard for your food. Yes, he can provide for those whom he loves even when they sleep.

³Yes, sons are a gift from the Lord, the fruit of the womb is a reward.

⁴Sons born during one's youth are like arrows in a warrior's hand.

⁵How blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them! They will not be put to shame when they confront enemies at the city gate.

128¹A song of ascents. How blessed is every one of the Lord's loyal followers, each one who keeps his commands!

²You will eat what you worked so hard to grow. You will be blessed and secure.

³Your wife will be like a fruitful vine in the inner rooms of your house; your children will be like olive branches, as they sit all around your table.

⁴Yes indeed, the man who fears the Lord will be blessed in this way.

⁵May the Lord bless you from Zion, that you might see Jerusalem prosper all the days of your life,

⁶and that you might see your grandchildren. May Israel experience peace!

129¹ A song of ascents. "Since my youth they have often attacked me," let Israel say.

²"Since my youth they have often attacked me, but they have not defeated me.

³The plowers plowed my back; they made their furrows long.

⁴The Lord is just; he cut the ropes of the wicked."

⁵May all who hate Zion be humiliated and turned back!

⁶May they be like the grass on the rooftops which withers before one can even pull it up,

⁷which cannot fill the reaper's hand, or the lap of the one who gathers the grain!

⁸Those who pass by will not say, "May you experience the Lord's blessing! We pronounce a blessing on you in the name of the Lord."

130¹ A song of ascents. From the deep water I cry out to you, O Lord.

²O Lord, listen to me! Pay attention to my plea for mercy!

³If you, O Lord, were to keep track of sins, O Lord, who could stand before you?

⁴But you are willing to forgive, so that you might be honored.

⁵I rely on the Lord, I rely on him with my whole being; I wait for his assuring word.

⁶I yearn for the Lord, more than watchmen do for the morning, yes, more than watchmen do for the morning.

⁷O Israel, hope in the Lord, for the Lord exhibits loyal love, and is more than willing to deliver.

⁸He will deliver Israel from all the consequences of their sins.

131 ¹A song of ascents, by David.
O Lord, my heart is not proud, nor do I have a haughty look. I do not have great aspirations, or concern myself with things that are beyond me.

²Indeed I am composed and quiet, like a young child carried by its mother; I am content like the young child I carry.

³O Israel, hope in the Lord now and forevermore!

132¹ A song of ascents. O Lord, for David's sake remember all his strenuous effort,

² and how he made a vow to the Lord, and swore an oath to the powerful ruler of Jacob.

³ He said, "I will not enter my own home, or get into my bed.

⁴ I will not allow my eyes to sleep, or my eyelids to slumber,

⁵ until I find a place for the Lord, a fine dwelling place for the powerful ruler of Jacob."

⁶ Look, we heard about it in Ephrathah, we found it in the territory of Jaar.

⁷ Let us go to his dwelling place! Let us worship before his footstool!

⁸ Ascend, O Lord, to your resting place, you and the ark of your strength!

⁹ May your priests be clothed with integrity! May your loyal followers shout for joy!

¹⁰ For the sake of David, your servant, do not reject your chosen king!

¹¹ The Lord made a reliable promise to David; he will not go back on his word. He said, "I will place one of your descendants on your throne.

¹²If your sons keep my covenant and the rules I teach them, their sons will also sit on your throne forever.”

¹³Certainly the Lord has chosen Zion; he decided to make it his home.

¹⁴He said, “This will be my resting place forever; I will live here, for I have chosen it.

¹⁵I will abundantly supply what she needs; I will give her poor all the food they need.

¹⁶I will protect her priests, and her godly people will shout exuberantly.

¹⁷There I will make David strong; I have determined that my chosen king’s dynasty will continue.

¹⁸I will humiliate his enemies, and his crown will shine.

133¹A song of ascents, by David. Look! How good and how pleasant it is when brothers live together!

²It is like fine oil poured on the head which flows down the beard – Aaron’s beard, and then flows down his garments.

³It is like the dew of Hermon, which flows down upon the hills of Zion. Indeed

that is where the Lord has decreed a blessing will be available – eternal life.

134¹ A song of ascents. Attention! Praise the Lord, all you servants of the Lord, who serve in the Lord's temple during the night.

² Lift your hands toward the sanctuary and praise the Lord!

³ May the Lord, the Creator of heaven and earth, bless you from Zion!

135¹ Praise the Lord! Praise the name of the Lord! Offer praise, you servants of the Lord,

² who serve in the Lord's temple, in the courts of the temple of our God.

³ Praise the Lord, for the Lord is good! Sing praises to his name, for it is pleasant!

⁴ Indeed, the Lord has chosen Jacob for himself, Israel to be his special possession.

⁵ Yes, I know the Lord is great, and our Lord is superior to all gods.

⁶ He does whatever he pleases in heaven and on earth, in the seas and all the ocean depths.

⁷ He causes the clouds to arise from the end of the earth, makes lightning bolts

accompany the rain, and brings the wind out of his storehouses.

⁸He struck down the firstborn of Egypt, including both men and animals.

⁹He performed awesome deeds and acts of judgment in your midst, O Egypt, against Pharaoh and all his servants.

¹⁰He defeated many nations, and killed mighty kings -

¹¹Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan, and all the kingdoms of Canaan.

¹²He gave their land as an inheritance, as an inheritance to Israel his people.

¹³O Lord, your name endures, your reputation, O Lord, lasts.

¹⁴For the Lord vindicates his people, and has compassion on his servants.

¹⁵The nations' idols are made of silver and gold, they are man-made.

¹⁶They have mouths, but cannot speak, eyes, but cannot see,

¹⁷and ears, but cannot hear. Indeed, they cannot breathe.

¹⁸Those who make them will end up like them, as will everyone who trusts in them.

¹⁹ O family of Israel, praise the Lord! O family of Aaron, praise the Lord!

²⁰ O family of Levi, praise the Lord! You loyal followers of the Lord, praise the Lord!

²¹ The Lord deserves praise in Zion – he who dwells in Jerusalem. Praise the Lord!

136 ¹ Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his loyal love endures.

² Give thanks to the God of gods, for his loyal love endures.

³ Give thanks to the Lord of lords, for his loyal love endures,

⁴ to the one who performs magnificent, amazing deeds all by himself, for his loyal love endures,

⁵ to the one who used wisdom to make the heavens, for his loyal love endures,

⁶ to the one who spread out the earth over the water, for his loyal love endures,

⁷ to the one who made the great lights, for his loyal love endures,

⁸ the sun to rule by day, for his loyal love endures,

⁹ the moon and stars to rule by night, for his loyal love endures,

¹⁰to the one who struck down the firstborn of Egypt, for his loyal love endures,

¹¹and led Israel out from their midst, for his loyal love endures,

¹²with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, for his loyal love endures,

¹³to the one who divided the Red Sea in two, for his loyal love endures,

¹⁴and led Israel through its midst, for his loyal love endures,

¹⁵and tossed Pharaoh and his army into the Red Sea, for his loyal love endures,

¹⁶to the one who led his people through the wilderness, for his loyal love endures,

¹⁷to the one who struck down great kings, for his loyal love endures,

¹⁸and killed powerful kings, for his loyal love endures,

¹⁹Sihon, king of the Amorites, for his loyal love endures,

²⁰Og, king of Bashan, for his loyal love endures,

²¹and gave their land as an inheritance, for his loyal love endures,

²²as an inheritance to Israel his servant, for his loyal love endures,

²³ to the one who remembered us when we were down, for his loyal love endures,
²⁴ and snatched us away from our enemies, for his loyal love endures,
²⁵ to the one who gives food to all living things, for his loyal love endures.

²⁶ Give thanks to the God of heaven, for his loyal love endures!

137 ¹ By the rivers of Babylon we sit down and weep when we remember Zion.

² On the poplars in her midst we hang our harps,

³ for there our captors ask us to compose songs; those who mock us demand that we be happy, saying: "Sing for us a song about Zion!"

⁴ How can we sing a song to the Lord in a foreign land?

⁵ If I forget you, O Jerusalem, may my right hand be crippled!

⁶ May my tongue stick to the roof of my mouth, if I do not remember you, and do not give Jerusalem priority over whatever gives me the most joy.

⁷ Remember, O Lord, what the Edomites did on the day Jerusalem fell. They said,

“Tear it down, tear it down, right to its very foundation!”

⁸O daughter Babylon, soon to be devastated! How blessed will be the one who repays you for what you dished out to us!

⁹How blessed will be the one who grabs your babies and smashes them on a rock!

138 ¹By David. I will give you thanks with all my heart; before the heavenly assembly I will sing praises to you.

²I will bow down toward your holy temple, and give thanks to your name, because of your loyal love and faithfulness, for you have exalted your promise above the entire sky.

³When I cried out for help, you answered me. You made me bold and energized me.

⁴Let all the kings of the earth give thanks to you, O Lord, when they hear the words you speak.

⁵Let them sing about the Lord’s deeds, for the Lord’s splendor is magnificent.

⁶Though the Lord is exalted, he takes note of the lowly, and recognizes the proud from far away.

⁷Even when I must walk in the midst of danger, you revive me. You oppose my angry enemies, and your right hand delivers me.

⁸The Lord avenges me. O Lord, your loyal love endures. Do not abandon those whom you have made!

139¹For the music director, a psalm of David. O Lord, you examine me and know.

²You know when I sit down and when I get up; even from far away you understand my motives.

³You carefully observe me when I travel or when I lie down to rest; you are aware of everything I do.

⁴Certainly my tongue does not frame a word without you, O Lord, being thoroughly aware of it.

⁵You squeeze me in from behind and in front; you place your hand on me.

⁶Your knowledge is beyond my comprehension; it is so far beyond me, I am unable to fathom it.

⁷ Where can I go to escape your spirit? Where can I flee to escape your presence?

⁸ If I were to ascend to heaven, you would be there. If I were to sprawl out in Sheol, there you would be.

⁹ If I were to fly away on the wings of the dawn, and settle down on the other side of the sea,

¹⁰ even there your hand would guide me, your right hand would grab hold of me.

¹¹ If I were to say, “Certainly the darkness will cover me, and the light will turn to night all around me,”

¹² even the darkness is not too dark for you to see, and the night is as bright as day; darkness and light are the same to you.

¹³ Certainly you made my mind and heart; you wove me together in my mother’s womb.

¹⁴ I will give you thanks because your deeds are awesome and amazing. You knew me thoroughly;

¹⁵ my bones were not hidden from you, when I was made in secret and sewed together in the depths of the earth.

¹⁶Your eyes saw me when I was inside the womb. All the days ordained for me were recorded in your scroll before one of them came into existence.

¹⁷How difficult it is for me to fathom your thoughts about me, O God! How vast is their sum total!

¹⁸If I tried to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand. Even if I finished counting them, I would still have to contend with you.

¹⁹If only you would kill the wicked, O God! Get away from me, you violent men!

²⁰They rebel against you and act deceitfully; your enemies lie.

²¹O Lord, do I not hate those who hate you, and despise those who oppose you?

²²I absolutely hate them, they have become my enemies!

²³Examine me, and probe my thoughts! Test me, and know my concerns!

²⁴See if there is any idolatrous tendency in me, and lead me in the reliable ancient path!

140¹ For the music director; a psalm of David. O Lord, rescue

me from wicked men! Protect me from violent men,

²who plan ways to harm me. All day long they stir up conflict.

³Their tongues wound like a serpent; a viper's venom is behind their lips. (Selah)

⁴O Lord, shelter me from the power of the wicked! Protect me from violent men, who plan to knock me over.

⁵Proud men hide a snare for me; evil men spread a net by the path; they set traps for me. (Selah)

⁶I say to the Lord, "You are my God." O Lord, pay attention to my plea for mercy!

⁷O sovereign Lord, my strong deliverer, you shield my head in the day of battle.

⁸O Lord, do not let the wicked have their way! Do not allow their plan to succeed when they attack! (Selah)

⁹As for the heads of those who surround me – may the harm done by their lips overwhelm them!

¹⁰May he rain down fiery coals upon them! May he throw them into the fire! From bottomless pits they will not escape.

¹¹ A slanderer will not endure on the earth; calamity will hunt down a violent man and strike him down.

¹² I know that the Lord defends the cause of the oppressed and vindicates the poor.

¹³ Certainly the godly will give thanks to your name; the morally upright will live in your presence.

141 ¹ A psalm of David. O Lord, I cry out to you. Come quickly to me! Pay attention to me when I cry out to you!

² May you accept my prayer like incense, my uplifted hands like the evening offering!

³ O Lord, place a guard on my mouth! Protect the opening of my lips!

⁴ Do not let me have evil desires, or participate in sinful activities with men who behave wickedly. I will not eat their delicacies.

⁵ May the godly strike me in love and correct me! May my head not refuse choice oil! Indeed, my prayer is a witness against their evil deeds.

⁶They will be thrown down the side of a cliff by their judges. They will listen to my words, for they are pleasant.

⁷As when one plows and breaks up the soil, so our bones are scattered at the mouth of Sheol.

⁸Surely I am looking to you, O sovereign Lord. In you I take shelter. Do not expose me to danger!

⁹Protect me from the snare they have laid for me, and the traps the evildoers have set.

¹⁰Let the wicked fall into their own nets, while I escape.

142¹ A well-written song by David, when he was in the cave; a prayer. To the Lord I cry out; to the Lord I plead for mercy.

²I pour out my lament before him; I tell him about my troubles.

³Even when my strength leaves me, you watch my footsteps. In the path where I walk they have hidden a trap for me.

⁴Look to the right and see! No one cares about me. I have nowhere to run; no one is concerned about my life.

⁵I cry out to you, O Lord; I say, “You are my shelter, my security in the land of the living.”

⁶Listen to my cry for help, for I am in serious trouble! Rescue me from those who chase me, for they are stronger than I am.

⁷Free me from prison, that I may give thanks to your name. Because of me the godly will assemble, for you will vindicate me.

143¹ A psalm of David. O Lord, hear my prayer! Pay attention to my plea for help! Because of your faithfulness and justice, answer me!

²Do not sit in judgment on your servant, for no one alive is innocent before you.

³Certainly my enemies chase me. They smash me into the ground. They force me to live in dark regions, like those who have been dead for ages.

⁴My strength leaves me; I am absolutely shocked.

⁵I recall the old days; I meditate on all you have done; I reflect on your accomplishments.

⁶I spread my hands out to you in prayer; my soul thirsts for you in a parched land.

⁷Answer me quickly, Lord! My strength is fading. Do not reject me, or I will join those descending into the grave.

⁸May I hear about your loyal love in the morning, for I trust in you. Show me the way I should go, because I long for you.

⁹Rescue me from my enemies, O Lord! I run to you for protection.

¹⁰Teach me to do what pleases you, for you are my God. May your kind presence lead me into a level land.

¹¹O Lord, for the sake of your reputation, revive me! Because of your justice, rescue me from trouble!

¹²As a demonstration of your loyal love, destroy my enemies! Annihilate all who threaten my life, for I am your servant.

144¹By David. The Lord, my protector, deserves praise – the one who trains my hands for battle, and my fingers for war,

²who loves me and is my stronghold, my refuge and my deliverer, my shield and the one in whom I take shelter, who makes nations submit to me.

³O Lord, of what importance is the human race, that you should notice them? Of what importance is mankind, that you should be concerned about them?

⁴People are like a vapor, their days like a shadow that disappears.

⁵O Lord, make the sky sink and come down! Touch the mountains and make them smolder!

⁶Hurl lightning bolts and scatter them! Shoot your arrows and rout them!

⁷Reach down from above! Grab me and rescue me from the surging water, from the power of foreigners,

⁸who speak lies, and make false promises.

⁹O God, I will sing a new song to you! Accompanied by a ten-stringed instrument, I will sing praises to you,

¹⁰the one who delivers kings, and rescued David his servant from a deadly sword.

¹¹Grab me and rescue me from the power of foreigners, who speak lies, and make false promises.

¹²Then our sons will be like plants, that quickly grow to full size. Our daughters

will be like corner pillars, carved like those in a palace.

¹³Our storehouses will be full, providing all kinds of food. Our sheep will multiply by the thousands and fill our pastures.

¹⁴Our cattle will be weighted down with produce. No one will break through our walls, no one will be taken captive, and there will be no terrified cries in our city squares.

¹⁵How blessed are the people who experience these things! How blessed are the people whose God is the Lord!

145 ¹A psalm of praise, by David. I will extol you, my God, O king! I will praise your name continually!

²Every day I will praise you! I will praise your name continually!

³The Lord is great and certainly worthy of praise! No one can fathom his greatness!

⁴One generation will praise your deeds to another, and tell about your mighty acts!

⁵I will focus on your honor and majestic splendor, and your amazing deeds!

⁶They will proclaim the power of your awesome acts! I will declare your great deeds!

⁷They will talk about the fame of your great kindness, and sing about your justice.

⁸The Lord is merciful and compassionate; he is patient and demonstrates great loyal love.

⁹The Lord is good to all, and has compassion on all he has made.

¹⁰All he has made will give thanks to the Lord. Your loyal followers will praise you.

¹¹They will proclaim the splendor of your kingdom; they will tell about your power,

¹²so that mankind might acknowledge your mighty acts, and the majestic splendor of your kingdom.

¹³Your kingdom is an eternal kingdom, and your dominion endures through all generations.

¹⁴The Lord supports all who fall, and lifts up all who are bent over.

¹⁵Everything looks to you in anticipation, and you provide them with food on a regular basis.

¹⁶You open your hand, and fill every living thing with the food they desire.

¹⁷The Lord is just in all his actions, and exhibits love in all he does.

¹⁸The Lord is near all who cry out to him, all who cry out to him sincerely.

¹⁹He satisfies the desire of his loyal followers; he hears their cry for help and delivers them.

²⁰The Lord protects those who love him, but he destroys all the wicked.

²¹My mouth will praise the Lord. Let all who live praise his holy name forever!

146¹ Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul!

²I will praise the Lord as long as I live! I will sing praises to my God as long as I exist!

³Do not trust in princes, or in human beings, who cannot deliver!

⁴Their life's breath departs, they return to the ground; on that day their plans die.

⁵How blessed is the one whose helper is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord his God,

⁶ the one who made heaven and earth,
the sea, and all that is in them, who
remains forever faithful,

⁷ vindicates the oppressed, and gives
food to the hungry. The Lord releases
the imprisoned.

⁸ The Lord gives sight to the blind. The
Lord lifts up all who are bent over. The
Lord loves the godly.

⁹ The Lord protects those residing
outside their native land; he lifts up
the fatherless and the widow, but he
opposes the wicked.

¹⁰ The Lord rules forever, your God,
O Zion, throughout the generations to
come! Praise the Lord!

147 ¹ Praise the Lord, for it is good
to sing praises to our God!
Yes, praise is pleasant and appropriate!

² The Lord rebuilds Jerusalem, and
gathers the exiles of Israel.

³ He heals the brokenhearted, and
bandages their wounds.

⁴ He counts the number of the stars; he
names all of them.

⁵ Our Lord is great and has awesome
power; there is no limit to his wisdom.

⁶The Lord lifts up the oppressed, but knocks the wicked to the ground.

⁷Offer to the Lord a song of thanks! Sing praises to our God to the accompaniment of a harp!

⁸He covers the sky with clouds, provides the earth with rain, and causes grass to grow on the hillsides.

⁹He gives food to the animals, and to the young ravens when they chirp.

¹⁰He is not enamored with the strength of a horse, nor is he impressed by the warrior's strong legs.

¹¹The Lord takes delight in his faithful followers, and in those who wait for his loyal love.

¹²Extol the Lord, O Jerusalem! Praise your God, O Zion!

¹³For he makes the bars of your gates strong. He blesses your children within you.

¹⁴He brings peace to your territory. He abundantly provides for you the best grain.

¹⁵He sends his command through the earth; swiftly his order reaches its destination.

¹⁶He sends the snow that is white like wool; he spreads the frost that is white like ashes.

¹⁷He throws his hailstones like crumbs. Who can withstand the cold wind he sends?

¹⁸He then orders it all to melt; he breathes on it, and the water flows.

¹⁹He proclaims his word to Jacob, his statutes and regulations to Israel.

²⁰He has not done so with any other nation; they are not aware of his regulations. Praise the Lord!

148¹Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord from the sky! Praise him in the heavens!

²Praise him, all his angels! Praise him, all his heavenly assembly!

³Praise him, O sun and moon! Praise him, all you shiny stars!

⁴Praise him, O highest heaven, and you waters above the sky!

⁵Let them praise the name of the Lord, for he gave the command and they came into existence.

⁶He established them so they would endure; he issued a decree that will not be revoked.

⁷ Praise the Lord from the earth, you sea creatures and all you ocean depths,

⁸ O fire and hail, snow and clouds, O stormy wind that carries out his orders,

⁹ you mountains and all you hills, you fruit trees and all you cedars,

¹⁰ you animals and all you cattle, you creeping things and birds,

¹¹ you kings of the earth and all you nations, you princes and all you leaders on the earth,

¹² you young men and young women, you elderly, along with you children!

¹³ Let them praise the name of the Lord, for his name alone is exalted; his majesty extends over the earth and sky.

¹⁴ He has made his people victorious, and given all his loyal followers reason to praise – the Israelites, the people who are close to him. Praise the Lord!

149 ¹ Praise the Lord! Sing to the Lord a new song! Praise him in the assembly of the godly!

² Let Israel rejoice in their Creator! Let the people of Zion delight in their king!

³ Let them praise his name with dancing! Let them sing praises to him to

the accompaniment of the tambourine and harp!

⁴For the Lord takes delight in his people; he exalts the oppressed by delivering them.

⁵Let the godly rejoice because of their vindication! Let them shout for joy upon their beds!

⁶May they praise God while they hold a two-edged sword in their hand,

⁷in order to take revenge on the nations, and punish foreigners.

⁸They bind their kings in chains, and their nobles in iron shackles,

⁹and execute the judgment to which their enemies have been sentenced. All his loyal followers will be vindicated.

Praise the Lord!

150¹ Praise the Lord! Praise God in his sanctuary! Praise him in the sky, which testifies to his strength!

² Praise him for his mighty acts! Praise him for his surpassing greatness!

³ Praise him with the blast of the horn! Praise him with the lyre and the harp!

⁴ Praise him with the tambourine and with dancing! Praise him with stringed instruments and the flute!

⁵Praise him with loud cymbals! Praise him with clanging cymbals!

⁶Let everything that has breath praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!

Proverbs

1 ¹ The Proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel:

² To learn wisdom and moral instruction, and to discern wise counsel.

³ To receive moral instruction in skillful living, in righteousness, justice, and equity.

⁴ To impart shrewdness to the morally naive, and a discerning plan to the young person.

⁵ (Let the wise also hear and gain instruction, and let the discerning acquire guidance!)

⁶ To discern the meaning of a proverb and a parable, the sayings of the wise and their riddles.

⁷ Fearing the Lord is the beginning of moral knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.

⁸ Listen, my child, to the instruction from your father, and do not forsake the teaching from your mother.

⁹For they will be like an elegant garland on your head, and like pendants around your neck.

¹⁰My child, if sinners try to entice you, do not consent!

¹¹If they say, "Come with us! We will lie in wait to shed blood; we will ambush an innocent person capriciously.

¹²We will swallow them alive like Sheol, those full of vigor like those going down to the Pit.

¹³We will seize all kinds of precious wealth; we will fill our houses with plunder.

¹⁴Join with us! We will all share equally in what we steal."

¹⁵My child, do not go down their way, withhold yourself from their path;

¹⁶for they are eager to inflict harm, and they hasten to shed blood.

¹⁷Surely it is futile to spread a net in plain sight of any bird,

¹⁸but these men lie in wait for their own blood, they ambush their own lives!

¹⁹Such are the ways of all who gain profit unjustly; it takes away the life of those who obtain it!

²⁰Wisdom calls out in the street, she shouts loudly in the plazas;

²¹at the head of the noisy streets she calls, in the entrances of the gates in the city she utters her words:

²²"How long will you simpletons love naiveté? How long will mockers delight in mockery and fools hate knowledge?

²³If only you will respond to my rebuke, then I will pour out my thoughts to you and I will make my words known to you.

²⁴However, because I called but you refused to listen, because I stretched out my hand but no one paid attention,

²⁵because you neglected all my advice, and did not comply with my rebuke,

²⁶so I myself will laugh when disaster strikes you, I will mock when what you dread comes,

²⁷when what you dread comes like a whirlwind, and disaster strikes you like a devastating storm, when distressing trouble comes on you.

²⁸Then they will call to me, but I will not answer; they will diligently seek me, but they will not find me.

²⁹Because they hated moral knowledge, and did not choose to fear the Lord,

³⁰ they did not comply with my advice,
they spurned all my rebuke.

³¹ Therefore they will eat from the fruit
of their way, and they will be stuffed full
of their own counsel.

³² For the waywardness of the
simpletons will kill them, and the
careless ease of fools will destroy them.

³³ But the one who listens to me will
live in security, and will be at ease from
the dread of harm.

2¹ My child, if you receive my words,
and store up my commands within
you,

² by making your ear attentive to
wisdom, and by turning your heart to
understanding,

³ indeed, if you call out for discernment
– raise your voice for understanding –

⁴ if you seek it like silver, and search for
it like hidden treasure,

⁵ then you will understand how to
fear the Lord, and you will discover
knowledge about God.

⁶ For the Lord gives wisdom, and
from his mouth comes knowledge and
understanding.

⁷ He stores up effective counsel for the upright, and is like a shield for those who live with integrity,

⁸ to guard the paths of the righteous and to protect the way of his pious ones.

⁹ Then you will understand righteousness and justice and equity – every good way.

¹⁰ For wisdom will enter your heart, and moral knowledge will be attractive to you.

¹¹ Discretion will protect you, understanding will guard you,

¹² to deliver you from the way of the wicked, from those speaking perversity,

¹³ who leave the upright paths to walk on the dark ways,

¹⁴ who delight in doing evil, they rejoice in perverse evil;

¹⁵ whose paths are morally crooked, and who are devious in their ways;

¹⁶ to deliver you from the adulteress, from the sexually loose woman who speaks flattering words;

¹⁷ who leaves the husband from her younger days, and forgets her marriage covenant made before God.

¹⁸For her house sinks down to death,
and her paths lead to the place of the
departed spirits.

¹⁹None who go in to her will return, nor
will they reach the paths of life.

²⁰So you will walk in the way of good
people, and will keep on the paths of the
righteous.

²¹For the upright will reside in the land,
and those with integrity will remain in it,

²²but the wicked will be removed from
the land, and the treacherous will be
torn away from it.

3¹My child, do not forget my
teaching, but let your heart keep my
commandments,

²for they will provide a long and full
life, and they will add well-being to you.

³Do not let truth and mercy leave you;
bind them around your neck, write them
on the tablet of your heart.

⁴Then you will find favor and good
understanding, in the sight of God and
people.

⁵Trust in the Lord with all your
heart, and do not rely on your own
understanding.

⁶Acknowledge him in all your ways, and he will make your paths straight.

⁷Do not be wise in your own estimation; fear the Lord and turn away from evil.

⁸This will bring healing to your body, and refreshment to your inner self.

⁹Honor the Lord from your wealth and from the first fruits of all your crops;

¹⁰then your barns will be filled completely, and your vats will overflow with new wine.

¹¹My child, do not despise discipline from the Lord, and do not loathe his rebuke.

¹²For the Lord disciplines those he loves, just as a father disciplines the son in whom he delights.

¹³Blessed is the one who finds wisdom, and the one who obtains understanding.

¹⁴For her benefit is more profitable than silver, and her gain is better than gold.

¹⁵She is more precious than rubies, and none of the things you desire can compare with her.

¹⁶Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honor.

¹⁷ Her ways are very pleasant, and all her paths are peaceful.

¹⁸ She is like a tree of life to those who obtain her, and everyone who grasps hold of her will be blessed.

¹⁹ By wisdom the Lord laid the foundation of the earth; he established the heavens by understanding.

²⁰ By his knowledge the primordial sea was broken open, and the clouds drip down dew.

²¹ My child, do not let them escape from your sight; safeguard sound wisdom and discretion.

²² So they will give life to you, and grace to adorn your neck.

²³ Then you will walk on your way with security, and you will not stumble.

²⁴ When you lie down you will not be filled with fear; when you lie down your sleep will be pleasant.

²⁵ You will not be afraid of sudden disaster, or when destruction overtakes the wicked;

²⁶ for the Lord will be the source of your confidence, and he will guard your foot from being caught in a trap.

²⁷ Do not withhold good from those who need it, when you have the ability to help.

²⁸ Do not say to your neighbor, "Go! Return tomorrow and I will give it," when you have it with you at the time.

²⁹ Do not plot evil against your neighbor when he dwells by you unsuspectingly.

³⁰ Do not accuse anyone without legitimate cause, if he has not treated you wrongly.

³¹ Do not envy a violent man, and do not choose to imitate any of his ways;

³² for one who goes astray is an abomination to the Lord, but he reveals his intimate counsel to the upright.

³³ The Lord's curse is on the household of the wicked, but he blesses the home of the righteous.

³⁴ Although he is scornful to arrogant scoffers, yet he shows favor to the humble.

³⁵ The wise inherit honor, but he holds fools up to public contempt.

4¹ Listen, children, to a father's instruction, and pay attention so that you may gain discernment.

² Because I give you good instruction, do not forsake my teaching.

³ When I was a son to my father, a tender only child before my mother,

⁴ he taught me, and he said to me: "Let your heart lay hold of my words; keep my commands so that you will live.

⁵ Acquire wisdom, acquire understanding; do not forget and do not turn aside from the words I speak.

⁶ Do not forsake wisdom, and she will protect you; love her, and she will guard you.

⁷ Wisdom is supreme – so acquire wisdom, and whatever you acquire, acquire understanding!

⁸ Esteem her highly and she will exalt you; she will honor you if you embrace her.

⁹ She will place a fair garland on your head; she will bestow a beautiful crown on you."

¹⁰ Listen, my child, and accept my words, so that the years of your life will be many.

¹¹ I will guide you in the way of wisdom and I will lead you in upright paths.

¹²When you walk, your steps will not be hampered, and when you run, you will not stumble.

¹³Hold on to instruction, do not let it go; protect it, because it is your life.

¹⁴Do not enter the path of the wicked or walk in the way of those who are evil.

¹⁵Avoid it, do not go on it; turn away from it, and go on.

¹⁶For they cannot sleep unless they cause harm; they are robbed of sleep until they make someone stumble.

¹⁷For they eat bread gained from wickedness and drink wine obtained from violence.

¹⁸But the path of the righteous is like the bright morning light, growing brighter and brighter until full day.

¹⁹The way of the wicked is like gloomy darkness; they do not know what causes them to stumble.

²⁰My child, pay attention to my words; listen attentively to my sayings.

²¹Do not let them depart from your sight, guard them within your heart;

²²for they are life to those who find them and healing to one's entire body.

²³ Guard your heart with all vigilance, for from it are the sources of life.

²⁴ Remove perverse speech from your mouth; keep devious talk far from your lips.

²⁵ Let your eyes look directly in front of you and let your gaze look straight before you.

²⁶ Make the path for your feet level, so that all your ways may be established.

²⁷ Do not turn to the right or to the left; turn yourself away from evil.

5¹ My child, be attentive to my wisdom, pay close attention to my understanding,

² in order to safeguard discretion, and that your lips may guard knowledge.

³ For the lips of the adulterous woman drip honey, and her seductive words are smoother than olive oil,

⁴ but in the end she is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword.

⁵ Her feet go down to death; her steps lead straight to the grave.

⁶ Lest she should make level the path leading to life, her paths are unstable but she does not know it.

⁷ So now, children, listen to me; do not turn aside from the words I speak.

⁸ Keep yourself far from her, and do not go near the door of her house,

⁹ lest you give your vigor to others and your years to a cruel person,

¹⁰ lest strangers devour your strength, and your labor benefit another man's house.

¹¹ And at the end of your life you will groan when your flesh and your body are wasted away.

¹² And you will say, "How I hated discipline! My heart spurned reproof!

¹³ For I did not obey my teachers and I did not heed my instructors.

¹⁴ I almost came to complete ruin in the midst of the whole congregation!"

¹⁵ Drink water from your own cistern and running water from your own well.

¹⁶ Should your springs be dispersed outside, your streams of water in the wide plazas?

¹⁷ Let them be for yourself alone, and not for strangers with you.

¹⁸ May your fountain be blessed, and may you rejoice in your young wife -

¹⁹a loving doe, a graceful deer; may her breasts satisfy you at all times, may you be captivated by her love always.

²⁰But why should you be captivated, my son, by an adulteress, and embrace the bosom of a different woman?

²¹For the ways of a person are in front of the Lord's eyes, and the Lord weighs all that person's paths.

²²The wicked will be captured by his own iniquities, and he will be held by the cords of his own sin.

²³He will die because there was no discipline; because of the greatness of his folly he will reel.

6¹ My child, if you have made a pledge for your neighbor, and have become a guarantor for a stranger,

²if you have been ensnared by the words you have uttered, and have been caught by the words you have spoken,

³then, my child, do this in order to deliver yourself, because you have fallen into your neighbor's power: go, humble yourself, and appeal firmly to your neighbor.

⁴Permit no sleep to your eyes or slumber to your eyelids.

⁵ Deliver yourself like a gazelle from a snare, and like a bird from the trap of the fowler.

⁶ Go to the ant, you sluggard; observe its ways and be wise!

⁷ It has no commander, overseer, or ruler,

⁸ yet it prepares its food in the summer; it gathers at the harvest what it will eat.

⁹ How long, you sluggard, will you lie there? When will you rise from your sleep?

¹⁰ A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to relax,

¹¹ and your poverty will come like a robber, and your need like an armed man.

¹² A worthless and wicked person walks around saying perverse things;

¹³ he winks with his eyes, signals with his feet, and points with his fingers;

¹⁴ he plots evil with perverse thoughts in his heart, he spreads contention at all times.

¹⁵ Therefore, his disaster will come suddenly; in an instant he will be broken, and there will be no remedy.

¹⁶There are six things that the Lord hates, even seven things that are an abomination to him:

¹⁷haughty eyes, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,

¹⁸a heart that devises wicked plans, feet that are swift to run to evil,

¹⁹a false witness who pours out lies, and a person who spreads discord among family members.

²⁰My child, guard the commands of your father and do not forsake the instruction of your mother.

²¹Bind them on your heart continually; fasten them around your neck.

²²When you walk about, they will guide you; when you lie down, they will watch over you; when you wake up, they will talk to you.

²³For the commandments are like a lamp, instruction is like a light, and rebukes of discipline are like the road leading to life,

²⁴by keeping you from the evil woman, from the smooth tongue of the loose woman.

²⁵ Do not lust in your heart for her beauty, and do not let her captivate you with her alluring eyes;

²⁶ for on account of a prostitute one is brought down to a loaf of bread, but the wife of another man preys on your precious life.

²⁷ Can a man hold fire against his chest without burning his clothes?

²⁸ Can a man walk on hot coals without scorching his feet?

²⁹ So it is with the one who has sex with his neighbor's wife; no one who touches her will escape punishment.

³⁰ People do not despise a thief when he steals to fulfill his need when he is hungry.

³¹ Yet if he is caught he must repay seven times over, he might even have to give all the wealth of his house.

³² A man who commits adultery with a woman lacks wisdom, whoever does it destroys his own life.

³³ He will be beaten and despised, and his reproach will not be wiped away;

³⁴ for jealousy kindles a husband's rage, and he will not show mercy when he takes revenge.

³⁵He will not consider any compensation; he will not be willing, even if you multiply the compensation.

7¹My child, keep my words and treasure up my commands in your own keeping.

²Keep my commands so that you may live, and obey my instruction as your most prized possession.

³Bind them on your forearm; write them on the tablet of your heart.

⁴Say to wisdom, "You are my sister," and call understanding a close relative,

⁵so that they may keep you from the adulterous woman, from the loose woman who flatters you with her words.

⁶For at the window of my house through my window lattice I looked out

⁷and I saw among the naive – I discerned among the youths – a young man who lacked wisdom.

⁸He was passing by the street near her corner, making his way along the road to her house

⁹in the twilight, the evening, in the dark of the night.

¹⁰Suddenly a woman came out to meet him! She was dressed like a prostitute and with secret intent.

¹¹(She is loud and rebellious, she does not remain at home –

¹²at one time outside, at another in the wide plazas, and by every corner she lies in wait.)

¹³So she grabbed him and kissed him, and with a bold expression she said to him,

¹⁴"I have fresh meat at home; today I have fulfilled my vows!

¹⁵That is why I came out to meet you, to look for you, and I found you!

¹⁶I have spread my bed with elegant coverings, with richly colored fabric from Egypt.

¹⁷I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.

¹⁸Come, let's drink deeply of lovemaking until morning, let's delight ourselves with sexual intercourse.

¹⁹For my husband is not at home; he has gone on a journey of some distance.

²⁰He has taken a bag of money with him; he will not return until the end of the month."

²¹ She persuaded him with persuasive words; with her smooth talk she compelled him.

²² Suddenly he went after her like an ox that goes to the slaughter, like a stag prancing into a trapper's snare

²³ till an arrow pierces his liver – like a bird hurrying into a trap, and he does not know that it will cost him his life.

²⁴ So now, sons, listen to me, and pay attention to the words I speak.

²⁵ Do not let your heart turn aside to her ways – do not wander into her pathways;

²⁶ for she has brought down many fatally wounded, and all those she has slain are many.

²⁷ Her house is the way to the grave, going down to the chambers of death.

8¹ Does not wisdom call out? Does not understanding raise her voice?

² At the top of the elevated places along the way, at the intersection of the paths she takes her stand;

³ beside the gates opening into the city, at the entrance of the doorways she cries out:

⁴ "To you, O people, I call out, and my voice calls to all mankind.

⁵ You who are naive, discern wisdom!
And you fools, understand discernment!

⁶ Listen, for I will speak excellent things,
and my lips will utter what is right.

⁷ For my mouth speaks truth, and my lips hate wickedness.

⁸ All the words of my mouth are righteous; there is nothing in them twisted or crooked.

⁹ All of them are clear to the discerning and upright to those who find knowledge.

¹⁰ Receive my instruction rather than silver, and knowledge rather than choice gold.

¹¹ For wisdom is better than rubies, and desirable things cannot be compared to her.

¹² "I, wisdom, live with prudence, and I find knowledge and discretion.

¹³ The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; I hate arrogant pride and the evil way and perverse utterances.

¹⁴ Counsel and sound wisdom belong to me; I possess understanding and might.

¹⁵ Kings reign by means of me, and potentates decree righteousness;

¹⁶by me princes rule, as well as nobles and all righteous judges.

¹⁷I love those who love me, and those who seek me find me.

¹⁸Riches and honor are with me, long-lasting wealth and righteousness.

¹⁹My fruit is better than the purest gold, and what I produce is better than choice silver.

²⁰I walk in the path of righteousness, in the pathway of justice,

²¹that I may cause those who love me to inherit wealth, and that I may fill their treasuries.

²²The Lord created me as the beginning of his works, before his deeds of long ago.

²³From eternity I was appointed, from the beginning, from before the world existed.

²⁴When there were no deep oceans I was born, when there were no springs overflowing with water;

²⁵before the mountains were set in place – before the hills – I was born,

²⁶before he made the earth and its fields, or the beginning of the dust of the world.

²⁷ When he established the heavens,
I was there; when he marked out the
horizon over the face of the deep,

²⁸ when he established the clouds
above, when the fountains of the deep
grew strong,

²⁹ when he gave the sea his decree
that the waters should not pass over
his command, when he marked out the
foundations of the earth,

³⁰ then I was beside him as a master
craftsman, and I was his delight day by
day, rejoicing before him at all times,

³¹ rejoicing in the habitable part of his
earth, and delighting in its people.

³² "So now, children, listen to me;
blessed are those who keep my ways.

³³ Listen to my instruction so that you
may be wise, and do not neglect it.

³⁴ Blessed is the one who listens to
me, watching at my doors day by day,
waiting beside my doorway.

³⁵ For the one who finds me finds life
and receives favor from the Lord.

³⁶ But the one who does not find me
brings harm to himself; all who hate me
love death."

9¹ Wisdom has built her house; she has carved out its seven pillars.

² She has prepared her meat, she has mixed her wine; she also has arranged her table.

³ She has sent out her female servants; she calls out on the highest places of the city.

⁴ "Whoever is naive, let him turn in here," she says to those who lack understanding.

⁵ "Come, eat some of my food, and drink some of the wine I have mixed.

⁶ Abandon your foolish ways so that you may live, and proceed in the way of understanding."

⁷ Whoever corrects a mocker is asking for insult; whoever reproves a wicked person receives abuse.

⁸ Do not reprove a mocker or he will hate you; reprove a wise person and he will love you.

⁹ Give instruction to a wise person, and he will become wiser still; teach a righteous person and he will add to his learning.

¹⁰The beginning of wisdom is to fear the Lord, and acknowledging the Holy One is understanding.

¹¹For because of me your days will be many, and years will be added to your life.

¹²If you are wise, you are wise to your own advantage, but if you are a mocker, you alone must bear it.

¹³The woman called Folly is brash, she is naive and does not know anything.

¹⁴So she sits at the door of her house, on a seat at the highest point of the city,

¹⁵calling out to those who are passing by her in the way, who go straight on their way.

¹⁶"Whoever is simple, let him turn in here," she says to those who lack understanding.

¹⁷"Stolen waters are sweet, and food obtained in secret is pleasant!"

¹⁸But they do not realize that the dead are there, that her guests are in the depths of the grave.

10¹The Proverbs of Solomon: A wise child makes a father rejoice, but a foolish child is a grief to his mother.

²Treasures gained by wickedness do not profit, but righteousness delivers from mortal danger.

³The Lord satisfies the appetite of the righteous, but he thwarts the craving of the wicked.

⁴The one who is lazy becomes poor, but the one who works diligently becomes wealthy.

⁵The one who gathers crops in the summer is a wise son, but the one who sleeps during the harvest is a son who brings shame to himself.

⁶Blessings are on the head of the righteous, but the speech of the wicked conceals violence.

⁷The memory of the righteous is a blessing, but the reputation of the wicked will rot.

⁸The wise person accepts instructions, but the one who speaks foolishness will come to ruin.

⁹The one who conducts himself in integrity will live securely, but the one who behaves perversely will be found out.

¹⁰The one who winks his eye causes trouble, and the one who speaks foolishness will come to ruin.

¹¹The teaching of the righteous is a fountain of life, but the speech of the wicked conceals violence.

¹²Hatred stirs up dissension, but love covers all transgressions.

¹³Wisdom is found in the words of the discerning person, but the one who lacks wisdom will be disciplined.

¹⁴Those who are wise store up knowledge, but foolish speech leads to imminent destruction.

¹⁵The wealth of a rich person is like a fortified city, but the poor are brought to ruin by their poverty.

¹⁶The reward which the righteous receive is life; the recompense which the wicked receive is judgment.

¹⁷The one who heeds instruction is on the way to life, but the one who rejects rebuke goes astray.

¹⁸The one who conceals hatred utters lies, and the one who spreads slander is certainly a fool.

¹⁹When words abound, transgression is inevitable, but the one who restrains his words is wise.

²⁰What the righteous say is like the best silver, but what the wicked think is of little value.

²¹The teaching of the righteous feeds many, but fools die for lack of wisdom.

²²The blessing from the Lord makes a person rich, and he adds no sorrow to it.

²³Carrying out a wicked scheme is enjoyable to a fool, and so is wisdom for the one who has discernment.

²⁴What the wicked fears will come on him; what the righteous desire will be granted.

²⁵When the storm passes through, the wicked are swept away, but the righteous are an everlasting foundation.

²⁶Like vinegar to the teeth and like smoke to the eyes, so is the sluggard to those who send him.

²⁷Fearing the Lord prolongs life, but the life span of the wicked will be shortened.

²⁸The hope of the righteous is joy, but the expectation of the wicked will remain unfulfilled.

²⁹The way of the Lord is like a stronghold for the upright, but it is destruction to evildoers.

³⁰The righteous will never be moved, but the wicked will not inhabit the land.

³¹The speech of the righteous bears the fruit of wisdom, but the one who speaks perversion will be destroyed.

³²The lips of the righteous know what is pleasing, but the speech of the wicked is perverse.

11 ¹The Lord abhors dishonest scales, but an accurate weight is his delight.

²When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom.

³The integrity of the upright guides them, but the crookedness of the unfaithful destroys them.

⁴Wealth does not profit in the day of wrath, but righteousness delivers from mortal danger.

⁵The righteousness of the blameless will make straight their way, but the wicked person will fall by his own wickedness.

⁶The righteousness of the upright will deliver them, but the faithless will be captured by their own desires.

⁷When a wicked person dies, his expectation perishes, and the hope of his strength perishes.

⁸The righteous person is delivered out of trouble, and the wicked turns up in his stead.

⁹With his speech the godless person destroys his neighbor, but by knowledge the righteous will be delivered.

¹⁰When the righteous do well, the city rejoices; when the wicked perish, there is joy.

¹¹A city is exalted by the blessing provided from the upright, but it is destroyed by the counsel of the wicked.

¹²The one who denounces his neighbor lacks wisdom, but the one who has discernment keeps silent.

¹³The one who goes about slandering others reveals secrets, but the one who is trustworthy conceals a matter.

¹⁴When there is no guidance a nation falls, but there is success in the abundance of counselors.

¹⁵The one who puts up security for a stranger will surely have trouble, but whoever avoids shaking hands will be secure.

¹⁶A generous woman gains honor, and ruthless men seize wealth.

¹⁷A kind person benefits himself, but a cruel person brings himself trouble.

¹⁸The wicked person earns deceitful wages, but the one who sows righteousness reaps a genuine reward.

¹⁹True righteousness leads to life, but the one who pursues evil pursues it to his own death.

²⁰The Lord abhors those who are perverse in heart, but those who are blameless in their ways are his delight.

²¹Be assured that the evil person will certainly be punished, but the descendants of the righteous will not suffer unjust judgment.

²²Like a gold ring in a pig's snout is a beautiful woman who rejects discretion.

²³What the righteous desire leads only to good, but what the wicked hope for leads to wrath.

²⁴One person is generous and yet grows more wealthy, but another

withholds more than he should and comes to poverty.

²⁵ A generous person will be enriched, and the one who provides water for others will himself be satisfied.

²⁶ People will curse the one who withholds grain, but they will praise the one who sells it.

²⁷ The one who diligently seeks good seeks favor, but the one who searches for evil – it will come to him.

²⁸ The one who trusts in his riches will fall, but the righteous will flourish like a green leaf.

²⁹ The one who troubles his family will inherit nothing, and the fool will be a servant to the wise person.

³⁰ The fruit of the righteous is like a tree producing life, and the one who wins souls is wise.

³¹ If the righteous are recompensed on earth, how much more the wicked sinner!

12¹ The one who loves discipline loves knowledge, but the one who hates reproof is stupid.

²A good person obtains favor from the Lord, but the Lord condemns a person with wicked schemes.

³No one can be established through wickedness, but a righteous root cannot be moved.

⁴A noble wife is the crown of her husband, but the wife who acts shamefully is like rottenness in his bones.

⁵The plans of the righteous are just; the counsels of the wicked are deceitful.

⁶The words of the wicked lie in wait to shed innocent blood, but the words of the upright will deliver them.

⁷The wicked are overthrown and perish, but the righteous household will stand.

⁸A person is praised in accordance with his wisdom, but the one who has a twisted mind is despised.

⁹Better is a person of humble standing who nevertheless has a servant, than one who pretends to be somebody important yet has no food.

¹⁰A righteous person cares for the life of his animal, but even the most compassionate acts of the wicked are cruel.

¹¹ The one who works his field will have plenty of food, but whoever chases daydreams lacks wisdom.

¹² The wicked person desires a stronghold, but the righteous root endures.

¹³ The evil person is ensnared by the transgression of his speech, but the righteous person escapes out of trouble.

¹⁴ A person will be satisfied with good from the fruit of his words, and the work of his hands will be rendered to him.

¹⁵ The way of a fool is right in his own opinion, but the one who listens to advice is wise.

¹⁶ A fool's annoyance is known at once, but the prudent overlooks an insult.

¹⁷ The faithful witness tells what is right, but a false witness speaks deceit.

¹⁸ Speaking recklessly is like the thrusts of a sword, but the words of the wise bring healing.

¹⁹ The one who tells the truth will endure forever, but the one who lies will last only for a moment.

²⁰ Deceit is in the heart of those who plot evil, but those who promote peace have joy.

²¹ The righteous do not encounter any harm, but the wicked are filled with calamity.

²² The Lord abhors a person who lies, but those who deal truthfully are his delight.

²³ The shrewd person conceals knowledge, but foolish people publicize folly.

²⁴ The diligent person will rule, but the slothful will become a slave.

²⁵ Anxiety in a person's heart weighs him down, but an encouraging word brings him joy.

²⁶ The righteous person is cautious in his friendship, but the way of the wicked leads them astray.

²⁷ The lazy person does not roast his prey, but personal possessions are precious to the diligent.

²⁸ In the path of righteousness there is life, but another path leads to death.

13¹ A wise son accepts his father's discipline, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke.

² From the fruit of his speech a person eats good things, but the faithless desire the fruit of violence.

³The one who guards his words guards his life, but whoever is talkative will come to ruin.

⁴The appetite of the sluggard craves but gets nothing, but the desire of the diligent will be abundantly satisfied.

⁵The righteous person hates anything false, but the wicked person acts in shameful disgrace.

⁶Righteousness guards the one who lives with integrity, but wickedness overthrows the sinner.

⁷There is one who pretends to be rich and yet has nothing; another pretends to be poor and yet possesses great wealth.

⁸The ransom of a person's life is his wealth, but the poor person hears no threat.

⁹The light of the righteous shines brightly, but the lamp of the wicked goes out.

¹⁰With pride comes only contention, but wisdom is with the well-advised.

¹¹Wealth gained quickly will dwindle away, but the one who gathers it little by little will become rich.

¹²Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is like a tree of life.

¹³The one who despises instruction will pay the penalty, but whoever esteems instruction will be rewarded.

¹⁴Instruction from the wise is like a life-giving fountain, to turn a person from deadly snares.

¹⁵Keen insight wins favor, but the conduct of the unfaithful is harsh.

¹⁶Every shrewd person acts with knowledge, but a fool displays his folly.

¹⁷An unreliable messenger falls into trouble, but a faithful envoy brings healing.

¹⁸The one who neglects discipline ends up in poverty and shame, but the one who accepts reproof is honored.

¹⁹A desire fulfilled is sweet to the soul, but fools abhor turning away from evil.

²⁰The one who associates with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm.

²¹Calamity pursues sinners, but prosperity rewards the righteous.

²²A benevolent person leaves an inheritance for his grandchildren, but the wealth of a sinner is stored up for the righteous.

²³ There is abundant food in the field of the poor, but it is swept away by injustice.

²⁴ The one who spares his rod hates his child, but the one who loves his child is diligent in disciplining him.

²⁵ The righteous has enough food to satisfy his appetite, but the belly of the wicked lacks food.

14 ¹ Every wise woman builds her household, but a foolish woman tears it down with her own hands.

² The one who walks in his uprightness fears the Lord, but the one who is perverted in his ways despises him.

³ In the speech of a fool is a rod for his back, but the words of the wise protect them.

⁴ Where there are no oxen, the feeding trough is clean, but an abundant harvest is produced by strong oxen.

⁵ A truthful witness does not lie, but a false witness breathes out lies.

⁶ The scorner seeks wisdom but finds none, but understanding is easy for a discerning person.

⁷ Leave the presence of a foolish person, or you will not understand wise counsel.

⁸The wisdom of the shrewd person is to discern his way, but the folly of fools is deception.

⁹Fools mock at reparation, but among the upright there is favor.

¹⁰The heart knows its own bitterness, and with its joy no one else can share.

¹¹The household of the wicked will be destroyed, but the tent of the upright will flourish.

¹²There is a way that seems right to a person, but its end is the way that leads to death.

¹³Even in laughter the heart may ache, and the end of joy may be grief.

¹⁴The backslider will be paid back from his own ways, but a good person will be rewarded for his.

¹⁵A naive person believes everything, but the shrewd person discerns his steps.

¹⁶A wise person is cautious and turns from evil, but a fool throws off restraint and is overconfident.

¹⁷A person who has a quick temper does foolish things, and a person with crafty schemes is hated.

¹⁸The naive inherit folly, but the shrewd are crowned with knowledge.

¹⁹Those who are evil will bow before those who are good, and the wicked will bow at the gates of the righteous.

²⁰A poor person is disliked even by his neighbors, but those who love the rich are many.

²¹The one who despises his neighbor sins, but whoever is kind to the needy is blessed.

²²Do not those who devise evil go astray? But those who plan good exhibit faithful covenant love.

²³In all hard work there is profit, but merely talking about it only brings poverty.

²⁴The crown of the wise is their riches, but the folly of fools is folly.

²⁵A truthful witness rescues lives, but the one who breathes lies brings deception.

²⁶In the fear of the Lord one has strong confidence, and it will be a refuge for his children.

²⁷The fear of the Lord is like a life-giving fountain, to turn people from deadly snares.

²⁸A king's glory is the abundance of people, but the lack of subjects is the ruin of a ruler.

²⁹The one who is slow to anger has great understanding, but the one who has a quick temper exalts folly.

³⁰A tranquil spirit revives the body, but envy is rotteness to the bones.

³¹The one who oppresses the poor insults his Creator, but whoever shows favor to the needy honors him.

³²The wicked will be thrown down in his trouble, but the righteous have refuge even in the threat of death.

³³Wisdom rests in the heart of the discerning; it is known even in the heart of fools.

³⁴Righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a disgrace to any people.

³⁵The king shows favor to a wise servant, but his wrath falls on one who acts shamefully.

15¹A gentle response turns away anger, but a harsh word stirs up wrath.

²The tongue of the wise treats knowledge correctly, but the mouth of the fool spouts out folly.

³The eyes of the Lord are in every place, keeping watch on those who are evil and those who are good.

⁴Speech that heals is like a life-giving tree, but a perverse tongue breaks the spirit.

⁵A fool rejects his father's discipline, but whoever heeds reproof shows good sense.

⁶In the house of the righteous is abundant wealth, but the income of the wicked brings trouble.

⁷The lips of the wise spread knowledge, but not so the heart of fools.

⁸The Lord abhors the sacrifices of the wicked, but the prayer of the upright pleases him.

⁹The Lord abhors the way of the wicked, but he loves those who pursue righteousness.

¹⁰Severe discipline is for the one who abandons the way; the one who hates reproof will die.

¹¹Death and Destruction are before the Lord – how much more the hearts of humans!

¹²The scorner does not love one who corrects him; he will not go to the wise.

¹³A joyful heart makes the face cheerful, but by a painful heart the spirit is broken.

¹⁴The discerning heart seeks knowledge, but the mouth of fools feeds on folly.

¹⁵All the days of the afflicted are bad, but one with a cheerful heart has a continual feast.

¹⁶Better is little with the fear of the Lord than great wealth and turmoil with it.

¹⁷Better a meal of vegetables where there is love than a fattened ox where there is hatred.

¹⁸A quick-tempered person stirs up dissension, but one who is slow to anger calms a quarrel.

¹⁹The way of the sluggard is like a hedge of thorns, but the path of the upright is like a highway.

²⁰A wise child brings joy to his father, but a foolish person despises his mother.

²¹Folly is a joy to one who lacks sense, but one who has understanding follows an upright course.

²² Plans fail when there is no counsel, but with abundant advisers they are established.

²³ A person has joy in giving an appropriate answer, and a word at the right time – how good it is!

²⁴ The path of life is upward for the wise person, to keep him from going downward to Sheol.

²⁵ The Lord tears down the house of the proud, but he maintains the boundaries of the widow.

²⁶ The Lord abhors the plans of the wicked, but pleasant words are pure.

²⁷ The one who is greedy for gain troubles his household, but whoever hates bribes will live.

²⁸ The heart of the righteous considers how to answer, but the mouth of the wicked pours out evil things.

²⁹ The Lord is far from the wicked, but he hears the prayer of the righteous.

³⁰ A bright look brings joy to the heart, and good news gives health to the body.

³¹ The person who hears the reproof that leads to life is at home among the wise.

³²The one who refuses correction despises himself, but whoever hears reproof acquires understanding.

³³The fear of the Lord provides wise instruction, and before honor comes humility.

16¹The intentions of the heart belong to a man, but the answer of the tongue comes from the Lord.

²All a person's ways seem right in his own opinion, but the Lord evaluates the motives.

³Commit your works to the Lord, and your plans will be established.

⁴The Lord works everything for its own ends – even the wicked for the day of disaster.

⁵The Lord abhors every arrogant person; rest assured that they will not go unpunished.

⁶Through loyal love and truth iniquity is appeased; through fearing the Lord one avoids evil.

⁷When a person's ways are pleasing to the Lord, he even reconciles his enemies to himself.

⁸Better to have a little with righteousness than to have abundant income without justice.

⁹A person plans his course, but the Lord directs his steps.

¹⁰The divine verdict is in the words of the king, his pronouncements must not act treacherously against justice.

¹¹Honest scales and balances are from the Lord; all the weights in the bag are his handiwork.

¹²Doing wickedness is an abomination to kings, because a throne is established in righteousness.

¹³The delight of kings is righteous counsel, and they love the one who speaks uprightly.

¹⁴A king's wrath is like a messenger of death, but a wise person appeases it.

¹⁵In the light of the king's face there is life, and his favor is like the clouds of the spring rain.

¹⁶How much better it is to acquire wisdom than gold; to acquire understanding is more desirable than silver.

¹⁷ The highway of the upright is to turn away from evil; the one who guards his way safeguards his life.

¹⁸ Pride goes before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.

¹⁹ It is better to be lowly in spirit with the afflicted than to share the spoils with the proud.

²⁰ The one who deals wisely in a matter will find success, and blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord.

²¹ The one who is wise in heart is called discerning, and kind speech increases persuasiveness.

²² Insight is like a life-giving fountain to the one who possesses it, but folly leads to the discipline of fools.

²³ A wise person's heart makes his speech wise and it adds persuasiveness to his words.

²⁴ Pleasant words are like a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.

²⁵ There is a way that seems right to a person, but its end is the way that leads to death.

²⁶ A laborer's appetite works on his behalf, for his hunger urges him to work.

²⁷ A wicked scoundrel digs up evil, and his slander is like a scorching fire.

²⁸ A perverse person spreads dissension, and a gossip separates the closest friends.

²⁹ A violent person entices his neighbor, and leads him down a path that is terrible.

³⁰ The one who winks his eyes devises perverse things, and one who compresses his lips brings about evil.

³¹ Gray hair is like a crown of glory; it is attained in the path of righteousness.

³² Better to be slow to anger than to be a mighty warrior, and one who controls his temper is better than one who captures a city.

³³ The dice are thrown into the lap, but their every decision is from the Lord.

17 ¹ Better is a dry crust of bread where there is quietness than a house full of feasting with strife.

² A servant who acts wisely will rule over an heir who behaves shamefully, and will share the inheritance along with the relatives.

³The crucible is for refining silver and the furnace is for gold, likewise the Lord tests hearts.

⁴One who acts wickedly pays attention to evil counsel; a liar listens to a malicious tongue.

⁵The one who mocks the poor insults his Creator; whoever rejoices over disaster will not go unpunished.

⁶Grandchildren are like a crown to the elderly, and the glory of children is their parents.

⁷Excessive speech is not becoming for a fool; how much less are lies for a ruler!

⁸A bribe works like a charm for the one who offers it; in whatever he does he succeeds.

⁹The one who forgives an offense seeks love, but whoever repeats a matter separates close friends.

¹⁰A rebuke makes a greater impression on a discerning person than a hundred blows on a fool.

¹¹An evil person seeks only rebellion, and so a cruel messenger will be sent against him.

¹²It is better for a person to meet a mother bear being robbed of her cubs, than to encounter a fool in his folly.

¹³As for the one who repays evil for good, evil will not leave his house.

¹⁴Starting a quarrel is like letting out water; stop it before strife breaks out!

¹⁵The one who acquits the guilty and the one who condemns the innocent – both of them are an abomination to the Lord.

¹⁶Of what use is money in the hand of a fool, since he has no intention of acquiring wisdom?

¹⁷A friend loves at all times, and a relative is born to help in adversity.

¹⁸The one who lacks wisdom strikes hands in pledge, and puts up financial security for his neighbor.

¹⁹The one who loves a quarrel loves transgression; whoever builds his gate high seeks destruction.

²⁰The one who has a perverse heart does not find good, and the one who is deceitful in speech falls into trouble.

²¹Whoever brings a fool into the world does so to his grief, and the father of a fool has no joy.

²² A cheerful heart brings good healing, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.

²³ A wicked person receives a bribe secretly to pervert the ways of justice.

²⁴ Wisdom is directly in front of the discerning person, but the eyes of a fool run to the ends of the earth.

²⁵ A foolish child is a grief to his father, and bitterness to the mother who bore him.

²⁶ It is terrible to punish a righteous person, and to flog honorable men is wrong.

²⁷ The truly wise person restrains his words, and the one who stays calm is discerning.

²⁸ Even a fool who remains silent is considered wise, and the one who holds his tongue is deemed discerning.

18¹ One who has isolated himself seeks his own desires; he rejects all sound judgment.

² A fool takes no pleasure in understanding but only in disclosing what is on his mind.

³ When a wicked person arrives, contempt shows up with him, and with shame comes a reproach.

⁴The words of a person's mouth are like deep waters, and the fountain of wisdom is like a flowing brook.

⁵It is terrible to show partiality to the wicked, by depriving a righteous man of justice.

⁶The lips of a fool enter into strife, and his mouth invites a flogging.

⁷The mouth of a fool is his ruin, and his lips are a snare for his life.

⁸The words of a gossip are like choice morsels; they go down into the person's innermost being.

⁹The one who is slack in his work is a brother to one who destroys.

¹⁰The name of the Lord is like a strong tower; the righteous person runs to it and is set safely on high.

¹¹The wealth of a rich person is like a strong city, and it is like a high wall in his imagination.

¹²Before destruction the heart of a person is proud, but humility comes before honor.

¹³The one who gives an answer before he listens – that is his folly and his shame.

¹⁴A person's spirit sustains him through sickness – but who can bear a crushed spirit?

¹⁵The discerning person acquires knowledge, and the wise person seeks knowledge.

¹⁶A person's gift makes room for him, and leads him before important people.

¹⁷The first to state his case seems right, until his opponent begins to cross-examine him.

¹⁸A toss of a coin ends disputes, and settles the issue between strong opponents.

¹⁹A relative offended is harder to reach than a strong city, and disputes are like the barred gates of a fortified citadel.

²⁰From the fruit of a person's mouth his stomach is satisfied, with the product of his lips is he satisfied.

²¹Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love its use will eat its fruit.

²²The one who finds a wife finds what is enjoyable, and receives a pleasurable gift from the Lord.

²³A poor person makes supplications, but a rich man answers harshly.

²⁴ A person who has friends may be harmed by them, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

19¹ Better is a poor person who walks in his integrity than one who is perverse in his speech and is a fool.

² It is dangerous to have zeal without knowledge, and the one who acts hastily makes poor choices.

³ A person's folly subverts his way, and his heart rages against the Lord.

⁴ Wealth adds many friends, but a poor person is separated from his friend.

⁵ A false witness will not go unpunished, and the one who spouts out lies will not escape punishment.

⁶ Many people entreat the favor of a generous person, and everyone is the friend of the person who gives gifts.

⁷ All the relatives of a poor person hate him; how much more do his friends avoid him – he pursues them with words, but they do not respond.

⁸ The one who acquires wisdom loves himself; the one who preserves understanding will prosper.

⁹A false witness will not go unpunished, and the one who spouts out lies will perish.

¹⁰Luxury is not appropriate for a fool; how much less for a servant to rule over princes!

¹¹A person's wisdom makes him slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense.

¹²A king's wrath is like the roar of a lion, but his favor is like dew on the grass.

¹³A foolish child is the ruin of his father, and a contentious wife is like a constant dripping.

¹⁴A house and wealth are inherited from parents, but a prudent wife is from the Lord.

¹⁵Laziness brings on a deep sleep, and the idle person will go hungry.

¹⁶The one who obeys commandments guards his life; the one who despises his ways will die.

¹⁷The one who is gracious to the poor lends to the Lord, and the Lord will repay him for his good deed.

¹⁸Discipline your child, for there is hope, but do not set your heart on causing his death.

¹⁹A person with great anger bears the penalty, but if you deliver him from it once, you will have to do it again.

²⁰Listen to advice and receive discipline, that you may become wise by the end of your life.

²¹There are many plans in a person's mind, but it is the counsel of the Lord which will stand.

²²What is desirable for a person is to show loyal love, and a poor person is better than a liar.

²³Fearing the Lord leads to life, and one who does so will live satisfied; he will not be afflicted by calamity.

²⁴The sluggard plunges his hand in the dish, and he will not even bring it back to his mouth!

²⁵Flog a scorner, and as a result the simpleton will learn prudence; correct a discerning person, and as a result he will understand knowledge.

²⁶The one who robs his father and chases away his mother is a son who brings shame and disgrace.

²⁷ If you stop listening to instruction, my child, you will stray from the words of knowledge.

²⁸ A crooked witness scorns justice, and the mouth of the wicked devours iniquity.

²⁹ Judgments are prepared for scorners, and floggings for the backs of fools.

20¹ Wine is a mocker and strong drink is a brawler; whoever goes astray by them is not wise.

² The king's terrifying anger is like the roar of a lion; whoever provokes him sins against himself.

³ It is an honor for a person to cease from strife, but every fool quarrels.

⁴ The sluggard will not plow during the planting season, so at harvest time he looks for the crop but has nothing.

⁵ Counsel in a person's heart is like deep water, but an understanding person draws it out.

⁶ Many people profess their loyalty, but a faithful person – who can find?

⁷ The righteous person behaves in integrity; blessed are his children after him.

⁸A king sitting on the throne to judge separates out all evil with his eyes.

⁹Who can say, "I have kept my heart clean; I am pure from my sin"?

¹⁰Diverse weights and diverse measures – the Lord abhors both of them.

¹¹Even a young man is known by his actions, whether his activity is pure and whether it is right.

¹²The ear that hears and the eye that sees – the Lord has made them both.

¹³Do not love sleep, lest you become impoverished; open your eyes so that you might be satisfied with food.

¹⁴"It's worthless! It's worthless!" says the buyer, but when he goes on his way, he boasts.

¹⁵There is gold, and an abundance of rubies, but words of knowledge are like a precious jewel.

¹⁶Take a man's garment when he has given security for a stranger, and when he gives surety for strangers, hold him in pledge.

¹⁷Bread gained by deceit tastes sweet to a person, but afterward his mouth will be filled with gravel.

¹⁸Plans are established by counsel, so make war with guidance.

¹⁹The one who goes about gossiping reveals secrets; therefore do not associate with someone who is always opening his mouth.

²⁰The one who curses his father and his mother, his lamp will be extinguished in the blackest darkness.

²¹An inheritance gained easily in the beginning will not be blessed in the end.

²²Do not say, "I will pay back evil!" Wait for the Lord, so that he may vindicate you.

²³The Lord abhors differing weights, and dishonest scales are wicked.

²⁴The steps of a person are ordained by the Lord – so how can anyone understand his own way?

²⁵It is a snare for a person to rashly cry, "Holy!" and only afterward to consider what he has vowed.

²⁶A wise king separates out the wicked; he turns the threshing wheel over them.

²⁷The human spirit is like the lamp of the Lord, searching all his innermost parts.

²⁸Loyal love and truth preserve a king, and his throne is upheld by loyal love.

²⁹The glory of young men is their strength, and the splendor of old men is gray hair.

³⁰Beatings and wounds cleanse away evil, and floggings cleanse the innermost being.

21 ¹The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord like channels of water; he turns it wherever he wants.

²All of a person's ways seem right in his own opinion, but the Lord evaluates the motives.

³To do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice.

⁴Haughty eyes and a proud heart – the agricultural product of the wicked is sin.

⁵The plans of the diligent lead only to plenty, but everyone who is hasty comes only to poverty.

⁶Making a fortune by a lying tongue is like a vapor driven back and forth; they seek death.

⁷The violence done by the wicked will drag them away because they refuse to do what is right.

⁸The way of the guilty person is devious, but as for the pure, his way is upright.

⁹It is better to live on a corner of the housetop than in a house in company with a quarrelsome wife.

¹⁰The appetite of the wicked desires evil; his neighbor is shown no favor in his eyes.

¹¹When a scorner is punished, the naive becomes wise; when a wise person is instructed, he gains knowledge.

¹²The Righteous One considers the house of the wicked; he overthrows the wicked to their ruin.

¹³The one who shuts his ears to the cry of the poor, he too will cry out and will not be answered.

¹⁴A gift given in secret subdues anger, and a bribe given secretly subdues strong wrath.

¹⁵Doing justice brings joy to the righteous and terror to those who do evil.

¹⁶The one who wanders from the way of wisdom will end up in the company of the departed.

¹⁷ The one who loves pleasure will be a poor person; whoever loves wine and anointing oil will not be rich.

¹⁸ The wicked become a ransom for the righteous, and the faithless are taken in the place of the upright.

¹⁹ It is better to live in a desert land than with a quarrelsome and easily-provoked woman.

²⁰ There is desirable treasure and olive oil in the dwelling of the wise, but a foolish person devours all he has.

²¹ The one who pursues righteousness and love finds life, bounty, and honor.

²² The wise person can scale the city of the mighty and bring down the stronghold in which they trust.

²³ The one who guards his mouth and his tongue keeps his life from troubles.

²⁴ A proud and arrogant person, whose name is "Scoffer," acts with overbearing pride.

²⁵ What the sluggard desires will kill him, for his hands refuse to work.

²⁶ All day long he craves greedily, but the righteous gives and does not hold back.

²⁷ The wicked person's sacrifice is an abomination; how much more when he brings it with evil intent!

²⁸ A lying witness will perish, but the one who reports accurately speaks forever.

²⁹ A wicked person shows boldness with his face, but as for the upright, he discerns his ways.

³⁰ There is no wisdom and there is no understanding, and there is no counsel against the Lord.

³¹ A horse is prepared for the day of battle, but the victory is from the Lord.

22 ¹ A good name is to be chosen rather than great wealth, good favor more than silver or gold.

² The rich and the poor meet together; the Lord is the creator of them both.

³ A shrewd person sees danger and hides himself, but the naive keep right on going and suffer for it.

⁴ The reward for humility and fearing the Lord is riches and honor and life.

⁵ Thorns and snares are in the path of the perverse, but the one who guards himself keeps far from them.

⁶Train a child in the way that he should go, and when he is old he will not turn from it.

⁷The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.

⁸The one who sows iniquity will reap trouble, and the rod of his fury will end.

⁹A generous person will be blessed, for he gives some of his food to the poor.

¹⁰Drive out the scorner and contention will leave; strife and insults will cease.

¹¹The one who loves a pure heart and whose speech is gracious – the king will be his friend.

¹²The eyes of the Lord guard knowledge, but he overthrows the words of the faithless person.

¹³The sluggard says, "There is a lion outside! I will be killed in the middle of the streets!"

¹⁴The mouth of an adulteress is like a deep pit; the one against whom the Lord is angry will fall into it.

¹⁵Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him.

¹⁶The one who oppresses the poor to increase his own gain and the one who

gives to the rich – both end up only in poverty.

¹⁷Incline your ear and listen to the words of the wise, and apply your heart to my instruction.

¹⁸For it is pleasing if you keep these sayings within you, and they are ready on your lips.

¹⁹So that your confidence may be in the Lord, I am making them known to you today – even you.

²⁰Have I not written thirty sayings for you, sayings of counsel and knowledge,

²¹to show you true and reliable words, so that you may give accurate answers to those who sent you?

²²Do not exploit a poor person because he is poor and do not crush the needy in court,

²³for the Lord will plead their case and will rob those who are robbing them.

²⁴Do not make friends with an angry person, and do not associate with a wrathful person,

²⁵lest you learn his ways and entangle yourself in a snare.

²⁶Do not be one who strikes hands in pledge or who puts up security for debts.

²⁷ If you do not have enough to pay, your bed will be taken right out from under you!

²⁸ Do not move an ancient boundary stone which was put in place by your ancestors.

²⁹ Do you see a person skilled in his work? He will take his position before kings; he will not take his position before obscure people.

23 ¹ When you sit down to eat with a ruler, consider carefully what is before you,

² and put a knife to your throat if you possess a large appetite.

³ Do not crave that ruler's delicacies, for that food is deceptive.

⁴ Do not wear yourself out to become rich; be wise enough to restrain yourself.

⁵ When you gaze upon riches, they are gone, for they surely make wings for themselves, and fly off into the sky like an eagle!

⁶ Do not eat the food of a stingy person, do not crave his delicacies;

⁷ for he is like someone calculating the cost in his mind. "Eat and drink," he says to you, but his heart is not with you;

⁸you will vomit up the little bit you have eaten, and will have wasted your pleasant words.

⁹Do not speak in the ears of a fool, for he will despise the wisdom of your words.

¹⁰Do not move an ancient boundary stone, or take over the fields of the fatherless,

¹¹for their Protector is strong; he will plead their case against you.

¹²Apply your heart to instruction and your ears to the words of knowledge.

¹³Do not withhold discipline from a child; even if you strike him with the rod, he will not die.

¹⁴If you strike him with the rod, you will deliver him from death.

¹⁵My child, if your heart is wise, then my heart also will be glad;

¹⁶my soul will rejoice when your lips speak what is right.

¹⁷Do not let your heart envy sinners, but rather be zealous in fearing the Lord all the time.

¹⁸For surely there is a future, and your hope will not be cut off.

¹⁹ Listen, my child, and be wise, and guide your heart on the right way.

²⁰ Do not spend time among drunkards, among those who eat too much meat,

²¹ because drunkards and gluttons become impoverished, and drowsiness clothes them with rags.

²² Listen to your father who begot you, and do not despise your mother when she is old.

²³ Acquire truth and do not sell it – wisdom, and discipline, and understanding.

²⁴ The father of a righteous person will rejoice greatly; whoever fathers a wise child will have joy in him.

²⁵ May your father and your mother have joy; may she who bore you rejoice.

²⁶ Give me your heart, my son, and let your eyes observe my ways;

²⁷ for a prostitute is like a deep pit; a harlot is like a narrow well.

²⁸ Indeed, she lies in wait like a robber, and increases the unfaithful among men.

²⁹ Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause? Who has dullness of the eyes?

³⁰ Those who linger over wine, those who go looking for mixed wine.

³¹ Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it goes down smoothly.

³² Afterward it bites like a snake, and stings like a viper.

³³ Your eyes will see strange things, and your mind will speak perverse things.

³⁴ And you will be like one who lies down in the midst of the sea, and like one who lies down on the top of the rigging.

³⁵ You will say, "They have struck me, but I am not harmed! They beat me, but I did not know it! When will I awake? I will look for another drink."

24¹ Do not envy evil people, do not desire to be with them;

² for their hearts contemplate violence, and their lips speak harm.

³ By wisdom a house is built, and through understanding it is established;

⁴ by knowledge its rooms are filled with all kinds of precious and pleasing treasures.

⁵ A wise warrior is strong, and a man of knowledge makes his strength stronger;

⁶for with guidance you wage your war, and with numerous advisers there is victory.

⁷Wisdom is unattainable for a fool; in court he does not open his mouth.

⁸The one who plans to do evil will be called a scheming person.

⁹A foolish scheme is sin, and the scorner is an abomination to people.

¹⁰If you faint in the day of trouble, your strength is small!

¹¹Deliver those being taken away to death, and hold back those slipping to the slaughter.

¹²If you say, "But we did not know about this," does not the one who evaluates hearts consider? Does not the one who guards your life know? Will he not repay each person according to his deeds?

¹³Eat honey, my child, for it is good, and honey from the honeycomb is sweet to your taste.

¹⁴Likewise, know that wisdom is sweet to your soul; if you find it, you will have a future, and your hope will not be cut off.

¹⁵ Do not lie in wait like the wicked against the place where the righteous live; do not assault his home.

¹⁶ Although a righteous person may fall seven times, he gets up again, but the wicked will be brought down by calamity.

¹⁷ Do not rejoice when your enemy falls, and when he stumbles do not let your heart rejoice,

¹⁸ lest the Lord see it, and be displeased, and turn his wrath away from him.

¹⁹ Do not fret because of evil people or be envious of wicked people,

²⁰ for the evil person has no future, and the lamp of the wicked will be extinguished.

²¹ Fear the Lord, my child, as well as the king, and do not associate with rebels,

²² for suddenly their destruction will overtake them, and who knows the ruinous judgment both the Lord and the king can bring?

²³ These sayings also are from the wise: To show partiality in judgment is terrible:

²⁴ The one who says to the guilty, "You are innocent," peoples will curse him, and nations will denounce him.

²⁵ But there will be delight for those who convict the guilty, and a pleasing blessing will come on them.

²⁶ Like a kiss on the lips is the one who gives an honest answer.

²⁷ Establish your work outside and get your fields ready; afterward build your house.

²⁸ Do not be a witness against your neighbor without cause, and do not deceive with your words.

²⁹ Do not say, "I will do to him just as he has done to me; I will pay him back according to what he has done."

³⁰ I passed by the field of a sluggard, by the vineyard of one who lacks wisdom.

³¹ I saw that thorns had grown up all over it, the ground was covered with weeds, and its stone wall was broken down.

³² When I saw this, I gave careful consideration to it; I received instruction from what I saw:

³³ "A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to relax,

³⁴ and your poverty will come like a bandit, and your need like an armed robber."

25¹ These also are proverbs of Solomon, which the men of King Hezekiah of Judah copied:

² It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, and it is the glory of a king to search out a matter.

³ As the heaven is high and the earth is deep so the hearts of kings are unsearchable.

⁴ Remove the dross from the silver, and material for the silversmith will emerge;

⁵ remove the wicked from before the king, and his throne will be established in righteousness.

⁶ Do not honor yourself before the king, and do not stand in the place of great men;

⁷ for it is better for him to say to you, "Come up here," than to put you lower before a prince, whom your eyes have seen.

⁸ Do not go out hastily to litigation, or what will you do afterward when your neighbor puts you to shame?

⁹ When you argue a case with your neighbor, do not reveal the secret of another person,

¹⁰lest the one who hears it put you to shame and your infamy will never go away.

¹¹Like apples of gold in settings of silver, so is a word skillfully spoken.

¹²Like an earring of gold and an ornament of fine gold, so is a wise reprover to the ear of the one who listens.

¹³Like the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to those who send him, for he refreshes the heart of his masters.

¹⁴Like cloudy skies and wind that produce no rain, so is the one who boasts of a gift not given.

¹⁵Through patience a ruler can be persuaded, and a soft tongue can break a bone.

¹⁶When you find honey, eat only what is sufficient for you, lest you become stuffed with it and vomit it up.

¹⁷Don't set foot too frequently in your neighbor's house, lest he become weary of you and hate you.

¹⁸Like a club or a sword or a sharp arrow, so is the one who testifies against his neighbor as a false witness.

¹⁹ Like a bad tooth or a foot out of joint, so is confidence in an unfaithful person at the time of trouble.

²⁰ Like one who takes off a garment on a cold day, or like vinegar poured on soda, so is one who sings songs to a heavy heart.

²¹ If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat, and if he is thirsty, give him water to drink,

²² for you will heap coals of fire on his head, and the Lord will reward you.

²³ The north wind brings forth rain, and a gossiping tongue brings forth an angry look.

²⁴ It is better to live on a corner of the housetop than in a house in company with a quarrelsome wife.

²⁵ Like cold water to a weary person, so is good news from a distant land.

²⁶ Like a muddied spring and a polluted well, so is a righteous person who gives way before the wicked.

²⁷ It is not good to eat too much honey, nor is it honorable for people to seek their own glory.

²⁸ Like a city that is broken down and without a wall, so is a person who cannot control his temper.

26 ¹ Like snow in summer or rain in harvest, so honor is not fitting for a fool.

² Like a fluttering bird or like a flying swallow, so a curse without cause does not come to rest.

³ A whip for the horse and a bridle for the donkey, and a rod for the backs of fools!

⁴ Do not answer a fool according to his folly, lest you yourself also be like him.

⁵ Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own estimation.

⁶ Like cutting off the feet or drinking violence, so is sending a message by the hand of a fool.

⁷ Like legs that hang limp from the lame, so is a proverb in the mouth of fools.

⁸ Like tying a stone in a sling, so is giving honor to a fool.

⁹ Like a thorn that goes into the hand of a drunkard, so is a proverb in the mouth of a fool.

¹⁰Like an archer who wounds at random, so is the one who hires a fool or hires any passer-by.

¹¹Like a dog that returns to its vomit, so a fool repeats his folly.

¹²Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

¹³The sluggard says, "There is a lion in the road! A lion in the streets!"

¹⁴Like a door that turns on its hinges, so a sluggard turns on his bed.

¹⁵The sluggard plunges his hand in the dish; he is too lazy to bring it back to his mouth.

¹⁶The sluggard is wiser in his own estimation than seven people who respond with good sense.

¹⁷Like one who grabs a wild dog by the ears, so is the person passing by who becomes furious over a quarrel not his own.

¹⁸Like a madman who shoots firebrands and deadly arrows,

¹⁹so is a person who deceives his neighbor, and says, "Was I not only joking?"

²⁰Where there is no wood, a fire goes out, and where there is no gossip, contention ceases.

²¹Like charcoal is to burning coals, and wood to fire, so is a contentious person to kindle strife.

²²The words of a gossip are like delicious morsels; they go down into a person's innermost being.

²³Like a coating of glaze over earthenware are fervent lips with an evil heart.

²⁴The one who hates others disguises it with his lips, but he stores up deceit within him.

²⁵When he speaks graciously, do not believe him, for there are seven abominations within him.

²⁶Though his hatred may be concealed by deceit, his evil will be uncovered in the assembly.

²⁷The one who digs a pit will fall into it; the one who rolls a stone – it will come back on him.

²⁸A lying tongue hates those crushed by it, and a flattering mouth works ruin.

27 ¹ Do not boast about tomorrow;
for you do not know what a day
may bring forth.

² Let another praise you, and not your
own mouth; someone else, and not your
own lips.

³ A stone is heavy and sand is
weighty, but vexation by a fool is more
burdensome than the two of them.

⁴ Wrath is cruel and anger is
overwhelming, but who can stand before
jealousy?

⁵ Better is open rebuke than hidden
love.

⁶ Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but
the kisses of an enemy are excessive.

⁷ The one whose appetite is satisfied
loathes honey, but to the hungry mouth
every bitter thing is sweet.

⁸ Like a bird that wanders from its nest,
so is a person who wanders from his
home.

⁹ Ointment and incense make the heart
rejoice, likewise the sweetness of one's
friend from sincere counsel.

¹⁰ Do not forsake your friend and your
father's friend, and do not enter your
brother's house in the day of your

disaster; a neighbor nearby is better than a brother far away.

¹¹ Be wise, my son, and make my heart glad, so that I may answer anyone who taunts me.

¹² A shrewd person sees danger and hides himself, but the naive keep right on going and suffer for it.

¹³ Take a man's garment when he has given security for a stranger, and when he gives surety for a stranger, hold him in pledge.

¹⁴ If someone blesses his neighbor with a loud voice early in the morning, it will be counted as a curse to him.

¹⁵ A continual dripping on a rainy day and a contentious wife are alike.

¹⁶ Whoever hides her hides the wind or grasps oil with his right hand.

¹⁷ As iron sharpens iron, so a person sharpens his friend.

¹⁸ The one who tends a fig tree will eat its fruit, and whoever takes care of his master will be honored.

¹⁹ As in water the face is reflected as a face, so a person's heart reflects the person.

²⁰As Death and Destruction are never satisfied, so the eyes of a person are never satisfied.

²¹As the crucible is for silver and the furnace is for gold, so a person is proved by the praise he receives.

²²If you should pound the fool in the mortar among the grain with the pestle, his foolishness would not depart from him.

²³Pay careful attention to the condition of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds,

²⁴for riches do not last forever, nor does a crown last from generation to generation.

²⁵When the hay is removed and new grass appears, and the grass from the hills is gathered in,

²⁶the lambs will be for your clothing, and the goats will be for the price of a field.

²⁷And there will be enough goat's milk for your food, for the food of your household, and for the sustenance of your servant girls.

28¹The wicked person flees when there is no one pursuing, but the

righteous person is as confident as a lion.

²When a country is rebellious it has many princes, but by someone who is discerning and knowledgeable order is maintained.

³A poor person who oppresses the weak is like a driving rain without food.

⁴Those who forsake the law praise the wicked, but those who keep the law contend with them.

⁵Evil people do not understand justice, but those who seek the Lord understand it all.

⁶A poor person who walks in his integrity is better than one who is perverse in his ways even though he is rich.

⁷The one who keeps the law is a discerning child, but a companion of gluttons brings shame to his parents.

⁸The one who increases his wealth by increasing interest gathers it for someone who is gracious to the needy.

⁹The one who turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination.

¹⁰The one who leads the upright astray in an evil way will himself fall into his own pit, but the blameless will inherit what is good.

¹¹A rich person is wise in his own eyes, but a discerning poor person can evaluate him properly.

¹²When the righteous rejoice, great is the glory, but when the wicked rise to power, people are sought out.

¹³The one who covers his transgressions will not prosper, but whoever confesses them and forsakes them will find mercy.

¹⁴Blessed is the one who is always cautious, but whoever hardens his heart will fall into evil.

¹⁵Like a roaring lion or a roving bear, so is a wicked ruler over a poor people.

¹⁶The prince who is a great oppressor lacks wisdom, but the one who hates unjust gain will prolong his days.

¹⁷The one who is tormented by the murder of another will flee to the pit; let no one support him.

¹⁸The one who walks blamelessly will be delivered, but whoever is perverse in his ways will fall at once.

¹⁹The one who works his land will be satisfied with food, but whoever chases daydreams will have his fill of poverty.

²⁰A faithful person will have an abundance of blessings, but the one who hastens to gain riches will not go unpunished.

²¹To show partiality is terrible, for a person will transgress over the smallest piece of bread.

²²The stingy person hastens after riches and does not know that poverty will overtake him.

²³The one who reproveth another will in the end find more favor than the one who flatters with the tongue.

²⁴The one who robs his father and mother and says, "There is no transgression," is a companion to the one who destroys.

²⁵The greedy person stirs up dissension, but the one who trusts in the Lord will prosper.

²⁶The one who trusts in his own heart is a fool, but the one who walks in wisdom will escape.

²⁷ The one who gives to the poor will not lack, but whoever shuts his eyes to them will receive many curses.

²⁸ When the wicked gain control, people hide themselves, but when they perish, the righteous increase.

29¹ The one who stiffens his neck after numerous rebukes will suddenly be destroyed without remedy.

² When the righteous become numerous, the people rejoice; when the wicked rule, the people groan.

³ The man who loves wisdom brings joy to his father, but whoever associates with prostitutes wastes his wealth.

⁴ A king brings stability to a land by justice, but one who exacts tribute tears it down.

⁵ The one who flatters his neighbor spreads a net for his steps.

⁶ In the transgression of an evil person there is a snare, but a righteous person can sing and rejoice.

⁷ The righteous person cares for the legal rights of the poor; the wicked does not understand such knowledge.

⁸ Scornful people inflame a city, but those who are wise turn away wrath.

⁹If a wise person goes to court with a foolish person, there is no peace whether he is angry or laughs.

¹⁰Bloodthirsty people hate someone with integrity; as for the upright, they seek his life.

¹¹A fool lets fly with all his temper, but a wise person keeps it back.

¹²If a ruler listens to lies, all his ministers will be wicked.

¹³The poor person and the oppressor have this in common: the Lord gives light to the eyes of them both.

¹⁴If a king judges the poor in truth, his throne will be established forever.

¹⁵A rod and reproof impart wisdom, but a child who is unrestrained brings shame to his mother.

¹⁶When the wicked increase, transgression increases, but the righteous will see their downfall.

¹⁷Discipline your child, and he will give you rest; he will bring you happiness.

¹⁸When there is no prophetic vision the people cast off restraint, but the one who keeps the law, blessed is he!

¹⁹A servant cannot be corrected by words, for although he understands, there is no answer.

²⁰Do you see someone who is hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

²¹If someone pampers his servant from youth, he will be a weakling in the end.

²²An angry person stirs up dissension, and a wrathful person is abounding in transgression.

²³A person's pride will bring him low, but one who has a lowly spirit will gain honor.

²⁴Whoever shares with a thief is his own enemy; he hears the oath to testify, but does not talk.

²⁵The fear of people becomes a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord will be set on high.

²⁶Many people seek the face of a ruler, but it is from the Lord that one receives justice.

²⁷An unjust person is an abomination to the righteous, and the one who lives an upright life is an abomination to the wicked.

30¹ The words of Agur, the son of Jakeh; an oracle: This man says to I thiel, to I thiel and to Ukal:

² Surely I am more brutish than any other human being, and I do not have human understanding;

³ I have not learned wisdom, nor do I have knowledge of the Holy One.

⁴ Who has ascended into heaven, and then descended? Who has gathered up the winds in his fists? Who has bound up the waters in his cloak? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his son's name? – if you know!

⁵ Every word of God is purified; he is like a shield for those who take refuge in him.

⁶ Do not add to his words, lest he reprove you, and prove you to be a liar.

⁷ Two things I ask from you; do not refuse me before I die:

⁸ Remove falsehood and lies far from me; do not give me poverty or riches, feed me with my allotted portion of bread,

⁹ lest I become satisfied and act deceptively and say, "Who is the Lord?"

Or lest I become poor and steal and demean the name of my God.

¹⁰Do not slander a servant to his master, lest he curse you, and you are found guilty.

¹¹There is a generation who curse their fathers and do not bless their mothers.

¹²There is a generation who are pure in their own eyes and yet are not washed from their filthiness.

¹³There is a generation whose eyes are so lofty, and whose eyelids are lifted up disdainfully.

¹⁴There is a generation whose teeth are like swords and whose molars are like knives to devour the poor from the earth and the needy from among the human race.

¹⁵The leech has two daughters: "Give! Give!" There are three things that are never satisfied, four that never say, "Enough" -

¹⁶the grave, the barren womb, land that is not satisfied with water, and fire that never says, "Enough!"

¹⁷The eye that mocks at a father and despises obeying a mother - the ravens

of the valley will peck it out and the young vultures will eat it.

¹⁸There are three things that are too wonderful for me, four that I do not understand:

¹⁹the way of an eagle in the sky, the way of a snake on a rock, the way of a ship in the sea, and the way of a man with a woman.

²⁰This is the way of an adulterous woman: she eats and wipes her mouth and says, "I have not done wrong."

²¹Under three things the earth trembles, and under four things it cannot bear up:

²²under a servant who becomes king, under a fool who is stuffed with food,

²³under an unloved woman who is married, and under a female servant who dispossesses her mistress.

²⁴There are four things on earth that are small, but they are exceedingly wise:

²⁵ants are creatures with little strength, but they prepare their food in the summer;

²⁶rock badgers are creatures with little power, but they make their homes in the crags;

²⁷ locusts have no king, but they all go forward by ranks;

²⁸ a lizard you can catch with the hand, but it gets into the palaces of the king.

²⁹ There are three things that are magnificent in their step, four things that move about magnificently:

³⁰ a lion, mightiest of the beasts, who does not retreat from anything;

³¹ a strutting rooster, a male goat, and a king with his army around him.

³² If you have done foolishly by exalting yourself or if you have planned evil, put your hand over your mouth!

³³ For as the churning of milk produces butter and as punching the nose produces blood, so stirring up anger produces strife.

31 ¹ The words of King Lemuel, an oracle that his mother taught him:

² O my son, O son of my womb, O son of my vows,

³ Do not give your strength to women, nor your ways to that which ruins kings.

⁴ It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine, or for rulers to crave strong drink,

⁵lest they drink and forget what is decreed, and remove from all the poor their legal rights.

⁶Give strong drink to the one who is perishing, and wine to those who are bitterly distressed;

⁷let them drink and forget their poverty, and remember their misery no more.

⁸Open your mouth on behalf of those unable to speak, for the legal rights of all the dying.

⁹Open your mouth, judge in righteousness, and plead the cause of the poor and needy.

¹⁰Who can find a wife of noble character? For her value is far more than rubies.

¹¹The heart of her husband has confidence in her, and he has no lack of gain.

¹²She brings him good and not evil all the days of her life.

¹³She obtains wool and flax, and she is pleased to work with her hands.

¹⁴She is like the merchant ships; she brings her food from afar.

¹⁵ She also gets up while it is still night, and provides food for her household and a portion to her female servants.

¹⁶ She considers a field and buys it; from her own income she plants a vineyard.

¹⁷ She begins her work vigorously, and she strengthens her arms.

¹⁸ She knows that her merchandise is good, and her lamp does not go out in the night.

¹⁹ Her hands take hold of the distaff, and her hands grasp the spindle.

²⁰ She extends her hand to the poor, and reaches out her hand to the needy.

²¹ She is not afraid of the snow for her household, for all of her household are clothed with scarlet.

²² She makes for herself coverlets; her clothing is fine linen and purple.

²³ Her husband is well-known in the city gate when he sits with the elders of the land.

²⁴ She makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies the merchants with sashes.

²⁵ She is clothed with strength and honor, and she can laugh at the time to come.

²⁶ She opens her mouth with wisdom, and loving instruction is on her tongue.

²⁷ She watches over the ways of her household, and does not eat the bread of idleness.

²⁸ Her children rise up and call her blessed, her husband also praises her:

²⁹ "Many daughters have done valiantly, but you surpass them all!"

³⁰ Charm is deceitful and beauty is fleeting, but a woman who fears the Lord will be praised.

³¹ Give her credit for what she has accomplished, and let her works praise her in the city gates.

Ecclesiastes

1 ¹ The words of the Teacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem:

² "Futile! Futile!" laments the Teacher, "Absolutely futile! Everything is futile!"

³ What benefit do people get from all the effort which they expend on earth?

⁴ A generation comes and a generation goes, but the earth remains the same through the ages.

⁵ The sun rises and the sun sets; it hurries away to a place from which it rises again.

⁶ The wind goes to the south and circles around to the north; round and round the wind goes and on its rounds it returns.

⁷ All the streams flow into the sea, but the sea is not full, and to the place where the streams flow, there they will flow again.

⁸ All this monotony is tiresome; no one can bear to describe it: The eye is never satisfied with seeing, nor is the ear ever content with hearing.

⁹What exists now is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done; there is nothing truly new on earth.

¹⁰Is there anything about which someone can say, "Look at this! It is new!"? It was already done long ago, before our time.

¹¹No one remembers the former events, nor will anyone remember the events that are yet to happen; they will not be remembered by the future generations.

¹²I, the Teacher, have been king over Israel in Jerusalem.

¹³I decided to carefully and thoroughly examine all that has been accomplished on earth. I concluded: God has given people a burdensome task that keeps them occupied.

¹⁴I reflected on everything that is accomplished by man on earth, and I concluded: Everything he has accomplished is futile – like chasing the wind!

¹⁵What is bent cannot be straightened, and what is missing cannot be supplied.

¹⁶I thought to myself, "I have become much wiser than any of my predecessors

who ruled over Jerusalem; I have acquired much wisdom and knowledge.”

¹⁷ So I decided to discern the benefit of wisdom and knowledge over foolish behavior and ideas; however, I concluded that even this endeavor is like trying to chase the wind!

¹⁸ For with great wisdom comes great frustration; whoever increases his knowledge merely increases his heartache.

2¹ I thought to myself, “Come now, I will try self-indulgent pleasure to see if it is worthwhile.” But I found that it also is futile.

² I said of partying, “It is folly,” and of self-indulgent pleasure, “It accomplishes nothing!”

³ I thought deeply about the effects of indulging myself with wine (all the while my mind was guiding me with wisdom) and the effects of behaving foolishly, so that I might discover what is profitable for people to do on earth during the few days of their lives.

⁴ I increased my possessions: I built houses for myself; I planted vineyards for myself.

⁵I designed royal gardens and parks for myself, and I planted all kinds of fruit trees in them.

⁶I constructed pools of water for myself, to irrigate my grove of flourishing trees.

⁷I purchased male and female slaves, and I owned slaves who were born in my house; I also possessed more livestock – both herds and flocks – than any of my predecessors in Jerusalem.

⁸I also amassed silver and gold for myself, as well as valuable treasures taken from kingdoms and provinces. I acquired male singers and female singers for myself, and what gives a man sensual delight – a harem of beautiful concubines!

⁹So I was far wealthier than all my predecessors in Jerusalem, yet I maintained my objectivity:

¹⁰I did not restrain myself from getting whatever I wanted; I did not deny myself anything that would bring me pleasure. So all my accomplishments gave me joy; this was my reward for all my effort.

¹¹Yet when I reflected on everything I had accomplished and on all the effort that I had expended to accomplish it, I

concluded: "All these achievements and possessions are ultimately profitless – like chasing the wind! There is nothing gained from them on earth."

¹²Next, I decided to consider wisdom, as well as foolish behavior and ideas. For what more can the king's successor do than what the king has already done?

¹³I realized that wisdom is preferable to folly, just as light is preferable to darkness:

¹⁴The wise man can see where he is going, but the fool walks in darkness. Yet I also realized that the same fate happens to them both.

¹⁵So I thought to myself, "The fate of the fool will happen even to me! Then what did I gain by becoming so excessively wise?" So I lamented to myself, "The benefits of wisdom are ultimately meaningless!"

¹⁶For the wise man, like the fool, will not be remembered for very long, because in the days to come, both will already have been forgotten. Alas, the wise man dies – just like the fool!

¹⁷So I loathed life because what happens on earth seems awful to me;

for all the benefits of wisdom are futile – like chasing the wind.

¹⁸So I loathed all the fruit of my effort, for which I worked so hard on earth, because I must leave it behind in the hands of my successor.

¹⁹Who knows if he will be a wise man or a fool? Yet he will be master over all the fruit of my labor for which I worked so wisely on earth! This also is futile!

²⁰So I began to despair about all the fruit of my labor for which I worked so hard on earth.

²¹For a man may do his work with wisdom, knowledge, and skill; however, he must hand over the fruit of his labor as an inheritance to someone else who did not work for it. This also is futile, and an awful injustice!

²²What does a man acquire from all his labor and from the anxiety that accompanies his toil on earth?

²³For all day long his work produces pain and frustration, and even at night his mind cannot relax! This also is futile!

²⁴There is nothing better for people than to eat and drink, and to find enjoyment in their work. I also perceived

that this ability to find enjoyment comes from God.

²⁵For no one can eat and drink or experience joy apart from him.

²⁶For to the one who pleases him, God gives wisdom, knowledge, and joy, but to the sinner, he gives the task of amassing wealth – only to give it to the one who pleases God. This task of the wicked is futile – like chasing the wind!

3¹For everything there is an appointed time, and an appropriate time for every activity on earth:

²A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to uproot what was planted;

³A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;

⁴A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance.

⁵A time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

⁶A time to search, and a time to give something up as lost; a time to keep, and a time to throw away;

⁷A time to rip, and a time to sew; a time to keep silent, and a time to speak.

⁸A time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace.

⁹What benefit can a worker gain from his toil?

¹⁰I have observed the burden that God has given to people to keep them occupied.

¹¹God has made everything fit beautifully in its appropriate time, but he has also placed ignorance in the human heart so that people cannot discover what God has ordained, from the beginning to the end of their lives.

¹²I have concluded that there is nothing better for people than to be happy and to enjoy themselves as long as they live,

¹³and also that everyone should eat and drink, and find enjoyment in all his toil, for these things are a gift from God.

¹⁴I also know that whatever God does will endure forever; nothing can be added to it, and nothing taken away from it. God has made it this way, so that men will fear him.

¹⁵Whatever exists now has already been, and whatever will be has already

been; for God will seek to do again what has occurred in the past.

¹⁶I saw something else on earth: In the place of justice, there was wickedness, and in the place of fairness, there was wickedness.

¹⁷I thought to myself, "God will judge both the righteous and the wicked; for there is an appropriate time for every activity, and there is a time of judgment for every deed.

¹⁸I also thought to myself, "It is for the sake of people, so God can clearly show them that they are like animals.

¹⁹For the fate of humans and the fate of animals are the same: As one dies, so dies the other; both have the same breath. There is no advantage for humans over animals, for both are fleeting.

²⁰Both go to the same place, both come from the dust, and to dust both return.

²¹Who really knows if the human spirit ascends upward, and the animal's spirit descends into the earth?

²²So I perceived there is nothing better than for people to enjoy their work,

because that is their reward; for who can show them what the future holds?

4¹ So I again considered all the oppression that continually occurs on earth. This is what I saw: The oppressed were in tears, but no one was comforting them; no one delivers them from the power of their oppressors.

² So I considered those who are dead and gone more fortunate than those who are still alive.

³ But better than both is the one who has not been born and has not seen the evil things that are done on earth.

⁴ Then I considered all the skillful work that is done: Surely it is nothing more than competition between one person and another. This also is profitless – like chasing the wind.

⁵ The fool folds his hands and does no work, so he has nothing to eat but his own flesh.

⁶ Better is one handful with some rest than two hands full of toil and chasing the wind.

⁷ So I again considered another futile thing on earth:

⁸A man who is all alone with no companion, he has no children nor siblings; yet there is no end to all his toil, and he is never satisfied with riches. He laments, "For whom am I toiling and depriving myself of pleasure?" This also is futile and a burdensome task!

⁹Two people are better than one, because they can reap more benefit from their labor.

¹⁰For if they fall, one will help his companion up, but pity the person who falls down and has no one to help him up.

¹¹Furthermore, if two lie down together, they can keep each other warm, but how can one person keep warm by himself?

¹²Although an assailant may overpower one person, two can withstand him. Moreover, a three-stranded cord is not quickly broken.

¹³A poor but wise youth is better than an old and foolish king who no longer knows how to receive advice.

¹⁴For he came out of prison to become king, even though he had been born poor in what would become his kingdom.

¹⁵I considered all the living who walk on earth, as well as the successor who would arise in his place.

¹⁶There is no end to all the people nor to the past generations, yet future generations will not rejoice in him. This also is profitless and like chasing the wind.

5¹ Be careful what you do when you go to the temple of God; draw near to listen rather than to offer a sacrifice like fools, for they do not realize that they are doing wrong.

²Do not be rash with your mouth or hasty in your heart to bring up a matter before God, for God is in heaven and you are on earth! Therefore, let your words be few.

³Just as dreams come when there are many cares, so the rash vow of a fool occurs when there are many words.

⁴When you make a vow to God, do not delay in paying it. For God takes no pleasure in fools: Pay what you vow!

⁵It is better for you not to vow than to vow and not pay it.

⁶Do not let your mouth cause you to sin, and do not tell the priest, "It was a

mistake!" Why make God angry at you so that he would destroy the work of your hands?"

⁷ Just as there is futility in many dreams, so also in many words. Therefore, fear God!

⁸ If you see the extortion of the poor, or the perversion of justice and fairness in the government, do not be astonished by the matter. For the high official is watched by a higher official, and there are higher ones over them!

⁹ The produce of the land is seized by all of them, even the king is served by the fields.

¹⁰ The one who loves money will never be satisfied with money, he who loves wealth will never be satisfied with his income. This also is futile.

¹¹ When someone's prosperity increases, those who consume it also increase; so what does its owner gain, except that he gets to see it with his eyes?

¹² The sleep of the laborer is pleasant - whether he eats little or much - but the wealth of the rich will not allow him to sleep.

¹³Here is a misfortune on earth that I have seen: Wealth hoarded by its owner to his own misery.

¹⁴Then that wealth was lost through bad luck; although he fathered a son, he has nothing left to give him.

¹⁵Just as he came forth from his mother's womb, naked will he return as he came, and he will take nothing in his hand that he may carry away from his toil.

¹⁶This is another misfortune: Just as he came, so will he go. What did he gain from toiling for the wind?

¹⁷Surely, he ate in darkness every day of his life, and he suffered greatly with sickness and anger.

¹⁸I have seen personally what is the only beneficial and appropriate course of action for people: to eat and drink, and find enjoyment in all their hard work on earth during the few days of their life which God has given them, for this is their reward.

¹⁹To every man whom God has given wealth, and possessions, he has also given him the ability to eat from them, to receive his reward and to find enjoyment

in his toil; these things are the gift of God.

²⁰For he does not think much about the fleeting days of his life because God keeps him preoccupied with the joy he derives from his activity.

6¹ Here is another misfortune that I have seen on earth, and it weighs heavily on people:

²God gives a man riches, property, and wealth so that he lacks nothing that his heart desires, yet God does not enable him to enjoy the fruit of his labor – instead, someone else enjoys it! This is fruitless and a grave misfortune.

³Even if a man fathers a hundred children and lives many years – even if he lives a long, long time, but cannot enjoy his prosperity – even if he were to live forever – I would say, “A stillborn child is better off than he is!”

⁴Though the stillborn child came into the world for no reason and departed into darkness, though its name is shrouded in darkness,

⁵though it never saw the light of day nor knew anything, yet it has more rest than that man –

⁶if he should live a thousand years twice, yet does not enjoy his prosperity. For both of them die!

⁷All of man's labor is for nothing more than to fill his stomach - yet his appetite is never satisfied!

⁸So what advantage does a wise man have over a fool? And what advantage does a pauper gain by knowing how to survive?

⁹It is better to be content with what the eyes can see than for one's heart always to crave more. This continual longing is futile - like chasing the wind.

¹⁰Whatever has happened was foreordained, and what happens to a person was also foreknown. It is useless for him to argue with God about his fate because God is more powerful than he is.

¹¹The more one argues with words, the less he accomplishes. How does that benefit him?

¹²For no one knows what is best for a person during his life - during the few days of his fleeting life - for they pass away like a shadow. Nor can anyone tell

him what the future will hold for him on earth.

7¹ A good reputation is better than precious perfume; likewise, the day of one's death is better than the day of one's birth.

² It is better to go to a funeral than a feast. For death is the destiny of every person, and the living should take this to heart.

³ Sorrow is better than laughter, because sober reflection is good for the heart.

⁴ The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning, but the heart of fools is in the house of merrymaking.

⁵ It is better for a person to receive a rebuke from those who are wise than to listen to the song of fools.

⁶ For like the crackling of quick-burning thorns under a cooking pot, so is the laughter of the fool. This kind of folly also is useless.

⁷ Surely oppression can turn a wise person into a fool; likewise, a bribe corrupts the heart.

⁸The end of a matter is better than its beginning; likewise, patience is better than pride.

⁹Do not let yourself be quickly provoked, for anger resides in the lap of fools.

¹⁰Do not say, "Why were the old days better than these days?" for it is not wise to ask that.

¹¹Wisdom, like an inheritance, is a good thing; it benefits those who see the light of day.

¹²For wisdom provides protection, just as money provides protection. But the advantage of knowledge is this: Wisdom preserves the life of its owner.

¹³Consider the work of God: For who can make straight what he has bent?

¹⁴In times of prosperity be joyful, but in times of adversity consider this: God has made one as well as the other, so that no one can discover what the future holds.

¹⁵During the days of my fleeting life I have seen both of these things: Sometimes a righteous person dies prematurely in spite of his righteousness,

and sometimes a wicked person lives long in spite of his evil deeds.

¹⁶So do not be excessively righteous or excessively wise; otherwise you might be disappointed.

¹⁷Do not be excessively wicked and do not be a fool; otherwise you might die before your time.

¹⁸It is best to take hold of one warning without letting go of the other warning; for the one who fears God will follow both warnings.

¹⁹Wisdom gives a wise person more protection than ten rulers in a city.

²⁰For there is not one truly righteous person on the earth who continually does good and never sins.

²¹Also, do not pay attention to everything that people say; otherwise, you might even hear your servant cursing you.

²²For you know in your own heart that you also have cursed others many times.

²³I have examined all this by wisdom; I said, "I am determined to comprehend this" – but it was beyond my grasp.

²⁴ Whatever has happened is beyond human understanding; it is far deeper than anyone can fathom.

²⁵ I tried to understand, examine, and comprehend the role of wisdom in the scheme of things, and to understand the stupidity of wickedness and the insanity of folly.

²⁶ I discovered this: More bitter than death is the kind of woman who is like a hunter's snare; her heart is like a hunter's net and her hands are like prison chains. The man who pleases God escapes her, but the sinner is captured by her.

²⁷ The Teacher says: I discovered this while trying to discover the scheme of things, item by item.

²⁸ What I have continually sought, I have not found; I have found only one upright man among a thousand, but I have not found one upright woman among all of them.

²⁹ This alone have I discovered: God made humankind upright, but they have sought many evil schemes.

8¹ Who is a wise person? Who knows the solution to a problem? A person's

wisdom brightens his appearance, and softens his harsh countenance.

²Obey the king's command, because you took an oath before God to be loyal to him.

³Do not rush out of the king's presence in haste – do not delay when the matter is unpleasant, for he can do whatever he pleases.

⁴Surely the king's authority is absolute; no one can say to him, "What are you doing?"

⁵Whoever obeys his command will not experience harm, and a wise person knows the proper time and procedure.

⁶For there is a proper time and procedure for every matter, for the oppression of the king is severe upon his victim.

⁷Surely no one knows the future, and no one can tell another person what will happen.

⁸Just as no one has power over the wind to restrain it, so no one has power over the day of his death. Just as no one can be discharged during the battle, so wickedness cannot rescue the wicked.

⁹While applying my mind to everything that happens in this world, I have seen all this: Sometimes one person dominates other people to their harm.

¹⁰Not only that, but I have seen the wicked approaching and entering the temple, and as they left the holy temple, they boasted in the city that they had done so. This also is an enigma.

¹¹When a sentence is not executed at once against a crime, the human heart is encouraged to do evil.

¹²Even though a sinner might commit a hundred crimes and still live a long time, yet I know that it will go well with God-fearing people – for they stand in fear before him.

¹³But it will not go well with the wicked, nor will they prolong their days like a shadow, because they do not stand in fear before God.

¹⁴Here is another enigma that occurs on earth: Sometimes there are righteous people who get what the wicked deserve, and sometimes there are wicked people who get what the righteous deserve. I said, "This also is an enigma."

¹⁵ So I recommend the enjoyment of life, for there is nothing better on earth for a person to do except to eat, drink, and enjoy life. So joy will accompany him in his toil during the days of his life which God gives him on earth.

¹⁶ When I tried to gain wisdom and to observe the activity on earth – even though it prevents anyone from sleeping day or night –

¹⁷ then I discerned all that God has done: No one really comprehends what happens on earth. Despite all human efforts to discover it, no one can ever grasp it. Even if a wise person claimed that he understood, he would not really comprehend it.

9¹ So I reflected on all this, attempting to clear it all up. I concluded that the righteous and the wise, as well as their works, are in the hand of God; whether a person will be loved or hated – no one knows what lies ahead.

² Everyone shares the same fate – the righteous and the wicked, the good and the bad, the ceremonially clean and unclean, those who offer sacrifices and those who do not. What happens to the

good person, also happens to the sinner; what happens to those who make vows, also happens to those who are afraid to make vows.

³This is the unfortunate fact about everything that happens on earth: the same fate awaits everyone. In addition to this, the hearts of all people are full of evil, and there is folly in their hearts during their lives – then they die.

⁴But whoever is among the living has hope; a live dog is better than a dead lion.

⁵For the living know that they will die, but the dead do not know anything; they have no further reward – and even the memory of them disappears.

⁶What they loved, as well as what they hated and envied, perished long ago, and they no longer have a part in anything that happens on earth.

⁷Go, eat your food with joy, and drink your wine with a happy heart, because God has already approved your works.

⁸Let your clothes always be white, and do not spare precious ointment on your head.

⁹Enjoy life with your beloved wife during all the days of your fleeting life that God has given you on earth during all your fleeting days; for that is your reward in life and in your burdensome work on earth.

¹⁰Whatever you find to do with your hands, do it with all your might, because there is neither work nor planning nor knowledge nor wisdom in the grave, the place where you will eventually go.

¹¹Again, I observed this on the earth: the race is not always won by the swiftest, the battle is not always won by the strongest; prosperity does not always belong to those who are the wisest, wealth does not always belong to those who are the most discerning, nor does success always come to those with the most knowledge – for time and chance may overcome them all.

¹²Surely, no one knows his appointed time! Like fish that are caught in a deadly net, and like birds that are caught in a snare – just like them, all people are ensnared at an unfortunate time that falls upon them suddenly.

¹³This is what I also observed about wisdom on earth, and it is a great burden to me:

¹⁴There was once a small city with a few men in it, and a mighty king attacked it, besieging it and building strong siege works against it.

¹⁵However, a poor but wise man lived in the city, and he could have delivered the city by his wisdom, but no one listened to that poor man.

¹⁶So I concluded that wisdom is better than might, but a poor man's wisdom is despised; no one ever listens to his advice.

¹⁷The words of the wise are heard in quiet, more than the shouting of a ruler is heard among fools.

¹⁸Wisdom is better than weapons of war, but one sinner can destroy much that is good.

10¹One dead fly makes the perfumer's ointment give off a rancid stench, so a little folly can outweigh much wisdom.

²A wise person's good sense protects him, but a fool's lack of sense leaves him vulnerable.

³Even when a fool walks along the road he lacks sense, and shows everyone what a fool he is.

⁴If the anger of the ruler flares up against you, do not resign from your position, for a calm response can undo great offenses.

⁵I have seen another misfortune on the earth: It is an error a ruler makes.

⁶Fools are placed in many positions of authority, while wealthy men sit in lowly positions.

⁷I have seen slaves on horseback and princes walking on foot like slaves.

⁸One who digs a pit may fall into it, and one who breaks through a wall may be bitten by a snake.

⁹One who quarries stones may be injured by them; one who splits logs may be endangered by them.

¹⁰If an iron axhead is blunt and a workman does not sharpen its edge, he must exert a great deal of effort; so wisdom has the advantage of giving success.

¹¹If the snake should bite before it is charmed, the snake charmer is in trouble.

¹²The words of a wise person win him favor, but the words of a fool are self-destructive.

¹³At the beginning his words are foolish and at the end his talk is wicked madness,

¹⁴yet a fool keeps on babbling. No one knows what will happen; who can tell him what will happen in the future?

¹⁵The toil of a stupid fool wears him out, because he does not even know the way to the city.

¹⁶Woe to you, O land, when your king is childish, and your princes feast in the morning!

¹⁷Blessed are you, O land, when your king is the son of nobility, and your princes feast at the proper time – with self-control and not in drunkenness.

¹⁸Because of laziness the roof caves in, and because of idle hands the house leaks.

¹⁹Feasts are made for laughter, and wine makes life merry, but money is the answer for everything.

²⁰Do not curse a king even in your thoughts, and do not curse the rich while in your bedroom; for a bird might report

what you are thinking, or some winged creature might repeat your words.

11 ¹ Send your grain overseas, for after many days you will get a return.

² Divide your merchandise among seven or even eight investments, for you do not know what calamity may happen on earth.

³ If the clouds are full of rain, they will empty themselves on the earth, and whether a tree falls to the south or to the north, the tree will lie wherever it falls.

⁴ He who watches the wind will not sow, and he who observes the clouds will not reap.

⁵ Just as you do not know the path of the wind, or how the bones form in the womb of a pregnant woman, so you do not know the work of God who makes everything.

⁶ Sow your seed in the morning, and do not stop working until the evening; for you do not know which activity will succeed – whether this one or that one, or whether both will prosper equally.

⁷ Light is sweet, and it is pleasant for a person to see the sun.

⁸So, if a man lives many years, let him rejoice in them all, but let him remember that the days of darkness will be many – all that is about to come is obscure.

⁹Rejoice, young man, while you are young, and let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth. Follow the impulses of your heart and the desires of your eyes, but know that God will judge your motives and actions.

¹⁰Banish emotional stress from your mind. and put away pain from your body; for youth and the prime of life are fleeting.

12¹ So remember your Creator in the days of your youth – before the difficult days come, and the years draw near when you will say, “I have no pleasure in them”;

²before the sun and the light of the moon and the stars grow dark, and the clouds disappear after the rain;

³when those who keep watch over the house begin to tremble, and the virile men begin to stoop over, and the grinders begin to cease because they grow few, and those who look through the windows grow dim,

⁴ and the doors along the street are shut; when the sound of the grinding mill grows low, and one is awakened by the sound of a bird, and all their songs grow faint,

⁵ and they are afraid of heights and the dangers in the street; the almond blossoms grow white, and the grasshopper drags itself along, and the caper berry shrivels up – because man goes to his eternal home, and the mourners go about in the streets –

⁶ before the silver cord is removed, or the golden bowl is broken, or the pitcher is shattered at the well, or the water wheel is broken at the cistern –

⁷ and the dust returns to the earth as it was, and the life's breath returns to God who gave it.

⁸ "Absolutely futile!" laments the Teacher, "All of these things are futile!"

⁹ Not only was the Teacher wise, but he also taught knowledge to the people; he carefully evaluated and arranged many proverbs.

¹⁰ The Teacher sought to find delightful words, and to write accurately truthful sayings.

¹¹ The words of the sages are like prods, and the collected sayings are like firmly fixed nails; they are given by one shepherd.

¹² Be warned, my son, of anything in addition to them. There is no end to the making of many books, and much study is exhausting to the body.

¹³ Having heard everything, I have reached this conclusion: Fear God and keep his commandments, because this is the whole duty of man.

¹⁴ For God will evaluate every deed, including every secret thing, whether good or evil.

The Song of Songs

1 ¹ Solomon's Most Excellent Love Song.

²The Beloved to Her Lover: Oh, how I wish you would kiss me passionately! For your lovemaking is more delightful than wine.

³The fragrance of your colognes is delightful; your name is like the finest perfume. No wonder the young women adore you!

⁴Draw me after you; let us hurry! May the king bring me into his bedroom chambers! The Maidens to the Lover: We will rejoice and delight in you; we will praise your love more than wine. The Beloved to Her Lover: How rightly the young women adore you!

⁵The Beloved to the Maidens: I am dark but lovely, O maidens of Jerusalem, dark like the tents of Qedar, lovely like the tent curtains of Salmah.

⁶Do not stare at me because I am dark, for the sun has burned my skin. My brothers were angry with me; they

made me the keeper of the vineyards.
Alas, my own vineyard I could not keep!

⁷The Beloved to Her Lover: Tell me,
O you whom my heart loves, where do
you pasture your sheep? Where do you
rest your sheep during the midday heat?
Tell me lest I wander around beside the
flocks of your companions!

⁸The Lover to His Beloved: If you do
not know, O most beautiful of women,
simply follow the tracks of my flock, and
pasture your little lambs beside the tents
of the shepherds.

⁹The Lover to His Beloved: O my
beloved, you are like a mare among
Pharaoh's stallions.

¹⁰Your cheeks are beautiful with
ornaments; your neck is lovely with
strings of jewels.

¹¹We will make for you gold ornaments
studded with silver.

¹²The Beloved about Her Lover: While
the king was at his banqueting table, my
nard gave forth its fragrance.

¹³My beloved is like a fragrant pouch of
myrrh spending the night between my
breasts.

¹⁴ My beloved is like a cluster of henna blossoms in the vineyards of En-Gedi.

¹⁵ The Lover to His Beloved: Oh, how beautiful you are, my beloved! Oh, how beautiful you are! Your eyes are like doves!

¹⁶ The Beloved to Her Lover: Oh, how handsome you are, my lover! Oh, how delightful you are! The lush foliage is our canopied bed;

¹⁷ the cedars are the beams of our bedroom chamber; the pines are the rafters of our bedroom.

2¹ The Beloved to Her Lover: I am a meadow flower from Sharon, a lily from the valleys.

² The Lover to His Beloved: Like a lily among the thorns, so is my darling among the maidens.

³ The Beloved about Her Lover: Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest, so is my beloved among the young men. I delight to sit in his shade, and his fruit is sweet to my taste.

⁴ The Beloved about Her Lover: He brought me into the banquet hall, and he looked at me lovingly.

⁵Sustain me with raisin cakes, refresh me with apples, for I am faint with love.
The Double Refrain: Embracing and Adjuration

⁶His left hand caresses my head, and his right hand stimulates me.

⁷The Beloved to the Maidens: I adjure you, O maidens of Jerusalem, by the gazelles and by the young does of the open fields: Do not awaken or arouse love until it pleases!

⁸The Beloved about Her Lover: Listen! My lover is approaching! Look! Here he comes, leaping over the mountains, bounding over the hills!

⁹My lover is like a gazelle or a young stag. Look! There he stands behind our wall, gazing through the window, peering through the lattice.

¹⁰The Lover to His Beloved: My lover spoke to me, saying: "Arise, my darling; My beautiful one, come away with me!

¹¹Look! The winter has passed, the winter rains are over and gone.

¹²The pomegranates have appeared in the land, the time for pruning and singing has come; the voice of the turtledove is heard in our land.

¹³The fig tree has budded, the vines have blossomed and give off their fragrance. Arise, come away my darling; my beautiful one, come away with me!"

¹⁴The Lover to His Beloved: O my dove, in the clefts of the rock, in the hiding places of the mountain crags, let me see your face, let me hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, and your face is lovely.

¹⁵The Beloved to Her Lover: Catch the foxes for us, the little foxes, that ruin the vineyards – for our vineyard is in bloom.

¹⁶The Beloved about Her Lover: My lover is mine and I am his; he grazes among the lilies.

¹⁷The Beloved to Her Lover: Until the dawn arrives and the shadows flee, turn, my beloved – be like a gazelle or a young stag on the mountain gorges.

3¹The Beloved about Her Lover: All night long on my bed I longed for my lover. I longed for him but he never appeared.

²"I will arise and look all around throughout the town, and throughout the streets and squares; I will search for

my beloved." I searched for him but I did not find him.

³The night watchmen found me – the ones who guard the city walls. "Have you seen my beloved?"

⁴Scarcely had I passed them by when I found my beloved! I held onto him tightly and would not let him go until I brought him to my mother's house, to the bedroom chamber of the one who conceived me.

⁵The Beloved to the Maidens: I admonish you, O maidens of Jerusalem, by the gazelles and by the young does of the open fields: "Do not awake or arouse love until it pleases!"

⁶The Speaker: Who is this coming up from the desert like a column of smoke, like a fragrant billow of myrrh and frankincense, every kind of fragrant powder of the traveling merchants?

⁷Look! It is Solomon's portable couch! It is surrounded by sixty warriors, some of Israel's mightiest warriors.

⁸All of them are skilled with a sword, well-trained in the art of warfare. Each has his sword at his side, to guard against the terrors of the night.

⁹King Solomon made a sedan chair for himself of wood imported from Lebanon.

¹⁰Its posts were made of silver; its back was made of gold. Its seat was upholstered with purple wool; its interior was inlaid with leather by the maidens of Jerusalem.

¹¹Come out, O maidens of Zion, and gaze upon King Solomon! He is wearing the crown with which his mother crowned him on his wedding day, on the most joyous day of his life!

4¹The Lover to His Beloved: Oh, you are beautiful, my darling! Oh, you are beautiful! Your eyes behind your veil are like doves. Your hair is like a flock of female goats descending from Mount Gilead.

²Your teeth are like a flock of newly-shorn sheep coming up from the washing place; each of them has a twin, and not one of them is missing.

³Your lips are like a scarlet thread; your mouth is lovely. Your forehead behind your veil is like a slice of pomegranate.

⁴Your neck is like the tower of David built with courses of stones; one

thousand shields are hung on it – all shields of valiant warriors.

⁵Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of the gazelle grazing among the lilies.

⁶Until the dawn arrives and the shadows flee, I will go up to the mountain of myrrh, and to the hill of frankincense.

⁷You are altogether beautiful, my darling! There is no blemish in you!

⁸Come with me from Lebanon, my bride, come with me from Lebanon. Descend from the crest of Amana, from the top of Senir, the summit of Hermon, from the lions' dens and the mountain haunts of the leopards.

⁹You have stolen my heart, my sister, my bride! You have stolen my heart with one glance of your eyes, with one jewel of your necklace.

¹⁰How delightful is your love, my sister, my bride! How much better is your love than wine; the fragrance of your perfume is better than any spice!

¹¹Your lips drip sweetness like the honeycomb, my bride, honey and milk are under your tongue. The fragrance of

your garments is like the fragrance of Lebanon.

¹²The Lover to His Beloved: You are a locked garden, my sister, my bride; you are an enclosed spring, a sealed-up fountain.

¹³Your shoots are a royal garden full of pomegranates with choice fruits: henna with nard,

¹⁴nard and saffron; calamus and cinnamon with every kind of spice, myrrh and aloes with all the finest spices.

¹⁵You are a garden spring, a well of fresh water flowing down from Lebanon.

¹⁶The Beloved to Her Lover: Awake, O north wind; come, O south wind! Blow on my garden so that its fragrant spices may send out their sweet smell. May my beloved come into his garden and eat its delightful fruit!

5¹The Lover to His Beloved: I have entered my garden, O my sister, my bride; I have gathered my myrrh with my balsam spice. I have eaten my honeycomb and my honey; I have drunk my wine and my milk! The Poet to the Couple: Eat, friends, and drink! Drink freely, O lovers!

²The Beloved about Her Lover: I was asleep, but my mind was dreaming. Listen! My lover is knocking at the door! The Lover to His Beloved: "Open for me, my sister, my darling, my dove, my flawless one! My head is drenched with dew, my hair with the dampness of the night."

³The Beloved to Her Lover: "I have already taken off my robe – must I put it on again? I have already washed my feet – must I soil them again?"

⁴My lover thrust his hand through the hole, and my feelings were stirred for him.

⁵I arose to open for my beloved; my hands dripped with myrrh – my fingers flowed with myrrh on the handles of the lock.

⁶I opened for my beloved, but my lover had already turned and gone away. I fell into despair when he departed. I looked for him but did not find him; I called him but he did not answer me.

⁷The watchmen found me as they made their rounds in the city. They beat me, they bruised me; they took away my cloak, those watchmen on the walls!

⁸The Beloved to the Maidens: O maidens of Jerusalem, I command you – If you find my beloved, what will you tell him? Tell him that I am lovesick!

⁹The Maidens to The Beloved: Why is your beloved better than others, O most beautiful of women? Why is your beloved better than others, that you would command us in this manner?

¹⁰The Beloved to the Maidens: My beloved is dazzling and ruddy; he stands out in comparison to all other men.

¹¹His head is like the most pure gold. His hair is curly – black like a raven.

¹²His eyes are like doves by streams of water, washed in milk, mounted like jewels.

¹³His cheeks are like garden beds full of balsam trees yielding perfume. His lips are like lilies dripping with drops of myrrh.

¹⁴His arms are like rods of gold set with chrysolite. His abdomen is like polished ivory inlaid with sapphires.

¹⁵His legs are like pillars of marble set on bases of pure gold. His appearance is like Lebanon, choice as its cedars.

¹⁶His mouth is very sweet; he is totally desirable. This is my beloved! This is my companion, O maidens of Jerusalem!

6¹The Maidens to the Beloved: Where has your beloved gone, O most beautiful among women? Where has your beloved turned? Tell us, that we may seek him with you.

²The Beloved to the Maidens: My beloved has gone down to his garden, to the flowerbeds of balsam spices, to graze in the gardens, and to gather lilies.

³The Beloved about Her Lover: I am my lover's and my lover is mine; he grazes among the lilies.

⁴The Lover to His Beloved: My darling, you are as beautiful as Tirzah, as lovely as Jerusalem, as awe-inspiring as bannered armies!

⁵Turn your eyes away from me – they overwhelm me! Your hair is like a flock of goats descending from Mount Gilead.

⁶Your teeth are like a flock of sheep coming up from the washing; each has its twin; not one of them is missing.

⁷Like a slice of pomegranate is your forehead behind your veil.

⁸There may be sixty queens, and eighty concubines, and young women without number.

⁹But she is unique! My dove, my perfect one! She is the special daughter of her mother, she is the favorite of the one who bore her. The maidens saw her and complimented her; the queens and concubines praised her:

¹⁰“Who is this who appears like the dawn? Beautiful as the moon, bright as the sun, awe-inspiring as the stars in procession?”

¹¹The Lover to His Beloved: I went down to the orchard of walnut trees, to look for the blossoms of the valley, to see if the vines had budded or if the pomegranates were in bloom.

¹²I was beside myself with joy! There please give me your myrrh, O daughter of my princely people.

¹³The Lover to His Beloved: Turn, turn, O Perfect One! Turn, turn, that I may stare at you! The Beloved to Her Lover: Why do you gaze upon the Perfect One like the dance of the Mahanaim?

7¹The Lover to His Beloved: How beautiful are your sandaled feet, O

nobleman's daughter! The curves of your thighs are like jewels, the work of the hands of a master craftsman.

²Your navel is a round mixing bowl – may it never lack mixed wine! Your belly is a mound of wheat, encircled by lilies.

³Your two breasts are like two fawns, twins of a gazelle.

⁴Your neck is like a tower made of ivory. Your eyes are the pools in Heshbon by the gate of Bath-Rabbim. Your nose is like the tower of Lebanon overlooking Damascus.

⁵Your head crowns you like Mount Carmel. The locks of your hair are like royal tapestries – the king is held captive in its tresses!

⁶How beautiful you are! How lovely, O love, with your delights!

⁷The Lover to His Beloved: Your stature is like a palm tree, and your breasts are like clusters of grapes.

⁸I want to climb the palm tree, and take hold of its fruit stalks. May your breasts be like the clusters of grapes, and may the fragrance of your breath be like apricots!

⁹May your mouth be like the best wine, flowing smoothly for my beloved, gliding gently over our lips as we sleep together.

¹⁰The Beloved about Her Lover: I am my beloved's, and he desires me!

¹¹The Beloved to Her Lover: Come, my beloved, let us go to the countryside; let us spend the night in the villages.

¹²Let us rise early to go to the vineyards, to see if the vines have budded, to see if their blossoms have opened, if the pomegranates are in bloom – there I will give you my love.

¹³The mandrakes send out their fragrance; over our door is every delicacy, both new and old, which I have stored up for you, my lover.

8¹The Beloved to Her Lover: Oh, how I wish you were my little brother, nursing at my mother's breasts; if I saw you outside, I could kiss you – surely no one would despise me!

²I would lead you and bring you to my mother's house, the one who taught me. I would give you spiced wine to drink, the nectar of my pomegranates.

³The Beloved about Her Lover: His left hand caresses my head, and his right hand stimulates me.

⁴The Beloved to the Maidens: I admonish you, O maidens of Jerusalem: "Do not arouse or awaken love until it pleases!"

⁵The Maidens about His Beloved: Who is this coming up from the desert, leaning on her beloved? The Beloved to Her Lover: Under the apple tree I aroused you; there your mother conceived you, there she who bore you was in labor of childbirth.

⁶The Beloved to Her Lover: Set me like a cylinder seal over your heart, like a signet on your arm. For love is as strong as death, passion is as unrelenting as Sheol. Its flames burst forth, it is a blazing flame.

⁷Surging waters cannot quench love; floodwaters cannot overflow it. If someone were to offer all his possessions to buy love, the offer would be utterly despised.

⁸The Beloved's Brothers: We have a little sister, and as yet she has no

breasts. What shall we do for our sister on the day when she is spoken for?

⁹If she is a wall, we will build on her a battlement of silver; but if she is a door, we will barricade her with boards of cedar.

¹⁰The Beloved: I was a wall, and my breasts were like fortress towers. Then I found favor in his eyes.

¹¹The Beloved to Her Lover: Solomon had a vineyard at Baal-Hamon; he leased out the vineyard to those who maintained it. Each was to bring a thousand shekels of silver for its fruit.

¹²My vineyard, which belongs to me, is at my disposal alone. The thousand shekels belong to you, O Solomon, and two hundred shekels belong to those who maintain it for its fruit.

¹³The Lover to His Beloved: O you who stay in the gardens, my companions are listening attentively for your voice; let me be the one to hear it!

¹⁴The Beloved to Her Lover: Make haste, my beloved! Be like a gazelle or a young stag on the mountains of spices.

Isaiah

1 ¹ Here is the message about Judah and Jerusalem that was revealed to Isaiah son of Amoz during the time when Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah reigned over Judah.

² Listen, O heavens, pay attention, O earth! For the Lord speaks: "I raised children, I brought them up, but they have rebelled against me!

³ An ox recognizes its owner, a donkey recognizes where its owner puts its food; but Israel does not recognize me, my people do not understand."

⁴ The sinful nation is as good as dead, the people weighed down by evil deeds. They are offspring who do wrong, children who do wicked things. They have abandoned the Lord, and rejected the Holy One of Israel. They are alienated from him.

⁵ Why do you insist on being battered? Why do you continue to rebel? Your head has a massive wound, your whole body is weak.

⁶From the soles of your feet to your head, there is no spot that is unharmed. There are only bruises, cuts, and open wounds. They have not been cleansed or bandaged, nor have they been treated with olive oil.

⁷Your land is devastated, your cities burned with fire. Right before your eyes your crops are being destroyed by foreign invaders. They leave behind devastation and destruction.

⁸Daughter Zion is left isolated, like a hut in a vineyard, or a shelter in a cucumber field; she is a besieged city.

⁹If the Lord who commands armies had not left us a few survivors, we would have quickly become like Sodom, we would have become like Gomorrah.

¹⁰Listen to the Lord's word, you leaders of Sodom! Pay attention to our God's rebuke, people of Gomorrah!

¹¹"Of what importance to me are your many sacrifices?" says the Lord. "I am stuffed with burnt sacrifices of rams and the fat from steers. The blood of bulls, lambs, and goats I do not want.

¹²When you enter my presence, do you actually think I want this – animals trampling on my courtyards?

¹³Do not bring any more meaningless offerings; I consider your incense detestable! You observe new moon festivals, Sabbaths, and convocations, but I cannot tolerate sin-stained celebrations!

¹⁴I hate your new moon festivals and assemblies; they are a burden that I am tired of carrying.

¹⁵When you spread out your hands in prayer, I look the other way; when you offer your many prayers, I do not listen, because your hands are covered with blood.

¹⁶Wash! Cleanse yourselves! Remove your sinful deeds from my sight. Stop sinning!

¹⁷Learn to do what is right! Promote justice! Give the oppressed reason to celebrate! Take up the cause of the orphan! Defend the rights of the widow!

¹⁸Come, let's consider your options," says the Lord. "Though your sins have stained you like the color red, you can become white like snow; though they

are as easy to see as the color scarlet, you can become white like wool.

¹⁹If you have a willing attitude and obey, then you will again eat the good crops of the land.

²⁰But if you refuse and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword." Know for certain that the Lord has spoken.

²¹How tragic that the once-faithful city has become a prostitute! She was once a center of justice, fairness resided in her, but now only murderers.

²²Your silver has become scum, your beer is diluted with water.

²³Your officials are rebels, they associate with thieves. All of them love bribery, and look for payoffs. They do not take up the cause of the orphan, or defend the rights of the widow.

²⁴Therefore, the sovereign Lord who commands armies, the powerful ruler of Israel, says this: "Ah, I will seek vengeance against my adversaries, I will take revenge against my enemies.

²⁵I will attack you; I will purify your metal with flux. I will remove all your slag.

²⁶I will reestablish honest judges as in former times, wise advisers as in earlier days. Then you will be called, 'The Just City, Faithful Town.'"

²⁷Zion will be freed by justice, and her returnees by righteousness.

²⁸All rebellious sinners will be shattered, those who abandon the Lord will perish.

²⁹Indeed, they will be ashamed of the sacred trees you find so desirable; you will be embarrassed because of the sacred orchards where you choose to worship.

³⁰For you will be like a tree whose leaves wither, like an orchard that is unwatered.

³¹The powerful will be like a thread of yarn, their deeds like a spark; both will burn together, and no one will put out the fire.

2¹ Here is the message about Judah and Jerusalem that was revealed to Isaiah son of Amoz.

²In the future the mountain of the Lord's temple will endure as the most important of mountains, and will be the

most prominent of hills. All the nations will stream to it,

³many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the Lord's mountain, to the temple of the God of Jacob, so he can teach us his requirements, and we can follow his standards." For Zion will be the center for moral instruction; the Lord will issue edicts from Jerusalem.

⁴He will judge disputes between nations; he will settle cases for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nations will not take up the sword against other nations, and they will no longer train for war.

⁵O descendants of Jacob, come, let us walk in the Lord's guiding light.

⁶Indeed, O Lord, you have abandoned your people, the descendants of Jacob. For diviners from the east are everywhere; they consult omen readers like the Philistines do. Plenty of foreigners are around.

⁷Their land is full of gold and silver; there is no end to their wealth. Their

land is full of horses; there is no end to their chariots.

⁸Their land is full of worthless idols; they worship the product of their own hands, what their own fingers have fashioned.

⁹Men bow down to them in homage, they lie flat on the ground in worship. Don't spare them!

¹⁰Go up into the rocky cliffs, hide in the ground. Get away from the dreadful judgment of the Lord, from his royal splendor!

¹¹Proud men will be brought low, arrogant men will be humiliated; the Lord alone will be exalted in that day.

¹²Indeed, the Lord who commands armies has planned a day of judgment, for all the high and mighty, for all who are proud – they will be humiliated;

¹³for all the cedars of Lebanon, that are so high and mighty, for all the oaks of Bashan;

¹⁴for all the tall mountains, for all the high hills,

¹⁵for every high tower, for every fortified wall,

¹⁶for all the large ships, for all the impressive ships.

¹⁷Proud men will be humiliated, arrogant men will be brought low; the Lord alone will be exalted in that day.

¹⁸The worthless idols will be completely eliminated.

¹⁹They will go into caves in the rocky cliffs and into holes in the ground, trying to escape the dreadful judgment of the Lord and his royal splendor, when he rises up to terrify the earth.

²⁰At that time men will throw their silver and gold idols, which they made for themselves to worship, into the caves where rodents and bats live,

²¹so they themselves can go into the crevices of the rocky cliffs and the openings under the rocky overhangs, trying to escape the dreadful judgment of the Lord and his royal splendor, when he rises up to terrify the earth.

²²Stop trusting in human beings, whose life's breath is in their nostrils. For why should they be given special consideration?

3¹Look, the sovereign Lord who commands armies is about to

remove from Jerusalem and Judah every source of security, including all the food and water,

² the mighty men and warriors, judges and prophets, omen readers and leaders,

³ captains of groups of fifty, the respected citizens, advisers and those skilled in magical arts, and those who know incantations.

⁴ The Lord says, "I will make youths their officials; malicious young men will rule over them.

⁵ The people will treat each other harshly; men will oppose each other; neighbors will fight. Youths will proudly defy the elderly and riffraff will challenge those who were once respected.

⁶ Indeed, a man will grab his brother right in his father's house and say, 'You own a coat – you be our leader! This heap of ruins will be under your control.'

⁷ At that time the brother will shout, 'I am no doctor, I have no food or coat in my house; don't make me a leader of the people!'"

⁸ Jerusalem certainly stumbles, Judah falls, for their words and their actions

offend the Lord; they rebel against his royal authority.

⁹The look on their faces testifies to their guilt; like the people of Sodom they openly boast of their sin. Too bad for them! For they bring disaster on themselves.

¹⁰Tell the innocent it will go well with them, for they will be rewarded for what they have done.

¹¹Too bad for the wicked sinners! For they will get exactly what they deserve.

¹²Oppressors treat my people cruelly; creditors rule over them. My people's leaders mislead them; they give you confusing directions.

¹³The Lord takes his position to judge; he stands up to pass sentence on his people.

¹⁴The Lord comes to pronounce judgment on the leaders of his people and their officials. He says, "It is you who have ruined the vineyard! You have stashed in your houses what you have stolen from the poor.

¹⁵Why do you crush my people and grind the faces of the poor?" The

sovereign Lord who commands armies has spoken.

¹⁶The Lord says, "The women of Zion are proud. They walk with their heads high and flirt with their eyes. They skip along and the jewelry on their ankles jingles.

¹⁷So the sovereign master will afflict the foreheads of Zion's women with skin diseases, the Lord will make the front of their heads bald."

¹⁸At that time the sovereign master will remove their beautiful ankle jewelry, neck ornaments, crescent shaped ornaments,

¹⁹earrings, bracelets, veils,

²⁰headdresses, ankle ornaments, sashes, sachets, amulets,

²¹rings, nose rings,

²²festive dresses, robes, shawls, purses,

²³garments, vests, head coverings, and gowns.

²⁴A putrid stench will replace the smell of spices, a rope will replace a belt, baldness will replace braided locks of hair, a sackcloth garment will replace

a fine robe, and a prisoner's brand will replace beauty.

²⁵Your men will fall by the sword, your strong men will die in battle.

²⁶Her gates will mourn and lament; deprived of her people, she will sit on the ground.

4¹Seven women will grab hold of one man at that time. They will say, "We will provide our own food, we will provide our own clothes; but let us belong to you – take away our shame!"

²At that time the crops given by the Lord will bring admiration and honor; the produce of the land will be a source of pride and delight to those who remain in Israel.

³Those remaining in Zion, those left in Jerusalem, will be called "holy," all in Jerusalem who are destined to live.

⁴At that time the sovereign master will wash the excrement from Zion's women, he will rinse the bloodstains from Jerusalem's midst, as he comes to judge and to bring devastation.

⁵Then the Lord will create over all of Mount Zion and over its convocations a cloud and smoke by day and a bright

flame of fire by night; indeed a canopy will accompany the Lord's glorious presence.

⁶By day it will be a shelter to provide shade from the heat, as well as safety and protection from the heavy downpour.

5¹I will sing to my love – a song to my lover about his vineyard. My love had a vineyard on a fertile hill.

²He built a hedge around it, removed its stones, and planted a vine. He built a tower in the middle of it, and constructed a winepress. He waited for it to produce edible grapes, but it produced sour ones instead.

³So now, residents of Jerusalem, people of Judah, you decide between me and my vineyard!

⁴What more can I do for my vineyard beyond what I have already done? When I waited for it to produce edible grapes, why did it produce sour ones instead?

⁵Now I will inform you what I am about to do to my vineyard: I will remove its hedge and turn it into pasture, I will break its wall and allow animals to graze there.

⁶I will make it a wasteland; no one will prune its vines or hoe its ground, and thorns and briars will grow there. I will order the clouds not to drop any rain on it.

⁷Indeed Israel is the vineyard of the Lord who commands armies, the people of Judah are the cultivated place in which he took delight. He waited for justice, but look what he got – disobedience! He waited for fairness, but look what he got – cries for help!

⁸Those who accumulate houses are as good as dead, those who also accumulate landed property until there is no land left, and you are the only landowners remaining within the land.

⁹The Lord who commands armies told me this: "Many houses will certainly become desolate, large, impressive houses will have no one living in them.

¹⁰Indeed, a large vineyard will produce just a few gallons, and enough seed to yield several bushels will produce less than a bushel."

¹¹Those who get up early to drink beer are as good as dead, those who keep

drinking long after dark until they are intoxicated with wine.

¹²They have stringed instruments, tambourines, flutes, and wine at their parties. So they do not recognize what the Lord is doing, they do not perceive what he is bringing about.

¹³Therefore my people will be deported because of their lack of understanding. Their leaders will have nothing to eat, their masses will have nothing to drink.

¹⁴So Death will open up its throat, and open wide its mouth; Zion's dignitaries and masses will descend into it, including those who revel and celebrate within her.

¹⁵Men will be humiliated, they will be brought low; the proud will be brought low.

¹⁶The Lord who commands armies will be exalted when he punishes, the sovereign God's authority will be recognized when he judges.

¹⁷Lambs will graze as if in their pastures, amid the ruins the rich sojourners will graze.

¹⁸Those who pull evil along using cords of emptiness are as good as dead, who pull sin as with cart ropes.

¹⁹They say, "Let him hurry, let him act quickly, so we can see; let the plan of the Holy One of Israel take shape and come to pass, then we will know it!"

²⁰Those who call evil good and good evil are as good as dead, who turn darkness into light and light into darkness, who turn bitter into sweet and sweet into bitter.

²¹Those who think they are wise are as good as dead, those who think they possess understanding.

²²Those who are champions at drinking wine are as good as dead, who display great courage when mixing strong drinks.

²³They pronounce the guilty innocent for a payoff, they ignore the just cause of the innocent.

²⁴Therefore, as flaming fire devours straw, and dry grass disintegrates in the flames, so their root will rot, and their flower will blow away like dust. For they have rejected the law of the Lord who commands armies, they have spurned the commands of the Holy One of Israel.

²⁵So the Lord is furious with his people; he lifts his hand and strikes them. The

mountains shake, and corpses lie like manure in the middle of the streets. Despite all this, his anger does not subside, and his hand is ready to strike again.

²⁶ He lifts a signal flag for a distant nation, he whistles for it to come from the far regions of the earth. Look, they come quickly and swiftly.

²⁷ None tire or stumble, they don't stop to nap or sleep. They don't loosen their belts, or unstrap their sandals to rest.

²⁸ Their arrows are sharpened, and all their bows are prepared. The hooves of their horses are hard as flint, and their chariot wheels are like a windstorm.

²⁹ Their roar is like a lion's; they roar like young lions. They growl and seize their prey; they drag it away and no one can come to the rescue.

³⁰ At that time they will growl over their prey, it will sound like sea waves crashing against rocks. One will look out over the land and see the darkness of disaster, clouds will turn the light into darkness.

6¹ In the year of King Uzziah's death, I saw the sovereign master seated on

a high, elevated throne. The hem of his robe filled the temple.

²Seraphs stood over him; each one had six wings. With two wings they covered their faces, with two they covered their feet, and they used the remaining two to fly.

³They called out to one another, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord who commands armies! His majestic splendor fills the entire earth!"

⁴The sound of their voices shook the door frames, and the temple was filled with smoke.

⁵I said, "Too bad for me! I am destroyed, for my lips are contaminated by sin, and I live among people whose lips are contaminated by sin. My eyes have seen the king, the Lord who commands armies."

⁶But then one of the seraphs flew toward me. In his hand was a hot coal he had taken from the altar with tongs.

⁷He touched my mouth with it and said, "Look, this coal has touched your lips. Your evil is removed; your sin is forgiven."

⁸I heard the voice of the sovereign master say, "Whom will I send? Who will go on our behalf?" I answered, "Here I am, send me!"

⁹He said, "Go and tell these people: 'Listen continually, but don't understand! Look continually, but don't perceive!'

¹⁰Make the hearts of these people calloused; make their ears deaf and their eyes blind! Otherwise they might see with their eyes and hear with their ears, their hearts might understand and they might repent and be healed."

¹¹I replied, "How long, sovereign master?" He said, "Until cities are in ruins and unpopulated, and houses are uninhabited, and the land is ruined and devastated,

¹²and the Lord has sent the people off to a distant place, and the very heart of the land is completely abandoned.

¹³Even if only a tenth of the people remain in the land, it will again be destroyed, like one of the large sacred trees or an Asherah pole, when a sacred pillar on a high place is thrown down. That sacred pillar symbolizes the special chosen family."

7¹ During the reign of Ahaz son of Jotham, son of Uzziah, king of Judah, King Rezin of Syria and King Pekah son of Remaliah of Israel marched up to Jerusalem to do battle, but they were unable to prevail against it.

² It was reported to the family of David, "Syria has allied with Ephraim." They and their people were emotionally shaken, just as the trees of the forest shake before the wind.

³ So the Lord told Isaiah, "Go out with your son Shear-jashub and meet Ahaz at the end of the conduit of the upper pool which is located on the road to the field where they wash and dry cloth.

⁴ Tell him, 'Make sure you stay calm! Don't be afraid! Don't be intimidated by these two stubs of smoking logs, or by the raging anger of Rezin, Syria, and the son of Remaliah.

⁵ Syria has plotted with Ephraim and the son of Remaliah to bring about your demise.

⁶ They say, "Let's attack Judah, terrorize it, and conquer it. Then we'll set up the son of Tabeel as its king."

⁷ For this reason the sovereign master, the Lord, says: "It will not take place; it will not happen.

⁸ For Syria's leader is Damascus, and the leader of Damascus is Rezin. Within sixty-five years Ephraim will no longer exist as a nation.

⁹ Ephraim's leader is Samaria, and Samaria's leader is the son of Remaliah. If your faith does not remain firm, then you will not remain secure."

¹⁰ The Lord again spoke to Ahaz:

¹¹ "Ask for a confirming sign from the Lord your God. You can even ask for something miraculous."

¹² But Ahaz responded, "I don't want to ask; I don't want to put the Lord to a test."

¹³ So Isaiah replied, "Pay attention, family of David. Do you consider it too insignificant to try the patience of men? Is that why you are also trying the patience of my God?"

¹⁴ For this reason the sovereign master himself will give you a confirming sign. Look, this young woman is about to conceive and will give birth to a son. You, young woman, will name him Immanuel.

¹⁵He will eat sour milk and honey, which will help him know how to reject evil and choose what is right.

¹⁶Here is why this will be so: Before the child knows how to reject evil and choose what is right, the land whose two kings you fear will be desolate.

¹⁷The Lord will bring on you, your people, and your father's family a time unlike any since Ephraim departed from Judah – the king of Assyria!"

¹⁸At that time the Lord will whistle for flies from the distant streams of Egypt and for bees from the land of Assyria.

¹⁹All of them will come and make their home in the ravines between the cliffs, and in the crevices of the cliffs, in all the thorn bushes, and in all the watering holes.

²⁰At that time the sovereign master will use a razor hired from the banks of the Euphrates River, the king of Assyria, to shave the head and the pubic hair; it will also shave off the beard.

²¹At that time a man will keep alive a young cow from the herd and a couple of goats.

²²From the abundance of milk they produce, he will have sour milk for his meals. Indeed, everyone left in the heart of the land will eat sour milk and honey.

²³At that time every place where there had been a thousand vines worth a thousand shekels will be overrun with thorns and briers.

²⁴With bow and arrow men will hunt there, for the whole land will be covered with thorns and briers.

²⁵They will stay away from all the hills that were cultivated, for fear of the thorns and briers. Cattle will graze there and sheep will trample on them.

8¹The Lord told me, "Take a large tablet and inscribe these words on it with an ordinary stylus: 'Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz.'"

²Then I will summon as my reliable witnesses Uriah the priest and Zechariah son of Jeberekiah."

³I then had sexual relations with the prophetess; she conceived and gave birth to a son. The Lord told me, "Name him Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz,

⁴for before the child knows how to cry out, 'My father' or 'My mother,' the

wealth of Damascus and the plunder of Samaria will be carried off by the king of Assyria."

⁵The Lord spoke to me again:

⁶"These people have rejected the gently flowing waters of Shiloah and melt in fear over Rezin and the son of Remaliah.

⁷So look, the sovereign master is bringing up against them the turbulent and mighty waters of the Euphrates River – the king of Assyria and all his majestic power. It will reach flood stage and overflow its banks.

⁸It will spill into Judah, flooding and engulfing, as it reaches to the necks of its victims. He will spread his wings out over your entire land, O Immanuel."

⁹You will be broken, O nations; you will be shattered! Pay attention, all you distant lands of the earth! Get ready for battle, and you will be shattered! Get ready for battle, and you will be shattered!

¹⁰Devise your strategy, but it will be thwarted! Issue your orders, but they will not be executed! For God is with us!

¹¹ Indeed this is what the Lord told me. He took hold of me firmly and warned me not to act like these people:

¹² "Do not say, 'Conspiracy,' every time these people say the word. Don't be afraid of what scares them; don't be terrified.

¹³ You must recognize the authority of the Lord who commands armies. He is the one you must respect; he is the one you must fear.

¹⁴ He will become a sanctuary, but a stone that makes a person trip, and a rock that makes one stumble – to the two houses of Israel. He will become a trap and a snare to the residents of Jerusalem.

¹⁵ Many will stumble over the stone and the rock, and will fall and be seriously injured, and will be ensnared and captured."

¹⁶ Tie up the scroll as legal evidence, seal the official record of God's instructions and give it to my followers.

¹⁷ I will wait patiently for the Lord, who has rejected the family of Jacob; I will wait for him.

¹⁸Look, I and the sons whom the Lord has given me are reminders and object lessons in Israel, sent from the Lord who commands armies, who lives on Mount Zion.

¹⁹They will say to you, "Seek oracles at the pits used to conjure up underworld spirits, from the magicians who chirp and mutter incantations. Should people not seek oracles from their gods, by asking the dead about the destiny of the living?"

²⁰Then you must recall the Lord's instructions and the prophetic testimony of what would happen. Certainly they say such things because their minds are spiritually darkened.

²¹They will pass through the land destitute and starving. Their hunger will make them angry, and they will curse their king and their God as they look upward.

²²When one looks out over the land, he sees distress and darkness, gloom and anxiety, darkness and people forced from the land.

9¹The gloom will be dispelled for those who were anxious. In earlier

times he humiliated the land of Zebulun, and the land of Naphtali; but now he brings honor to the way of the sea, the region beyond the Jordan, and Galilee of the nations.

²The people walking in darkness see a bright light; light shines on those who live in a land of deep darkness.

³You have enlarged the nation; you give them great joy. They rejoice in your presence as harvesters rejoice; as warriors celebrate when they divide up the plunder.

⁴For their oppressive yoke and the club that strikes their shoulders, the cudgel the oppressor uses on them, you have shattered, as in the day of Midian's defeat.

⁵Indeed every boot that marches and shakes the earth and every garment dragged through blood is used as fuel for the fire.

⁶For a child has been born to us, a son has been given to us. He shoulders responsibility and is called: Extraordinary Strategist, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷ His dominion will be vast and he will bring immeasurable prosperity. He will rule on David's throne and over David's kingdom, establishing it and strengthening it by promoting justice and fairness, from this time forward and forevermore. The Lord's intense devotion to his people will accomplish this.

⁸ The sovereign master decreed judgment on Jacob, and it fell on Israel.

⁹ All the people were aware of it, the people of Ephraim and those living in Samaria. Yet with pride and an arrogant attitude, they said,

¹⁰ "The bricks have fallen, but we will rebuild with chiseled stone; the sycamore fig trees have been cut down, but we will replace them with cedars."

¹¹ Then the Lord provoked their adversaries to attack them, he stirred up their enemies –

¹² Syria from the east, and the Philistines from the west, they gobbled up Israelite territory. Despite all this, his anger does not subside, and his hand is ready to strike again.

¹³ The people did not return to the one who struck them, they did not

seek reconciliation with the Lord who commands armies.

¹⁴ So the Lord cut off Israel's head and tail, both the shoots and stalk in one day.

¹⁵ The leaders and the highly respected people are the head, the prophets who teach lies are the tail.

¹⁶ The leaders of this nation were misleading people, and the people being led were destroyed.

¹⁷ So the sovereign master was not pleased with their young men, he took no pity on their orphans and widows; for the whole nation was godless and did wicked things, every mouth was speaking disgraceful words. Despite all this, his anger does not subside, and his hand is ready to strike again.

¹⁸ For evil burned like a fire, it consumed thorns and briars; it burned up the thickets of the forest, and they went up in smoke.

¹⁹ Because of the anger of the Lord who commands armies, the land was scorched, and the people became fuel for the fire. People had no compassion on one another.

²⁰They devoured on the right, but were still hungry, they ate on the left, but were not satisfied. People even ate the flesh of their own arm!

²¹Manasseh fought against Ephraim, and Ephraim against Manasseh; together they fought against Judah. Despite all this, his anger does not subside, and his hand is ready to strike again.

10¹ Those who enact unjust policies are as good as dead, those who are always instituting unfair regulations,² to keep the poor from getting fair treatment, and to deprive the oppressed among my people of justice, so they can steal what widows own, and loot what belongs to orphans.

³What will you do on judgment day, when destruction arrives from a distant place? To whom will you run for help? Where will you leave your wealth?

⁴You will have no place to go, except to kneel with the prisoners, or to fall among those who have been killed. Despite all this, his anger does not subside, and his hand is ready to strike again.

⁵Assyria, the club I use to vent my anger, is as good as dead, a cudgel with which I angrily punish.

⁶I sent him against a godless nation, I ordered him to attack the people with whom I was angry, to take plunder and to carry away loot, to trample them down like dirt in the streets.

⁷But he does not agree with this, his mind does not reason this way, for his goal is to destroy, and to eliminate many nations.

⁸Indeed, he says: "Are not my officials all kings?

⁹Is not Calneh like Carchemish? Hamath like Arpad? Samaria like Damascus?

¹⁰I overpowered kingdoms ruled by idols, whose carved images were more impressive than Jerusalem's or Samaria's.

¹¹As I have done to Samaria and its idols, so I will do to Jerusalem and its idols."

¹²But when the sovereign master finishes judging Mount Zion and Jerusalem, then I will punish the king of

Assyria for what he has proudly planned and for the arrogant attitude he displays.

¹³For he says: "By my strong hand I have accomplished this, by my strategy that I devised. I invaded the territory of nations, and looted their storehouses. Like a mighty conqueror, I brought down rulers.

¹⁴My hand discovered the wealth of the nations, as if it were in a nest, as one gathers up abandoned eggs, I gathered up the whole earth. There was no wing flapping, or open mouth chirping."

¹⁵Does an ax exalt itself over the one who wields it, or a saw magnify itself over the one who cuts with it? As if a scepter should brandish the one who raises it, or a staff should lift up what is not made of wood!

¹⁶For this reason the sovereign master, the Lord who commands armies, will make his healthy ones emaciated. His majestic glory will go up in smoke.

¹⁷The light of Israel will become a fire, their Holy One will become a flame; it will burn and consume the Assyrian king's briars and his thorns in one day.

¹⁸The splendor of his forest and his orchard will be completely destroyed, as when a sick man's life ebbs away.

¹⁹There will be so few trees left in his forest, a child will be able to count them.

²⁰At that time those left in Israel, those who remain of the family of Jacob, will no longer rely on a foreign leader that abuses them. Instead they will truly rely on the Lord, the Holy One of Israel.

²¹A remnant will come back, a remnant of Jacob, to the mighty God.

²²For though your people, Israel, are as numerous as the sand on the seashore, only a remnant will come back. Destruction has been decreed; just punishment is about to engulf you.

²³The sovereign master, the Lord who commands armies, is certainly ready to carry out the decreed destruction throughout the land.

²⁴So here is what the sovereign master, the Lord who commands armies, says: "My people who live in Zion, do not be afraid of Assyria, even though they beat you with a club and lift their cudgel against you as Egypt did.

²⁵For very soon my fury will subside, and my anger will be directed toward their destruction."

²⁶The Lord who commands armies is about to beat them with a whip, similar to the way he struck down Midian at the rock of Oreb. He will use his staff against the sea, lifting it up as he did in Egypt.

²⁷At that time the Lord will remove their burden from your shoulders, and their yoke from your neck; the yoke will be taken off because your neck will be too large.

²⁸They attacked Aiath, moved through Migron, depositing their supplies at Micmash.

²⁹They went through the pass, spent the night at Geba. Ramah trembled, Gibeah of Saul ran away.

³⁰Shout out, daughter of Gallim! Pay attention, Laishah! Answer her, Anathoth!

³¹Madmenah flees, the residents of Gebim have hidden.

³²This very day, standing in Nob, they shake their fist at Daughter Zion's mountain - at the hill of Jerusalem.

³³ Look, the sovereign master, the Lord who commands armies, is ready to cut off the branches with terrifying power. The tallest trees will be cut down, the loftiest ones will be brought low.

³⁴ The thickets of the forest will be chopped down with an ax, and mighty Lebanon will fall.

11 ¹ A shoot will grow out of Jesse's root stock, a bud will sprout from his roots.

² The Lord's spirit will rest on him – a spirit that gives extraordinary wisdom, a spirit that provides the ability to execute plans, a spirit that produces absolute loyalty to the Lord.

³ He will take delight in obeying the Lord. He will not judge by mere appearances, or make decisions on the basis of hearsay.

⁴ He will treat the poor fairly, and make right decisions for the downtrodden of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and order the wicked to be executed.

⁵ Justice will be like a belt around his waist, integrity will be like a belt around his hips.

⁶A wolf will reside with a lamb, and a leopard will lie down with a young goat; an ox and a young lion will graze together, as a small child leads them along.

⁷A cow and a bear will graze together, their young will lie down together. A lion, like an ox, will eat straw.

⁸A baby will play over the hole of a snake; over the nest of a serpent an infant will put his hand.

⁹They will no longer injure or destroy on my entire royal mountain. For there will be universal submission to the Lord's sovereignty, just as the waters completely cover the sea.

¹⁰At that time a root from Jesse will stand like a signal flag for the nations. Nations will look to him for guidance, and his residence will be majestic.

¹¹At that time the sovereign master will again lift his hand to reclaim the remnant of his people from Assyria, Egypt, Pathros, Cush, Elam, Shinar, Hamath, and the seacoasts.

¹²He will lift a signal flag for the nations; he will gather Israel's dispersed people and assemble Judah's scattered

people from the four corners of the earth.

¹³Ephraim's jealousy will end, and Judah's hostility will be eliminated. Ephraim will no longer be jealous of Judah, and Judah will no longer be hostile toward Ephraim.

¹⁴They will swoop down on the Philistine hills to the west; together they will loot the people of the east. They will take over Edom and Moab, and the Ammonites will be their subjects.

¹⁵The Lord will divide the gulf of the Egyptian Sea; he will wave his hand over the Euphrates River and send a strong wind, he will turn it into seven dried-up streams, and enable them to walk across in their sandals.

¹⁶There will be a highway leading out of Assyria for the remnant of his people, just as there was for Israel, when they went up from the land of Egypt.

12¹At that time you will say: "I praise you, O Lord, for even though you were angry with me, your anger subsided, and you consoled me.

²Look, God is my deliverer! I will trust in him and not fear. For the Lord gives

me strength and protects me; he has become my deliverer."

³Joyfully you will draw water from the springs of deliverance.

⁴At that time you will say: "Praise the Lord! Ask him for help! Publicize his mighty acts among the nations! Make it known that he is unique!

⁵Sing to the Lord, for he has done magnificent things, let this be known throughout the earth!

⁶Cry out and shout for joy, O citizens of Zion, for the Holy One of Israel acts mightily among you!"

13¹This is a message about Babylon that God revealed to Isaiah son of Amoz:

²On a bare hill raise a signal flag, shout to them, wave your hand, so they might enter the gates of the princes!

³I have given orders to my chosen soldiers; I have summoned the warriors through whom I will vent my anger, my boasting, arrogant ones.

⁴There is a loud noise on the mountains – it sounds like a large army! There is great commotion among the kingdoms – nations are being assembled! The Lord

who commands armies is mustering forces for battle.

⁵They come from a distant land, from the horizon. It is the Lord with his instruments of judgment, coming to destroy the whole earth.

⁶Wail, for the Lord's day of judgment is near; it comes with all the destructive power of the sovereign judge.

⁷For this reason all hands hang limp, every human heart loses its courage.

⁸They panic – cramps and pain seize hold of them like those of a woman who is straining to give birth. They look at one another in astonishment; their faces are flushed red.

⁹Look, the Lord's day of judgment is coming; it is a day of cruelty and savage, raging anger, destroying the earth and annihilating its sinners.

¹⁰Indeed the stars in the sky and their constellations no longer give out their light; the sun is darkened as soon as it rises, and the moon does not shine.

¹¹I will punish the world for its evil, and wicked people for their sin. I will put an end to the pride of the insolent, I will bring down the arrogance of tyrants.

¹²I will make human beings more scarce than pure gold, and people more scarce than gold from Ophir.

¹³So I will shake the heavens, and the earth will shake loose from its foundation, because of the fury of the Lord who commands armies, in the day he vents his raging anger.

¹⁴Like a frightened gazelle or a sheep with no shepherd, each will turn toward home, each will run to his homeland.

¹⁵Everyone who is caught will be stabbed; everyone who is seized will die by the sword.

¹⁶Their children will be smashed to pieces before their very eyes; their houses will be looted and their wives raped.

¹⁷Look, I am stirring up the Medes to attack them; they are not concerned about silver, nor are they interested in gold.

¹⁸Their arrows will cut young men to ribbons; they have no compassion on a person's offspring, they will not look with pity on children.

¹⁹Babylon, the most admired of kingdoms, the Chaldeans' source of

honor and pride, will be destroyed by God just as Sodom and Gomorrah were.

²⁰No one will live there again; no one will ever reside there again. No bedouin will camp there, no shepherds will rest their flocks there.

²¹Wild animals will rest there, the ruined houses will be full of hyenas. Ostriches will live there, wild goats will skip among the ruins.

²²Wild dogs will yip in her ruined fortresses, jackals will yelp in the once-splendid palaces. Her time is almost up, her days will not be prolonged.

14¹The Lord will certainly have compassion on Jacob; he will again choose Israel as his special people and restore them to their land. Resident foreigners will join them and unite with the family of Jacob.

²Nations will take them and bring them back to their own place. Then the family of Jacob will make foreigners their servants as they settle in the Lord's land. They will make their captors captives and rule over the ones who oppressed them.

³When the Lord gives you relief from your suffering and anxiety, and from the hard labor which you were made to perform,

⁴you will taunt the king of Babylon with these words: "Look how the oppressor has met his end! Hostility has ceased!

⁵The Lord has broken the club of the wicked, the scepter of rulers.

⁶It furiously struck down nations with unceasing blows. It angrily ruled over nations, oppressing them without restraint.

⁷The whole earth rests and is quiet; they break into song.

⁸The evergreens also rejoice over your demise, as do the cedars of Lebanon, singing, 'Since you fell asleep, no woodsman comes up to chop us down!'

⁹Sheol below is stirred up about you, ready to meet you when you arrive. It rouses the spirits of the dead for you, all the former leaders of the earth; it makes all the former kings of the nations rise from their thrones.

¹⁰All of them respond to you, saying: 'You too have become weak like us! You have become just like us!

¹¹Your splendor has been brought down to Sheol, as well as the sound of your stringed instruments. You lie on a bed of maggots, with a blanket of worms over you.

¹²Look how you have fallen from the sky, O shining one, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the ground, O conqueror of the nations!

¹³You said to yourself, "I will climb up to the sky. Above the stars of El I will set up my throne. I will rule on the mountain of assembly on the remote slopes of Zaphon.

¹⁴I will climb up to the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High!"

¹⁵But you were brought down to Sheol, to the remote slopes of the pit.

¹⁶Those who see you stare at you, they look at you carefully, thinking: "Is this the man who shook the earth, the one who made kingdoms tremble?"

¹⁷Is this the one who made the world like a desert, who ruined its cities, and refused to free his prisoners so they could return home?"'

¹⁸As for all the kings of the nations, all of them lie down in splendor, each in his own tomb.

¹⁹But you have been thrown out of your grave like a shoot that is thrown away. You lie among the slain, among those who have been slashed by the sword, among those headed for the stones of the pit, as if you were a mangled corpse.

²⁰You will not be buried with them, because you destroyed your land and killed your people. The offspring of the wicked will never be mentioned again.

²¹Prepare to execute his sons for the sins their ancestors have committed. They must not rise up and take possession of the earth, or fill the surface of the world with cities."

²²"I will rise up against them," says the Lord who commands armies. "I will blot out all remembrance of Babylon and destroy all her people, including the offspring she produces," says the Lord.

²³"I will turn her into a place that is overrun with wild animals and covered with pools of stagnant water. I will get rid of her, just as one sweeps away dirt with

a broom," says the Lord who commands armies.

²⁴The Lord who commands armies makes this solemn vow: "Be sure of this: Just as I have intended, so it will be; just as I have planned, it will happen.

²⁵I will break Assyria in my land, I will trample them underfoot on my hills. Their yoke will be removed from my people, the burden will be lifted from their shoulders.

²⁶This is the plan I have devised for the whole earth; my hand is ready to strike all the nations."

²⁷Indeed, the Lord who commands armies has a plan, and who can possibly frustrate it? His hand is ready to strike, and who can possibly stop it?

²⁸In the year King Ahaz died, this message was revealed:

²⁹Don't be so happy, all you Philistines, just because the club that beat you has been broken! For a viper will grow out of the serpent's root, and its fruit will be a darting adder.

³⁰The poor will graze in my pastures; the needy will rest securely. But I will kill

your root by famine; it will put to death all your survivors.

³¹Wail, O city gate! Cry out, O city! Melt with fear, all you Philistines! For out of the north comes a cloud of smoke, and there are no stragglers in its ranks.

³²How will they respond to the messengers of this nation? Indeed, the Lord has made Zion secure; the oppressed among his people will find safety in her.

15 ¹Here is a message about Moab: Indeed, in a night it is devastated, Ar of Moab is destroyed! Indeed, in a night it is devastated, Kir of Moab is destroyed!

²They went up to the temple, the people of Dibon went up to the high places to lament. Because of what happened to Nebo and Medeba, Moab wails. Every head is shaved bare, every beard is trimmed off.

³In their streets they wear sackcloth; on their roofs and in their town squares all of them wail, they fall down weeping.

⁴The people of Heshbon and Elealeh cry out, their voices are heard as far away

as Jahaz. For this reason Moab's soldiers shout in distress; their courage wavers.

⁵My heart cries out because of Moab's plight, and for the fugitives stretched out as far as Zoar and Eglath Shelishiyah. For they weep as they make their way up the ascent of Luhith; they loudly lament their demise on the road to Horonaim.

⁶For the waters of Nimrim are gone; the grass is dried up, the vegetation has disappeared, and there are no plants.

⁷For this reason what they have made and stored up, they carry over the Stream of the Poplars.

⁸Indeed, the cries of distress echo throughout Moabite territory; their wailing can be heard in Eglaim and Beer Elim.

⁹Indeed, the waters of Dimon are full of blood! Indeed, I will heap even more trouble on Dimon. A lion will attack the Moabite fugitives and the people left in the land.

16¹ Send rams as tribute to the ruler of the land, from Sela in the desert to the hill of Daughter Zion.

²At the fords of the Arnon the Moabite women are like a bird that flies about when forced from its nest.

³"Bring a plan, make a decision! Provide some shade in the middle of the day! Hide the fugitives! Do not betray the one who tries to escape!

⁴Please let the Moabite fugitives live among you. Hide them from the destroyer!" Certainly the one who applies pressure will cease, the destroyer will come to an end, those who trample will disappear from the earth.

⁵Then a trustworthy king will be established; he will rule in a reliable manner, this one from David's family. He will be sure to make just decisions and will be experienced in executing justice.

⁶We have heard about Moab's pride, their great arrogance, their boasting, pride, and excess. But their boastful claims are empty!

⁷So Moab wails over its demise – they all wail! Completely devastated, they moan about what has happened to the raisin cakes of Kir Hareseth.

⁸For the fields of Heshbon are dried up, as well as the vines of Sibmah. The

rulers of the nations trample all over its vines, which reach Jazer and spread to the desert; their shoots spread out and cross the sea.

⁹So I weep along with Jazer over the vines of Sibmah. I will saturate you with my tears, Heshbon and Elealeh, for the conquering invaders shout triumphantly over your fruit and crops.

¹⁰Joy and happiness disappear from the orchards, and in the vineyards no one rejoices or shouts; no one treads out juice in the wine vats – I have brought the joyful shouts to an end.

¹¹So my heart constantly sighs for Moab, like the strumming of a harp, my inner being sighs for Kir Hareseth.

¹²When the Moabites plead with all their might at their high places, and enter their temples to pray, their prayers will be ineffective!

¹³This is the message the Lord previously announced about Moab.

¹⁴Now the Lord makes this announcement: "Within exactly three years Moab's splendor will disappear, along with all her many people; there

will be just a few, insignificant survivors left.”

17 ¹ Here is a message about Damascus: “Look, Damascus is no longer a city, it is a heap of ruins!

² The cities of Aroer are abandoned. They will be used for herds, which will lie down there in peace.

³ Fortified cities will disappear from Ephraim, and Damascus will lose its kingdom. The survivors in Syria will end up like the splendor of the Israelites,” says the Lord who commands armies.

⁴ “At that time Jacob’s splendor will be greatly diminished, and he will become skin and bones.

⁵ It will be as when one gathers the grain harvest, and his hand gleanes the ear of grain. It will be like one gathering the ears of grain in the Valley of Rephaim.

⁶ There will be some left behind, like when an olive tree is beaten – two or three ripe olives remain toward the very top, four or five on its fruitful branches,” says the Lord God of Israel.

⁷At that time men will trust in their creator; they will depend on the Holy One of Israel.

⁸They will no longer trust in the altars their hands made, or depend on the Asherah poles and incense altars their fingers made.

⁹At that time their fortified cities will be like the abandoned summits of the Amorites, which they abandoned because of the Israelites; there will be desolation.

¹⁰For you ignore the God who rescues you; you pay no attention to your strong protector. So this is what happens: You cultivate beautiful plants and plant exotic vines.

¹¹The day you begin cultivating, you do what you can to make it grow; the morning you begin planting, you do what you can to make it sprout. Yet the harvest will disappear in the day of disease and incurable pain.

¹²The many nations massing together are as good as dead, those who make a commotion as loud as the roaring of the sea's waves. The people making such an uproar are as good as dead, those who

make an uproar as loud as the roaring of powerful waves.

¹³Though these people make an uproar as loud as the roaring of powerful waves, when he shouts at them, they will flee to a distant land, driven before the wind like dead weeds on the hills, or like dead thistles before a strong gale.

¹⁴In the evening there is sudden terror; by morning they vanish. This is the fate of those who try to plunder us, the destiny of those who try to loot us!

18¹The land of buzzing wings is as good as dead, the one beyond the rivers of Cush,

²that sends messengers by sea, who glide over the water's surface in boats made of papyrus. Go, you swift messengers, to a nation of tall, smooth-skinned people, to a people that are feared far and wide, to a nation strong and victorious, whose land rivers divide.

³All you who live in the world, who reside on the earth, you will see a signal flag raised on the mountains; you will hear a trumpet being blown.

⁴For this is what the Lord has told me: “I will wait and watch from my place, like scorching heat produced by the sunlight, like a cloud of mist in the heat of harvest.”

⁵For before the harvest, when the bud has sprouted, and the ripening fruit appears, he will cut off the unproductive shoots with pruning knives; he will prune the tendrils.

⁶They will all be left for the birds of the hills and the wild animals; the birds will eat them during the summer, and all the wild animals will eat them during the winter.

⁷At that time tribute will be brought to the Lord who commands armies, by a people that are tall and smooth-skinned, a people that are feared far and wide, a nation strong and victorious, whose land rivers divide. The tribute will be brought to the place where the Lord who commands armies has chosen to reside, on Mount Zion.

19¹Here is a message about Egypt: Look, the Lord rides on a swift-moving cloud and approaches

Egypt. The idols of Egypt tremble before him; the Egyptians lose their courage.

²“I will provoke civil strife in Egypt, brothers will fight with each other, as will neighbors, cities, and kingdoms.

³The Egyptians will panic, and I will confuse their strategy. They will seek guidance from the idols and from the spirits of the dead, from the pits used to conjure up underworld spirits, and from the magicians.

⁴I will hand Egypt over to a harsh master; a powerful king will rule over them,” says the sovereign master, the Lord who commands armies.

⁵The water of the sea will be dried up, and the river will dry up and be empty.

⁶The canals will stink; the streams of Egypt will trickle and then dry up; the bulrushes and reeds will decay,

⁷along with the plants by the mouth of the river. All the cultivated land near the river will turn to dust and be blown away.

⁸The fishermen will mourn and lament, all those who cast a fishhook into the river, and those who spread out a net on the water’s surface will grieve.

⁹Those who make clothes from combed flax will be embarrassed; those who weave will turn pale.

¹⁰Those who make cloth will be demoralized; all the hired workers will be depressed.

¹¹The officials of Zoan are nothing but fools; Pharaoh's wise advisers give stupid advice. How dare you say to Pharaoh, "I am one of the sages, one well-versed in the writings of the ancient kings?"

¹²But where, oh where, are your wise men? Let them tell you, let them find out what the Lord who commands armies has planned for Egypt.

¹³The officials of Zoan are fools, the officials of Memphis are misled; the rulers of her tribes lead Egypt astray.

¹⁴The Lord has made them undiscerning; they lead Egypt astray in all she does, so that she is like a drunk sliding around in his own vomit.

¹⁵Egypt will not be able to do a thing, head or tail, shoots and stalk.

¹⁶At that time the Egyptians will be like women. They will tremble and fear

because the Lord who commands armies brandishes his fist against them.

¹⁷The land of Judah will humiliate Egypt. Everyone who hears about Judah will be afraid because of what the Lord who commands armies is planning to do to them.

¹⁸At that time five cities in the land of Egypt will speak the language of Canaan and swear allegiance to the Lord who commands armies. One will be called the City of the Sun.

¹⁹At that time there will be an altar for the Lord in the middle of the land of Egypt, as well as a sacred pillar dedicated to the Lord at its border.

²⁰It will become a visual reminder in the land of Egypt of the Lord who commands armies. When they cry out to the Lord because of oppressors, he will send them a deliverer and defender who will rescue them.

²¹The Lord will reveal himself to the Egyptians, and they will acknowledge the Lord's authority at that time. They will present sacrifices and offerings; they will make vows to the Lord and fulfill them.

²²The Lord will strike Egypt, striking and then healing them. They will turn to the Lord and he will listen to their prayers and heal them.

²³At that time there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria. The Assyrians will visit Egypt, and the Egyptians will visit Assyria. The Egyptians and Assyrians will worship together.

²⁴At that time Israel will be the third member of the group, along with Egypt and Assyria, and will be a recipient of blessing in the earth.

²⁵The Lord who commands armies will pronounce a blessing over the earth, saying, “Blessed be my people, Egypt, and the work of my hands, Assyria, and my special possession, Israel!”

20¹The Lord revealed the following message during the year in which King Sargon of Assyria sent his commanding general to Ashdod, and he fought against it and captured it.

²At that time the Lord announced through Isaiah son of Amoz: “Go, remove the sackcloth from your waist and take your sandals off your feet.” He

did as instructed and walked around in undergarments and barefoot.

³ Later the Lord explained, "In the same way that my servant Isaiah has walked around in undergarments and barefoot for the past three years, as an object lesson and omen pertaining to Egypt and Cush,

⁴ so the king of Assyria will lead away the captives of Egypt and the exiles of Cush, both young and old. They will be in undergarments and barefoot, with the buttocks exposed; the Egyptians will be publicly humiliated.

⁵ Those who put their hope in Cush and took pride in Egypt will be afraid and embarrassed.

⁶ At that time those who live on this coast will say, 'Look what has happened to our source of hope to whom we fled for help, expecting to be rescued from the king of Assyria! How can we escape now?'"

21 ¹ Here is a message about the Desert by the Sea: Like strong winds blowing in the south, one invades from the desert, from a land that is feared.

²I have received a distressing message: "The deceiver deceives, the destroyer destroys. Attack, you Elamites! Lay siege, you Medes! I will put an end to all the groaning!"

³For this reason my stomach churns; cramps overwhelm me like the contractions of a woman in labor. I am disturbed by what I hear, horrified by what I see.

⁴My heart palpitates, I shake in fear; the twilight I desired has brought me terror.

⁵Arrange the table, lay out the carpet, eat and drink! Get up, you officers, smear oil on the shields!

⁶For this is what the sovereign master has told me: "Go, post a guard! He must report what he sees.

⁷When he sees chariots, teams of horses, riders on donkeys, riders on camels, he must be alert, very alert."

⁸Then the guard cries out: "On the watchtower, O sovereign master, I stand all day long; at my post I am stationed every night.

⁹Look what's coming! A charioteer, a team of horses." When questioned, he

replies, "Babylon has fallen, fallen! All the idols of her gods lie shattered on the ground!"

¹⁰O my downtrodden people, crushed like stalks on the threshing floor, what I have heard from the Lord who commands armies, the God of Israel, I have reported to you.

¹¹Here is a message about Dumah: Someone calls to me from Seir, "Watchman, what is left of the night? Watchman, what is left of the night?"

¹²The watchman replies, "Morning is coming, but then night. If you want to ask, ask; come back again."

¹³Here is a message about Arabia: In the thicket of Arabia you spend the night, you Dedanite caravans.

¹⁴Bring out some water for the thirsty. You who live in the land of Tema, bring some food for the fugitives.

¹⁵For they flee from the swords – from the drawn sword and from the battle-ready bow and from the severity of the battle.

¹⁶For this is what the sovereign master has told me: "Within exactly one year

all the splendor of Kedar will come to an end.

¹⁷Just a handful of archers, the warriors of Kedar, will be left." Indeed, the Lord God of Israel has spoken.

22¹Here is a message about the Valley of Vision: What is the reason that all of you go up to the rooftops?

²The noisy city is full of raucous sounds; the town is filled with revelry. Your slain were not cut down by the sword; they did not die in battle.

³All your leaders ran away together – they fled to a distant place; all your refugees were captured together – they were captured without a single arrow being shot.

⁴So I say: "Don't look at me! I am weeping bitterly. Don't try to console me concerning the destruction of my defenseless people."

⁵For the sovereign master, the Lord who commands armies, has planned a day of panic, defeat, and confusion. In the Valley of Vision people shout and cry out to the hill.

⁶The Elamites picked up the quiver, and came with chariots and horsemen; the men of Kir prepared the shield.

⁷Your very best valleys were full of chariots; horsemen confidently took their positions at the gate.

⁸They removed the defenses of Judah. At that time you looked for the weapons in the House of the Forest.

⁹You saw the many breaks in the walls of the city of David; you stored up water in the lower pool.

¹⁰You counted the houses in Jerusalem, and demolished houses so you could have material to reinforce the wall.

¹¹You made a reservoir between the two walls for the water of the old pool – but you did not trust in the one who made it; you did not depend on the one who formed it long ago!

¹²At that time the sovereign master, the Lord who commands armies, called for weeping and mourning, for shaved heads and sackcloth.

¹³But look, there is outright celebration! You say, “Kill the ox and slaughter the sheep, eat meat and drink wine. Eat and drink, for tomorrow we die!”

¹⁴The Lord who commands armies told me this: "Certainly this sin will not be forgiven as long as you live," says the sovereign master, the Lord who commands armies.

¹⁵This is what the sovereign master, the Lord who commands armies, says: "Go visit this administrator, Shebna, who supervises the palace, and tell him:

¹⁶'What right do you have to be here? What relatives do you have buried here? Why do you chisel out a tomb for yourself here? He chisels out his burial site in an elevated place, he carves out his tomb on a cliff.

¹⁷Look, the Lord will throw you far away, you mere man! He will wrap you up tightly.

¹⁸He will wind you up tightly into a ball and throw you into a wide, open land. There you will die, and there with you will be your impressive chariots, which bring disgrace to the house of your master.

¹⁹I will remove you from your office; you will be thrown down from your position.

²⁰ "At that time I will summon my servant Eliakim, son of Hilkiah.

²¹ I will put your robe on him, tie your belt around him, and transfer your authority to him. He will become a protector of the residents of Jerusalem and of the people of Judah.

²² I will place the key to the house of David on his shoulder. When he opens the door, no one can close it; when he closes the door, no one can open it.

²³ I will fasten him like a peg into a solid place; he will bring honor and respect to his father's family.

²⁴ His father's family will gain increasing prominence because of him, including the offspring and the offshoots. All the small containers, including the bowls and all the jars will hang from this peg.'

²⁵ "At that time," says the Lord who commands armies, "the peg fastened into a solid place will come loose. It will be cut off and fall, and the load hanging on it will be cut off." Indeed, the Lord has spoken.

23¹ Here is a message about Tyre:
Wail, you large ships, for the port is too devastated to enter! From the

land of Cyprus this news is announced to them.

²Lament, you residents of the coast, you merchants of Sidon who travel over the sea, whose agents sail over

³the deep waters! Grain from the Shihor region, crops grown near the Nile she receives; she is the trade center of the nations.

⁴Be ashamed, O Sidon, for the sea says this, O fortress of the sea: "I have not gone into labor or given birth; I have not raised young men or brought up young women."

⁵When the news reaches Egypt, they will be shaken by what has happened to Tyre.

⁶Travel to Tarshish! Wail, you residents of the coast!

⁷Is this really your boisterous city whose origins are in the distant past, and whose feet led her to a distant land to reside?

⁸Who planned this for royal Tyre, whose merchants are princes, whose traders are the dignitaries of the earth?

⁹The Lord who commands armies planned it - to dishonor the pride that

comes from all her beauty, to humiliate all the dignitaries of the earth.

¹⁰Daughter Tarshish, travel back to your land, as one crosses the Nile; there is no longer any marketplace in Tyre.

¹¹The Lord stretched out his hand over the sea, he shook kingdoms; he gave the order to destroy Canaan's fortresses.

¹²He said, "You will no longer celebrate, oppressed virgin daughter Sidon! Get up, travel to Cyprus, but you will find no relief there."

¹³Look at the land of the Chaldeans, these people who have lost their identity! The Assyrians have made it a home for wild animals. They erected their siege towers, demolished its fortresses, and turned it into a heap of ruins.

¹⁴Wail, you large ships, for your fortress is destroyed!

¹⁵At that time Tyre will be forgotten for seventy years, the typical life span of a king. At the end of seventy years Tyre will try to attract attention again, like the prostitute in the popular song:

¹⁶"Take the harp, go through the city, forgotten prostitute! Play it well, play lots of songs, so you'll be noticed!"

¹⁷At the end of seventy years the Lord will revive Tyre. She will start making money again by selling her services to all the earth's kingdoms.

¹⁸Her profits and earnings will be set apart for the Lord. They will not be stored up or accumulated, for her profits will be given to those who live in the Lord's presence and will be used to purchase large quantities of food and beautiful clothes.

24¹Look, the Lord is ready to devastate the earth and leave it in ruins; he will mar its surface and scatter its inhabitants.

²Everyone will suffer – the priest as well as the people, the master as well as the servant, the elegant lady as well as the female attendant, the seller as well as the buyer, the borrower as well as the lender, the creditor as well as the debtor.

³The earth will be completely devastated and thoroughly ransacked. For the Lord has decreed this judgment.

⁴The earth dries up and withers, the world shrivels up and withers; the prominent people of the earth fade away.

⁵The earth is defiled by its inhabitants, for they have violated laws, disregarded the regulation, and broken the permanent treaty.

⁶So a treaty curse devours the earth; its inhabitants pay for their guilt. This is why the inhabitants of the earth disappear, and are reduced to just a handful of people.

⁷The new wine dries up, the vines shrivel up, all those who like to celebrate groan.

⁸The happy sound of the tambourines stops, the revelry of those who celebrate comes to a halt, the happy sound of the harp ceases.

⁹They no longer sing and drink wine; the beer tastes bitter to those who drink it.

¹⁰The ruined town is shattered; all of the houses are shut up tight.

¹¹They howl in the streets because of what happened to the wine; all joy turns to sorrow; celebrations disappear from the earth.

¹²The city is left in ruins; the gate is reduced to rubble.

¹³This is what will happen throughout the earth, among the nations. It will be like when they beat an olive tree, and just a few olives are left at the end of the harvest.

¹⁴They lift their voices and shout joyfully; they praise the majesty of the Lord in the west.

¹⁵So in the east extol the Lord, along the seacoasts extol the fame of the Lord God of Israel.

¹⁶From the ends of the earth we hear songs – the Just One is majestic. But I say, “I’m wasting away! I’m wasting away! I’m doomed! Deceivers deceive, deceivers thoroughly deceive!”

¹⁷Terror, pit, and snare are ready to overtake you inhabitants of the earth!

¹⁸The one who runs away from the sound of the terror will fall into the pit; the one who climbs out of the pit, will be trapped by the snare. For the floodgates of the heavens are opened up and the foundations of the earth shake.

¹⁹The earth is broken in pieces, the earth is ripped to shreds, the earth shakes violently.

²⁰The earth will stagger around like a drunk; it will sway back and forth like a hut in a windstorm. Its sin will weigh it down, and it will fall and never get up again.

²¹At that time the Lord will punish the heavenly forces in the heavens and the earthly kings on the earth.

²²They will be imprisoned in a pit, locked up in a prison, and after staying there for a long time, they will be punished.

²³The full moon will be covered up, the bright sun will be darkened; for the Lord who commands armies will rule on Mount Zion in Jerusalem in the presence of his assembly, in majestic splendor.

25¹O Lord, you are my God! I will extol you in praise, I will extol your fame. For you have done extraordinary things, and executed plans made long ago exactly as you decreed.

²Indeed, you have made the city into a heap of rubble, the fortified town into a heap of ruins; the fortress of foreigners is no longer a city, it will never be rebuilt.

³So a strong nation will extol you; the towns of powerful nations will fear you.

⁴For you are a protector for the poor, a protector for the needy in their distress, a shelter from the rainstorm, a shade from the heat. Though the breath of tyrants is like a winter rainstorm,

⁵like heat in a dry land, you humble the boasting foreigners. Just as the shadow of a cloud causes the heat to subside, so he causes the song of tyrants to cease.

⁶The Lord who commands armies will hold a banquet for all the nations on this mountain. At this banquet there will be plenty of meat and aged wine – tender meat and choicest wine.

⁷On this mountain he will swallow up the shroud that is over all the peoples, the woven covering that is over all the nations;

⁸he will swallow up death permanently. The sovereign Lord will wipe away the tears from every face, and remove his people's disgrace from all the earth. Indeed, the Lord has announced it!

⁹At that time they will say, "Look, here is our God! We waited for him and he delivered us. Here is the Lord! We waited for him. Let's rejoice and celebrate his deliverance!"

¹⁰For the Lord's power will make this mountain secure. Moab will be trampled down where it stands, as a heap of straw is trampled down in a manure pile.

¹¹Moab will spread out its hands in the middle of it, just as a swimmer spreads his hands to swim; the Lord will bring down Moab's pride as it spreads its hands.

¹²The fortified city (along with the very tops of your walls) he will knock down, he will bring it down, he will throw it down to the dusty ground.

26 ¹At that time this song will be sung in the land of Judah: "We have a strong city! The Lord's deliverance, like walls and a rampart, makes it secure.

²Open the gates so a righteous nation can enter – one that remains trustworthy.

³You keep completely safe the people who maintain their faith, for they trust in you.

⁴Trust in the Lord from this time forward, even in Yah, the Lord, an enduring protector!

⁵Indeed, the Lord knocks down those who live in a high place, he brings down an elevated town; he brings it down to the ground, he throws it down to the dust.

⁶It is trampled underfoot by the feet of the oppressed, by the soles of the poor."

⁷The way of the righteous is level, the path of the righteous that you make is straight.

⁸Yes, as your judgments unfold, O Lord, we wait for you. We desire your fame and reputation to grow.

⁹I look for you during the night, my spirit within me seeks you at dawn, for when your judgments come upon the earth, those who live in the world learn about justice.

¹⁰If the wicked are shown mercy, they do not learn about justice. Even in a land where right is rewarded, they act unjustly; they do not see the Lord's majesty revealed.

¹¹O Lord, you are ready to act, but they don't even notice. They will see and be put to shame by your angry judgment against humankind, yes, fire will consume your enemies.

¹²O Lord, you make us secure, for even all we have accomplished, you have done for us.

¹³O Lord, our God, masters other than you have ruled us, but we praise your name alone.

¹⁴The dead do not come back to life, the spirits of the dead do not rise. That is because you came in judgment and destroyed them, you wiped out all memory of them.

¹⁵You have made the nation larger, O Lord, you have made the nation larger and revealed your splendor, you have extended all the borders of the land.

¹⁶O Lord, in distress they looked for you; they uttered incantations because of your discipline.

¹⁷As when a pregnant woman gets ready to deliver and strains and cries out because of her labor pains, so were we because of you, O Lord.

¹⁸We were pregnant, we strained, we gave birth, as it were, to wind. We cannot produce deliverance on the earth; people to populate the world are not born.

¹⁹Your dead will come back to life; your corpses will rise up. Wake up and shout joyfully, you who live in the ground! For you will grow like plants drenched with the morning dew, and the earth will bring forth its dead spirits.

²⁰Go, my people! Enter your inner rooms! Close your doors behind you! Hide for a little while, until his angry judgment is over!

²¹For look, the Lord is coming out of the place where he lives, to punish the sin of those who live on the earth. The earth will display the blood shed on it; it will no longer cover up its slain.

27 ¹At that time the Lord will punish with his destructive, great, and powerful sword Leviathan the fast-moving serpent, Leviathan the squirming serpent; he will kill the sea monster.

²When that time comes, sing about a delightful vineyard!

³I, the Lord, protect it; I water it regularly. I guard it night and day, so no one can harm it.

⁴I am not angry. I wish I could confront some thorns and briars! Then I would

march against them for battle; I would set them all on fire,

⁵ unless they became my subjects and made peace with me; let them make peace with me.

⁶ The time is coming when Jacob will take root; Israel will blossom and grow branches. The produce will fill the surface of the world.

⁷ Has the Lord struck down Israel like he did their oppressors? Has Israel been killed like their enemies?

⁸ When you summon her for divorce, you prosecute her; he drives her away with his strong wind in the day of the east wind.

⁹ So in this way Jacob's sin will be forgiven, and this is how they will show they are finished sinning: They will make all the stones of the altars like crushed limestone, and the Asherah poles and the incense altars will no longer stand.

¹⁰ For the fortified city is left alone; it is a deserted settlement and abandoned like the desert. Calves graze there; they lie down there and eat its branches bare.

¹¹ When its branches get brittle, they break; women come and use them

for kindling. For these people lack understanding, therefore the one who made them has no compassion on them; the one who formed them has no mercy on them.

¹²At that time the Lord will shake the tree, from the Euphrates River to the Stream of Egypt. Then you will be gathered up one by one, O Israelites.

¹³At that time a large trumpet will be blown, and the ones lost in the land of Assyria will come, as well as the refugees in the land of Egypt. They will worship the Lord on the holy mountain in Jerusalem.

28¹The splendid crown of Ephraim's drunkards is doomed, the withering flower, its beautiful splendor, situated at the head of a rich valley, the crown of those overcome with wine.

²Look, the sovereign master sends a strong, powerful one. With the force of a hailstorm or a destructive windstorm, with the might of a driving, torrential rainstorm, he will knock that crown to the ground with his hand.

³The splendid crown of Ephraim's drunkards will be trampled underfoot.

⁴The withering flower, its beautiful splendor, situated at the head of a rich valley, will be like an early fig before harvest – as soon as someone notices it, he grabs it and swallows it.

⁵At that time the Lord who commands armies will become a beautiful crown and a splendid diadem for the remnant of his people.

⁶He will give discernment to the one who makes judicial decisions, and strength to those who defend the city from attackers.

⁷Even these men stagger because of wine, they stumble around because of beer – priests and prophets stagger because of beer, they are confused because of wine, they stumble around because of beer; they stagger while seeing prophetic visions, they totter while making legal decisions.

⁸Indeed, all the tables are covered with vomit; no place is untouched.

⁹Who is the Lord trying to teach? To whom is he explaining a message? Those just weaned from milk! Those just taken from their mother's breast!

¹⁰Indeed, they will hear meaningless gibberish, senseless babbling, a syllable here, a syllable there.

¹¹For with mocking lips and a foreign tongue he will speak to these people.

¹²In the past he said to them, "This is where security can be found. Provide security for the one who is exhausted! This is where rest can be found." But they refused to listen.

¹³So the Lord's word to them will sound like meaningless gibberish, senseless babbling, a syllable here, a syllable there. As a result, they will fall on their backsides when they try to walk, and be injured, ensnared, and captured.

¹⁴Therefore, listen to the Lord's word, you who mock, you rulers of these people who reside in Jerusalem!

¹⁵For you say, "We have made a treaty with death, with Sheol we have made an agreement. When the overwhelming judgment sweeps by it will not reach us. For we have made a lie our refuge, we have hidden ourselves in a deceitful word."

¹⁶Therefore, this is what the sovereign master, the Lord, says: "Look, I am

laying a stone in Zion, an approved stone, set in place as a precious cornerstone for the foundation. The one who maintains his faith will not panic.

¹⁷I will make justice the measuring line, fairness the plumb line; hail will sweep away the unreliable refuge, the floodwaters will overwhelm the hiding place.

¹⁸Your treaty with death will be dissolved; your agreement with Sheol will not last. When the overwhelming judgment sweeps by, you will be overrun by it.

¹⁹Whenever it sweeps by, it will overtake you; indeed, every morning it will sweep by, it will come through during the day and the night." When this announcement is understood, it will cause nothing but terror.

²⁰For the bed is too short to stretch out on, and the blanket is too narrow to wrap around oneself.

²¹For the Lord will rise up, as he did at Mount Perazim, he will rouse himself, as he did in the Valley of Gibeon, to accomplish his work, his peculiar work, to perform his task, his strange task.

²² So now, do not mock, or your chains will become heavier! For I have heard a message about decreed destruction, from the sovereign master, the Lord who commands armies, against the entire land.

²³ Pay attention and listen to my message! Be attentive and listen to what I have to say!

²⁴ Does a farmer just keep on plowing at planting time? Does he keep breaking up and harrowing his ground?

²⁵ Once he has leveled its surface, does he not scatter the seed of the caraway plant, sow the seed of the cumin plant, and plant the wheat, barley, and grain in their designated places?

²⁶ His God instructs him; he teaches him the principles of agriculture.

²⁷ Certainly caraway seed is not threshed with a sledge, nor is the wheel of a cart rolled over cumin seed. Certainly caraway seed is beaten with a stick, and cumin seed with a flail.

²⁸ Grain is crushed, though one certainly does not thresh it forever. The wheel of one's wagon rolls over it, but his horses do not crush it.

²⁹This also comes from the Lord who commands armies, who gives supernatural guidance and imparts great wisdom.

29¹ Ariel is as good as dead – Ariel, the town David besieged! Keep observing your annual rituals, celebrate your festivals on schedule.

²I will threaten Ariel, and she will mourn intensely and become like an altar hearth before me.

³I will lay siege to you on all sides; I will besiege you with troops; I will raise siege works against you.

⁴You will fall; while lying on the ground you will speak; from the dust where you lie, your words will be heard. Your voice will sound like a spirit speaking from the underworld; from the dust you will chirp as if muttering an incantation.

⁵But the horde of invaders will be like fine dust, the horde of tyrants like chaff that is blown away. It will happen suddenly, in a flash.

⁶Judgment will come from the Lord who commands armies, accompanied by thunder, earthquake, and a loud noise,

by a strong gale, a windstorm, and a consuming flame of fire.

⁷It will be like a dream, a night vision. There will be a horde from all the nations that fight against Ariel, those who attack her and her stronghold and besiege her.

⁸It will be like a hungry man dreaming that he is eating, only to awaken and find that his stomach is empty. It will be like a thirsty man dreaming that he is drinking, only to awaken and find that he is still weak and his thirst unquenched. So it will be for the horde from all the nations that fight against Mount Zion.

⁹You will be shocked and amazed! You are totally blind! They are drunk, but not because of wine; they stagger, but not because of beer.

¹⁰For the Lord has poured out on you a strong urge to sleep deeply. He has shut your eyes (the prophets), and covered your heads (the seers).

¹¹To you this entire prophetic revelation is like words in a sealed scroll. When they hand it to one who can read and say, "Read this," he responds, "I can't, because it is sealed."

¹²Or when they hand the scroll to one who can't read and say, "Read this," he says, "I can't read."

¹³The sovereign master says, "These people say they are loyal to me; they say wonderful things about me, but they are not really loyal to me. Their worship consists of nothing but man-made ritual.

¹⁴Therefore I will again do an amazing thing for these people – an absolutely extraordinary deed. Wise men will have nothing to say, the sages will have no explanations."

¹⁵Those who try to hide their plans from the Lord are as good as dead, who do their work in secret and boast, "Who sees us? Who knows what we're doing?"

¹⁶Your thinking is perverse! Should the potter be regarded as clay? Should the thing made say about its maker, "He didn't make me"? Or should the pottery say about the potter, "He doesn't understand"?

¹⁷In just a very short time Lebanon will turn into an orchard, and the orchard will be considered a forest.

¹⁸At that time the deaf will be able to hear words read from a scroll, and

the eyes of the blind will be able to see through deep darkness.

¹⁹The downtrodden will again rejoice in the Lord; the poor among humankind will take delight in the Holy One of Israel.

²⁰For tyrants will disappear, those who taunt will vanish, and all those who love to do wrong will be eliminated –

²¹those who bear false testimony against a person, who entrap the one who arbitrates at the city gate and deprive the innocent of justice by making false charges.

²²So this is what the Lord, the one who delivered Abraham, says to the family of Jacob: “Jacob will no longer be ashamed; their faces will no longer show their embarrassment.

²³For when they see their children, whom I will produce among them, they will honor my name. They will honor the Holy One of Jacob; they will respect the God of Israel.

²⁴Those who stray morally will gain understanding; those who complain will acquire insight.

30¹ “The rebellious children are as good as dead,” says the

Lord, "those who make plans without consulting me, who form alliances without consulting my Spirit, and thereby compound their sin.

²They travel down to Egypt without seeking my will, seeking Pharaoh's protection, and looking for safety in Egypt's protective shade.

³But Pharaoh's protection will bring you nothing but shame, and the safety of Egypt's protective shade nothing but humiliation.

⁴Though his officials are in Zoan and his messengers arrive at Hanes,

⁵all will be put to shame because of a nation that cannot help them, who cannot give them aid or help, but only shame and disgrace."

⁶This is a message about the animals in the Negev: Through a land of distress and danger, inhabited by lionesses and roaring lions, by snakes and darting adders, they transport their wealth on the backs of donkeys, their riches on the humps of camels, to a nation that cannot help them.

⁷ Egypt is totally incapable of helping. For this reason I call her 'Proud one who is silenced.'

⁸ Now go, write it down on a tablet in their presence, inscribe it on a scroll, so that it might be preserved for a future time as an enduring witness.

⁹ For these are rebellious people – they are lying children, children unwilling to obey the Lord's law.

¹⁰ They say to the visionaries, "See no more visions!" and to the seers, "Don't relate messages to us about what is right! Tell us nice things, relate deceptive messages.

¹¹ Turn aside from the way, stray off the path. Remove from our presence the Holy One of Israel."

¹² For this reason this is what the Holy One of Israel says: "You have rejected this message; you trust instead in your ability to oppress and trick, and rely on that kind of behavior.

¹³ So this sin will become your downfall. You will be like a high wall that bulges and cracks and is ready to collapse; it crumbles suddenly, in a flash.

¹⁴It shatters in pieces like a clay jar, so shattered to bits that none of it can be salvaged. Among its fragments one cannot find a shard large enough to scoop a hot coal from a fire or to skim off water from a cistern.”

¹⁵For this is what the master, the Lord, the Holy One of Israel says: “If you repented and patiently waited for me, you would be delivered; if you calmly trusted in me you would find strength, but you are unwilling.

¹⁶You say, ‘No, we will flee on horses,’ so you will indeed flee. You say, ‘We will ride on fast horses,’ so your pursuers will be fast.

¹⁷One thousand will scurry at the battle cry of one enemy soldier; at the battle cry of five enemy soldiers you will all run away, until the remaining few are as isolated as a flagpole on a mountaintop or a signal flag on a hill.”

¹⁸For this reason the Lord is ready to show you mercy; he sits on his throne, ready to have compassion on you. Indeed, the Lord is a just God; all who wait for him in faith will be blessed.

¹⁹For people will live in Zion; in Jerusalem you will weep no more. When he hears your cry of despair, he will indeed show you mercy; when he hears it, he will respond to you.

²⁰The sovereign master will give you distress to eat and suffering to drink; but your teachers will no longer be hidden; your eyes will see them.

²¹You will hear a word spoken behind you, saying, "This is the correct way, walk in it," whether you are heading to the right or the left.

²²You will desecrate your silver-plated idols and your gold-plated images. You will throw them away as if they were a menstrual rag, saying to them, "Get out!"

²³He will water the seed you plant in the ground, and the ground will produce crops in abundance. At that time your cattle will graze in wide pastures.

²⁴The oxen and donkeys used in plowing will eat seasoned feed winnowed with a shovel and pitchfork.

²⁵On every high mountain and every high hill there will be streams flowing

with water, at the time of great slaughter when the fortified towers collapse.

²⁶The light of the full moon will be like the sun's glare and the sun's glare will be seven times brighter, like the light of seven days, when the Lord binds up his people's fractured bones and heals their severe wound.

²⁷Look, the name of the Lord comes from a distant place in raging anger and awesome splendor. He speaks angrily and his word is like destructive fire.

²⁸His battle cry overwhelms like a flooding river that reaches one's neck. He shakes the nations in a sieve that isolates the chaff; he puts a bit into the mouth of the nations and leads them to destruction.

²⁹You will sing as you do in the evening when you are celebrating a festival. You will be happy like one who plays a flute as he goes to the mountain of the Lord, the Rock who shelters Israel.

³⁰The Lord will give a mighty shout and intervene in power, with furious anger and flaming, destructive fire, with a driving rainstorm and hailstones.

³¹ Indeed, the Lord's shout will shatter Assyria; he will beat them with a club.

³² Every blow from his punishing cudgel, with which the Lord will beat them, will be accompanied by music from the tambourine and harp, and he will attack them with his weapons.

³³ For the burial place is already prepared; it has been made deep and wide for the king. The firewood is piled high on it. The Lord's breath, like a stream flowing with brimstone, will ignite it.

31 ¹ Those who go down to Egypt for help are as good as dead, those who rely on war horses, and trust in Egypt's many chariots and in their many, many horsemen. But they do not rely on the Holy One of Israel and do not seek help from the Lord.

² Yet he too is wise and he will bring disaster; he does not retract his decree. He will attack the wicked nation, and the nation that helps those who commit sin.

³ The Egyptians are mere humans, not God; their horses are made of flesh, not spirit. The Lord will strike with his hand; the one who helps will stumble and the

one being helped will fall. Together they will perish.

⁴Indeed, this is what the Lord says to me: "The Lord will be like a growling lion, like a young lion growling over its prey. Though a whole group of shepherds gathers against it, it is not afraid of their shouts or intimidated by their yelling. In this same way the Lord who commands armies will descend to do battle on Mount Zion and on its hill.

⁵Just as birds hover over a nest, so the Lord who commands armies will protect Jerusalem. He will protect and deliver it; as he passes over he will rescue it.

⁶You Israelites! Return to the one against whom you have so blatantly rebelled!

⁷For at that time everyone will get rid of the silver and gold idols your hands sinfully made.

⁸Assyria will fall by a sword, but not one human-made; a sword not made by humankind will destroy them. They will run away from this sword and their young men will be forced to do hard labor.

⁹They will surrender their stronghold because of fear; their officers will be afraid of the Lord's battle flag." This is what the Lord says – the one whose fire is in Zion, whose firepot is in Jerusalem.

32¹ Look, a king will promote fairness; officials will promote justice.

²Each of them will be like a shelter from the wind and a refuge from a rainstorm; like streams of water in a dry region and like the shade of a large cliff in a parched land.

³Eyes will no longer be blind and ears will be attentive.

⁴The mind that acts rashly will possess discernment and the tongue that stutters will speak with ease and clarity.

⁵A fool will no longer be called honorable; a deceiver will no longer be called principled.

⁶For a fool speaks disgraceful things; his mind plans out sinful deeds. He commits godless deeds and says misleading things about the Lord; he gives the hungry nothing to satisfy their appetite and gives the thirsty nothing to drink.

⁷ A deceiver's methods are evil; he dreams up evil plans to ruin the poor with lies, even when the needy are in the right.

⁸ An honorable man makes honorable plans; his honorable character gives him security.

⁹ You complacent women, get up and listen to me! You carefree daughters, pay attention to what I say!

¹⁰ In a year's time you carefree ones will shake with fear, for the grape harvest will fail, and the fruit harvest will not arrive.

¹¹ Tremble, you complacent ones! Shake with fear, you carefree ones! Strip off your clothes and expose yourselves – put sackcloth on your waist!

¹² Mourn over the field, over the delightful fields and the fruitful vine!

¹³ Mourn over the land of my people, which is overgrown with thorns and briars, and over all the once-happy houses in the city filled with revelry.

¹⁴ For the fortress is neglected; the once-crowded city is abandoned. Hill and watchtower are permanently

uninhabited. Wild donkeys love to go there, and flocks graze there.

¹⁵This desolation will continue until new life is poured out on us from heaven. Then the desert will become an orchard and the orchard will be considered a forest.

¹⁶Justice will settle down in the desert and fairness will live in the orchard.

¹⁷Fairness will produce peace and result in lasting security.

¹⁸My people will live in peaceful settlements, in secure homes, and in safe, quiet places.

¹⁹Even if the forest is destroyed and the city is annihilated,

²⁰you will be blessed, you who plant seed by all the banks of the streams, you who let your ox and donkey graze.

33¹The destroyer is as good as dead, you who have not been destroyed! The deceitful one is as good as dead, the one whom others have not deceived! When you are through destroying, you will be destroyed; when you finish deceiving, others will deceive you!

²Lord, be merciful to us! We wait for you. Give us strength each morning! Deliver us when distress comes.

³The nations run away when they hear a loud noise; the nations scatter when you spring into action!

⁴Your plunder disappears as if locusts were eating it; they swarm over it like locusts!

⁵The Lord is exalted, indeed, he lives in heaven; he fills Zion with justice and fairness.

⁶He is your constant source of stability; he abundantly provides safety and great wisdom; he gives all this to those who fear him.

⁷Look, ambassadors cry out in the streets; messengers sent to make peace weep bitterly.

⁸Highways are empty, there are no travelers. Treaties are broken, witnesses are despised, human life is treated with disrespect.

⁹The land dries up and withers away; the forest of Lebanon shrivels up and decays. Sharon is like the desert; Bashan and Carmel are parched.

¹⁰“Now I will rise up,” says the Lord. “Now I will exalt myself; now I will magnify myself.

¹¹You conceive straw, you give birth to chaff; your breath is a fire that destroys you.

¹²The nations will be burned to ashes; like thorn bushes that have been cut down, they will be set on fire.

¹³You who are far away, listen to what I have done! You who are close by, recognize my strength!”

¹⁴Sinners are afraid in Zion; panic grips the godless. They say, ‘Who among us can coexist with destructive fire? Who among us can coexist with unquenchable fire?’

¹⁵The one who lives uprightly and speaks honestly; the one who refuses to profit from oppressive measures and rejects a bribe; the one who does not plot violent crimes and does not seek to harm others –

¹⁶This is the person who will live in a secure place; he will find safety in the rocky, mountain strongholds; he will have food and a constant supply of water.

¹⁷You will see a king in his splendor;
you will see a wide land.

¹⁸Your mind will recall the terror you experienced, and you will ask yourselves, "Where is the scribe? Where is the one who weighs the money? Where is the one who counts the towers?"

¹⁹You will no longer see a defiant people whose language you do not comprehend, whose derisive speech you do not understand.

²⁰Look at Zion, the city where we hold religious festivals! You will see Jerusalem, a peaceful settlement, a tent that stays put; its stakes will never be pulled up; none of its ropes will snap in two.

²¹Instead the Lord will rule there as our mighty king. Rivers and wide streams will flow through it; no war galley will enter; no large ships will sail through.

²²For the Lord, our ruler, the Lord, our commander, the Lord, our king - he will deliver us.

²³Though at this time your ropes are slack, the mast is not secured, and the sail is not unfurled, at that time you will

divide up a great quantity of loot; even the lame will drag off plunder.

²⁴No resident of Zion will say, "I am ill"; the people who live there will have their sin forgiven.

34¹Come near, you nations, and listen! Pay attention, you people! The earth and everything it contains must listen, the world and everything that lives in it.

²For the Lord is angry at all the nations and furious with all their armies. He will annihilate them and slaughter them.

³Their slain will be left unburied, their corpses will stink; the hills will soak up their blood.

⁴All the stars in the sky will fade away, the sky will roll up like a scroll; all its stars will wither, like a leaf withers and falls from a vine or a fig withers and falls from a tree.

⁵He says, "Indeed, my sword has slaughtered heavenly powers. Look, it now descends on Edom, on the people I will annihilate in judgment."

⁶The Lord's sword is dripping with blood, it is covered with fat; it drips with the blood of young rams and goats and

is covered with the fat of rams' kidneys. For the Lord is holding a sacrifice in Bozrah, a bloody slaughter in the land of Edom.

⁷Wild oxen will be slaughtered along with them, as well as strong bulls. Their land is drenched with blood, their soil is covered with fat.

⁸For the Lord has planned a day of revenge, a time when he will repay Edom for her hostility toward Zion.

⁹Edom's streams will be turned into pitch and her soil into brimstone; her land will become burning pitch.

¹⁰Night and day it will burn; its smoke will ascend continually. Generation after generation it will be a wasteland and no one will ever pass through it again.

¹¹Owls and wild animals will live there, all kinds of wild birds will settle in it. The Lord will stretch out over her the measuring line of ruin and the plumb line of destruction.

¹²Her nobles will have nothing left to call a kingdom and all her officials will disappear.

¹³Her fortresses will be overgrown with thorns; thickets and weeds will grow

in her fortified cities. Jackals will settle there; ostriches will live there.

¹⁴Wild animals and wild dogs will congregate there; wild goats will bleat to one another. Yes, nocturnal animals will rest there and make for themselves a nest.

¹⁵Owls will make nests and lay eggs there; they will hatch them and protect them. Yes, hawks will gather there, each with its mate.

¹⁶Carefully read the scroll of the Lord! Not one of these creatures will be missing, none will lack a mate. For the Lord has issued the decree, and his own spirit gathers them.

¹⁷He assigns them their allotment; he measures out their assigned place. They will live there permanently; they will settle in it through successive generations.

35¹ Let the desert and dry region be happy; let the wilderness rejoice and bloom like a lily!

²Let it richly bloom; let it rejoice and shout with delight! It is given the grandeur of Lebanon, the splendor of Carmel and Sharon. They will see the

grandeur of the Lord, the splendor of our God.

³Strengthen the hands that have gone limp, steady the knees that shake!

⁴Tell those who panic, "Be strong! Do not fear! Look, your God comes to avenge! With divine retribution he comes to deliver you."

⁵Then blind eyes will open, deaf ears will hear.

⁶Then the lame will leap like a deer, the mute tongue will shout for joy; for water will flow in the desert, streams in the wilderness.

⁷The dry soil will become a pool of water, the parched ground springs of water. Where jackals once lived and sprawled out, grass, reeds, and papyrus will grow.

⁸A thoroughfare will be there – it will be called the Way of Holiness. The unclean will not travel on it; it is reserved for those authorized to use it – fools will not stray into it.

⁹No lions will be there, no ferocious wild animals will be on it – they will not be found there. Those delivered from bondage will travel on it,

¹⁰ those whom the Lord has ransomed will return that way. They will enter Zion with a happy shout. Unending joy will crown them, happiness and joy will overwhelm them; grief and suffering will disappear.

36 ¹ In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah's reign, King Sennacherib of Assyria marched up against all the fortified cities of Judah and captured them.

² The king of Assyria sent his chief adviser from Lachish to King Hezekiah in Jerusalem, along with a large army. The chief adviser stood at the conduit of the upper pool which is located on the road to the field where they wash and dry cloth.

³ Eliakim son of Hilkiah, the palace supervisor, accompanied by Shebna the scribe and Joah son of Asaph, the secretary, went out to meet him.

⁴ The chief adviser said to them, "Tell Hezekiah: 'This is what the great king, the king of Assyria, says: "What is your source of confidence?"

⁵ Your claim to have a strategy and military strength is just empty talk. In

whom are you trusting, that you would dare to rebel against me?

⁶Look, you must be trusting in Egypt, that splintered reed staff. If someone leans on it for support, it punctures his hand and wounds him. That is what Pharaoh king of Egypt does to all who trust in him!

⁷Perhaps you will tell me, 'We are trusting in the Lord our God.' But Hezekiah is the one who eliminated his high places and altars and then told the people of Judah and Jerusalem, 'You must worship at this altar.'

⁸Now make a deal with my master the king of Assyria, and I will give you two thousand horses, provided you can find enough riders for them.

⁹Certainly you will not refuse one of my master's minor officials and trust in Egypt for chariots and horsemen.

¹⁰Furthermore it was by the command of the Lord that I marched up against this land to destroy it. The Lord told me, 'March up against this land and destroy it!''''

¹¹Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah said to the chief adviser, "Speak to your servants

in Aramaic, for we understand it. Don't speak with us in the Judahite dialect in the hearing of the people who are on the wall."

¹²But the chief adviser said, "My master did not send me to speak these words only to your master and to you. His message is also for the men who sit on the wall, for they will eat their own excrement and drink their own urine along with you!"

¹³The chief adviser then stood there and called out loudly in the Judahite dialect, "Listen to the message of the great king, the king of Assyria.

¹⁴This is what the king says: 'Don't let Hezekiah mislead you, for he is not able to rescue you!

¹⁵Don't let Hezekiah talk you into trusting in the Lord by saying, "The Lord will certainly rescue us; this city will not be handed over to the king of Assyria."

¹⁶Don't listen to Hezekiah!' For this is what the king of Assyria says, 'Send me a token of your submission and surrender to me. Then each of you may eat from his own vine and fig tree and drink water from his own cistern,

¹⁷until I come and take you to a land just like your own – a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards.

¹⁸Hezekiah is misleading you when he says, “The Lord will rescue us.” Has any of the gods of the nations rescued his land from the power of the king of Assyria?

¹⁹Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim? Indeed, did any gods rescue Samaria from my power?

²⁰Who among all the gods of these lands have rescued their lands from my power? So how can the Lord rescue Jerusalem from my power?”

²¹They were silent and did not respond, for the king had ordered, “Don’t respond to him.”

²²Eliakim son of Hilkiah, the palace supervisor, accompanied by Shebna the scribe and Joah son of Asaph, the secretary, went to Hezekiah with their clothes torn in grief and reported to him what the chief adviser had said.

37 ¹When King Hezekiah heard this, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth, and went to the Lord’s temple.

²Eliakim the palace supervisor, Shebna the scribe, and the leading priests, clothed in sackcloth, sent this message to the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz:

³"This is what Hezekiah says: 'This is a day of distress, insults, and humiliation, as when a baby is ready to leave the birth canal, but the mother lacks the strength to push it through.

⁴Perhaps the Lord your God will hear all these things the chief adviser has spoken on behalf of his master, the king of Assyria, who sent him to taunt the living God. When the Lord your God hears, perhaps he will punish him for the things he has said. So pray for this remnant that remains.'"

⁵When King Hezekiah's servants came to Isaiah,

⁶Isaiah said to them, "Tell your master this: 'This is what the Lord says: "Don't be afraid because of the things you have heard – these insults the king of Assyria's servants have hurled against me.

⁷Look, I will take control of his mind; he will receive a report and return to

his own land. I will cut him down with a sword in his own land.'""

⁸When the chief adviser heard the king of Assyria had departed from Lachish, he left and went to Libnah, where the king was campaigning.

⁹The king heard that King Tirhakah of Ethiopia was marching out to fight him. He again sent messengers to Hezekiah, ordering them:

¹⁰"Tell King Hezekiah of Judah this: 'Don't let your God in whom you trust mislead you when he says, "Jerusalem will not be handed over to the king of Assyria."

¹¹Certainly you have heard how the kings of Assyria have annihilated all lands. Do you really think you will be rescued?

¹²Were the nations whom my predecessors destroyed – the nations of Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and the people of Eden in Telassar – rescued by their gods?

¹³Where are the king of Hamath, the king of Arpad, and the kings of Lair, Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah?'"

¹⁴Hezekiah took the letter from the messengers and read it. Then Hezekiah went up to the Lord's temple and spread it out before the Lord.

¹⁵Hezekiah prayed before the Lord:

¹⁶"O Lord who commands armies, O God of Israel, who is enthroned on the cherubim! You alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth. You made the sky and the earth.

¹⁷Pay attention, Lord, and hear! Open your eyes, Lord, and observe! Listen to this entire message Sennacherib sent and how he taunts the living God!

¹⁸It is true, Lord, that the kings of Assyria have destroyed all the nations and their lands.

¹⁹They have burned the gods of the nations, for they are not really gods, but only the product of human hands manufactured from wood and stone. That is why the Assyrians could destroy them.

²⁰Now, O Lord our God, rescue us from his power, so all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you alone are the Lord."

²¹ Isaiah son of Amoz sent this message to Hezekiah: "This is what the Lord God of Israel says: 'Because you prayed to me concerning King Sennacherib of Assyria,

²² this is what the Lord says about him: "The virgin daughter Zion despises you – she makes fun of you; daughter Jerusalem shakes her head after you.

²³ Whom have you taunted and hurled insults at? At whom have you shouted and looked so arrogantly? At the Holy One of Israel!

²⁴ Through your messengers you taunted the sovereign master, 'With my many chariots I climbed up the high mountains, the slopes of Lebanon. I cut down its tall cedars and its best evergreens. I invaded its most remote regions, its thickest woods.

²⁵ I dug wells and drank water. With the soles of my feet I dried up all the rivers of Egypt.'

²⁶ Certainly you must have heard! Long ago I worked it out, in ancient times I planned it, and now I am bringing it to pass. The plan is this: Fortified cities will crash into heaps of ruins.

²⁷ Their residents are powerless; they are terrified and ashamed. They are as short-lived as plants in the field or green vegetation. They are as short-lived as grass on the rooftops when it is scorched by the east wind.

²⁸ I know where you live and everything you do and how you rage against me.

²⁹ Because you rage against me and the uproar you create has reached my ears, I will put my hook in your nose, and my bridle between your lips, and I will lead you back the way you came."

³⁰ "This will be your reminder that I have spoken the truth: This year you will eat what grows wild, and next year what grows on its own. But the year after that you will plant seed and harvest crops; you will plant vines and consume their produce.

³¹ Those who remain in Judah will take root in the ground and bear fruit.

³² "For a remnant will leave Jerusalem; survivors will come out of Mount Zion. The intense devotion of the Lord who commands armies will accomplish this.

³³ So this is what the Lord says about the king of Assyria: 'He will not enter

this city, nor will he shoot an arrow here. He will not attack it with his shielded warriors, nor will he build siege works against it.

³⁴He will go back the way he came – he will not enter this city,' says the Lord.

³⁵I will shield this city and rescue it for the sake of my reputation and because of my promise to David my servant.'"

³⁶The Lord's messenger went out and killed 185,000 troops in the Assyrian camp. When they got up early the next morning, there were all the corpses!

³⁷So King Sennacherib of Assyria broke camp and went on his way. He went home and stayed in Nineveh.

³⁸One day, as he was worshiping in the temple of his god Nisroch, his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer struck him down with the sword. They ran away to the land of Ararat; his son Esarhaddon replaced him as king.

38¹In those days Hezekiah was stricken with a terminal illness. The prophet Isaiah son of Amoz visited him and told him, "This is what the Lord says, 'Give instructions to your

household, for you are about to die; you will not get well.”

²Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and prayed to the Lord,

³“Please, Lord. Remember how I have served you faithfully and with wholehearted devotion, and how I have carried out your will.” Then Hezekiah wept bitterly.

⁴The Lord told Isaiah,

⁵“Go and tell Hezekiah: ‘This is what the Lord God of your ancestor David says: “I have heard your prayer; I have seen your tears. Look, I will add fifteen years to your life,

⁶and rescue you and this city from the king of Assyria. I will shield this city.””

⁷Isaiah replied, “This is your sign from the Lord confirming that the Lord will do what he has said:

⁸Look, I will make the shadow go back ten steps on the stairs of Ahaz.” And then the shadow went back ten steps.

⁹This is the prayer of King Hezekiah of Judah when he was sick and then recovered from his illness:

¹⁰ "I thought, 'In the middle of my life I must walk through the gates of Sheol, I am deprived of the rest of my years.'

¹¹ "I thought, 'I will no longer see the Lord in the land of the living, I will no longer look on humankind with the inhabitants of the world.'

¹² My dwelling place is removed and taken away from me like a shepherd's tent. I rolled up my life like a weaver rolls cloth; from the loom he cuts me off. You turn day into night and end my life.

¹³ I cry out until morning; like a lion he shatters all my bones; you turn day into night and end my life.

¹⁴ Like a swallow or a thrush I chirp, I coo like a dove; my eyes grow tired from looking up to the sky. O sovereign master, I am oppressed; help me!

¹⁵ What can I say? He has decreed and acted. I will walk slowly all my years because I am overcome with grief.

¹⁶ O sovereign master, your decrees can give men life; may years of life be restored to me. Restore my health and preserve my life.'

¹⁷ "Look, the grief I experienced was for my benefit. You delivered me from the

pit of oblivion. For you removed all my sins from your sight.

¹⁸Indeed Sheol does not give you thanks; death does not praise you. Those who descend into the pit do not anticipate your faithfulness.

¹⁹The living person, the living person, he gives you thanks, as I do today. A father tells his sons about your faithfulness.

²⁰The Lord is about to deliver me, and we will celebrate with music for the rest of our lives in the Lord's temple."

²¹Isaiah ordered, "Let them take a fig cake and apply it to the ulcerated sore and he will get well."

²²Hezekiah said, "What is the confirming sign that I will go up to the Lord's temple?"

39¹ At that time Merodach-Baladan son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent letters and a gift to Hezekiah, for he heard that Hezekiah had been ill and had recovered.

²Hezekiah welcomed them and showed them his storehouse with its silver, gold, spices, and high-quality olive oil, as well as his whole armory and everything in

his treasuries. Hezekiah showed them everything in his palace and in his whole kingdom.

³Isaiah the prophet visited King Hezekiah and asked him, "What did these men say? Where do they come from?" Hezekiah replied, "They come from the distant land of Babylon."

⁴Isaiah asked, "What have they seen in your palace?" Hezekiah replied, "They have seen everything in my palace. I showed them everything in my treasuries."

⁵Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Listen to the word of the Lord who commands armies:

⁶'Look, a time is coming when everything in your palace and the things your ancestors have accumulated to this day will be carried away to Babylon; nothing will be left,' says the Lord.

⁷'Some of your very own descendants whom your father will be taken away and will be made eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.'"

⁸Hezekiah said to Isaiah, "The Lord's word which you have announced is appropriate." Then he thought, "For

there will be peace and stability during my lifetime."

40¹ "Comfort, comfort my people," says your God.

² "Speak kindly to Jerusalem, and tell her that her time of warfare is over, that her punishment is completed. For the Lord has made her pay double for all her sins."

³ A voice cries out, "In the wilderness clear a way for the Lord; construct in the desert a road for our God.

⁴ Every valley must be elevated, and every mountain and hill leveled. The rough terrain will become a level plain, the rugged landscape a wide valley.

⁵ The splendor of the Lord will be revealed, and all people will see it at the same time. For the Lord has decreed it."

⁶ A voice says, "Cry out!" Another asks, "What should I cry out?" The first voice responds: "All people are like grass, and all their promises are like the flowers in the field.

⁷ The grass dries up, the flowers wither, when the wind sent by the Lord blows on them. Surely humanity is like grass.

⁸The grass dries up, the flowers wither, but the decree of our God is forever reliable."

⁹Go up on a high mountain, O herald Zion! Shout out loudly, O herald Jerusalem! Shout, don't be afraid! Say to the towns of Judah, "Here is your God!"

¹⁰Look, the sovereign Lord comes as a victorious warrior; his military power establishes his rule. Look, his reward is with him; his prize goes before him.

¹¹Like a shepherd he tends his flock; he gathers up the lambs with his arm; he carries them close to his heart; he leads the ewes along.

¹²Who has measured out the waters in the hollow of his hand, or carefully measured the sky, or carefully weighed the soil of the earth, or weighed the mountains in a balance, or the hills on scales?

¹³Who comprehends the mind of the Lord, or gives him instruction as his counselor?

¹⁴From whom does he receive directions? Who teaches him the correct way to do things, or imparts knowledge to him, or instructs him in skillful design?

¹⁵Look, the nations are like a drop in a bucket; they are regarded as dust on the scales. He lifts the coastlands as if they were dust.

¹⁶Not even Lebanon could supply enough firewood for a sacrifice; its wild animals would not provide enough burnt offerings.

¹⁷All the nations are insignificant before him; they are regarded as absolutely nothing.

¹⁸To whom can you compare God? To what image can you liken him?

¹⁹A craftsman casts an idol; a metalsmith overlays it with gold and forges silver chains for it.

²⁰To make a contribution one selects wood that will not rot; he then seeks a skilled craftsman to make an idol that will not fall over.

²¹Do you not know? Do you not hear? Has it not been told to you since the very beginning? Have you not understood from the time the earth's foundations were made?

²²He is the one who sits on the earth's horizon; its inhabitants are like grasshoppers before him. He is the one

who stretches out the sky like a thin curtain, and spreads it out like a pitched tent.

²³He is the one who reduces rulers to nothing; he makes the earth's leaders insignificant.

²⁴Indeed, they are barely planted; yes, they are barely sown; yes, they barely take root in the earth, and then he blows on them, causing them to dry up, and the wind carries them away like straw.

²⁵"To whom can you compare me? Whom do I resemble?" says the Holy One.

²⁶Look up at the sky! Who created all these heavenly lights? He is the one who leads out their ranks; he calls them all by name. Because of his absolute power and awesome strength, not one of them is missing.

²⁷Why do you say, Jacob, Why do you say, Israel, "The Lord is not aware of what is happening to me, My God is not concerned with my vindication"?

²⁸Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is an eternal God, the creator of the whole earth. He does not

get tired or weary; there is no limit to his wisdom.

²⁹He gives strength to those who are tired; to the ones who lack power, he gives renewed energy.

³⁰Even youths get tired and weary; even strong young men clumsily stumble.

³¹But those who wait for the Lord's help find renewed strength; they rise up as if they had eagles' wings, they run without growing weary, they walk without getting tired.

41 ¹"Listen to me in silence, you coastlands! Let the nations find renewed strength! Let them approach and then speak; let us come together for debate!

²Who stirs up this one from the east? Who officially commissions him for service? He hands nations over to him, and enables him to subdue kings. He makes them like dust with his sword, like windblown straw with his bow.

³He pursues them and passes by unharmed; he advances with great speed.

⁴ Who acts and carries out decrees? Who summons the successive generations from the beginning? I, the Lord, am present at the very beginning, and at the very end – I am the one.

⁵ The coastlands see and are afraid; the whole earth trembles; they approach and come.

⁶ They help one another; one says to the other, 'Be strong!'

⁷ The craftsman encourages the metalsmith, the one who wields the hammer encourages the one who pounds on the anvil. He approves the quality of the welding, and nails it down so it won't fall over."

⁸ "You, my servant Israel, Jacob whom I have chosen, offspring of Abraham my friend,

⁹ you whom I am bringing back from the earth's extremities, and have summoned from the remote regions – I told you, "You are my servant." I have chosen you and not rejected you.

¹⁰ Don't be afraid, for I am with you! Don't be frightened, for I am your God! I strengthen you – yes, I help you – yes, I uphold you with my saving right hand!

¹¹ Look, all who were angry at you will be ashamed and humiliated; your adversaries will be reduced to nothing and perish.

¹² When you will look for your opponents, you will not find them; your enemies will be reduced to absolutely nothing.

¹³ For I am the Lord your God, the one who takes hold of your right hand, who says to you, 'Don't be afraid, I am helping you.'

¹⁴ Don't be afraid, despised insignificant Jacob, men of Israel. I am helping you," says the Lord, your protector, the Holy One of Israel.

¹⁵ "Look, I am making you like a sharp threshing sledge, new and double-edged. You will thresh the mountains and crush them; you will make the hills like straw.

¹⁶ You will winnow them and the wind will blow them away; the wind will scatter them. You will rejoice in the Lord; you will boast in the Holy One of Israel.

¹⁷ The oppressed and the poor look for water, but there is none; their tongues are parched from thirst. I, the Lord, will

respond to their prayers; I, the God of Israel, will not abandon them.

¹⁸I will make streams flow down the slopes and produce springs in the middle of the valleys. I will turn the desert into a pool of water and the arid land into springs.

¹⁹I will make cedars, acacias, myrtles, and olive trees grow in the wilderness; I will make evergreens, firs, and cypresses grow together in the desert.

²⁰I will do this so people will observe and recognize, so they will pay attention and understand that the Lord's power has accomplished this, and that the Holy One of Israel has brought it into being."

²¹"Present your argument," says the Lord. "Produce your evidence," says Jacob's king.

²²"Let them produce evidence! Let them tell us what will happen! Tell us about your earlier predictive oracles, so we may examine them and see how they were fulfilled. Or decree for us some future events!

²³Predict how future events will turn out, so we might know you are gods.

Yes, do something good or bad, so we might be frightened and in awe.

²⁴Look, you are nothing, and your accomplishments are nonexistent; the one who chooses to worship you is disgusting.

²⁵I have stirred up one out of the north and he advances, one from the eastern horizon who prays in my name. He steps on rulers as if they were clay, like a potter treading the clay.

²⁶Who decreed this from the beginning, so we could know? Who announced it ahead of time, so we could say, 'He's correct'? Indeed, none of them decreed it! Indeed, none of them announced it! Indeed, no one heard you say anything!

²⁷I first decreed to Zion, 'Look, here's what will happen!' I sent a herald to Jerusalem.

²⁸I look, but there is no one, among them there is no one who serves as an adviser, that I might ask questions and receive answers.

²⁹Look, all of them are nothing, their accomplishments are nonexistent; their metal images lack any real substance.

42¹ "Here is my servant whom I support, my chosen one in whom I take pleasure. I have placed my spirit on him; he will make just decrees for the nations.

² He will not cry out or shout; he will not publicize himself in the streets.

³ A crushed reed he will not break, a dim wick he will not extinguish; he will faithfully make just decrees.

⁴ He will not grow dim or be crushed before establishing justice on the earth; the coastlands will wait in anticipation for his decrees."

⁵ This is what the true God, the Lord, says – the one who created the sky and stretched it out, the one who fashioned the earth and everything that lives on it, the one who gives breath to the people on it, and life to those who live on it:

⁶ "I, the Lord, officially commission you; I take hold of your hand. I protect you and make you a covenant mediator for people, and a light to the nations,

⁷ to open blind eyes, to release prisoners from dungeons, those who live in darkness from prisons.

⁸I am the Lord! That is my name! I will not share my glory with anyone else, or the praise due me with idols.

⁹Look, my earlier predictive oracles have come to pass; now I announce new events. Before they begin to occur, I reveal them to you."

¹⁰Sing to the Lord a brand new song! Praise him from the horizon of the earth, you who go down to the sea, and everything that lives in it, you coastlands and those who live there!

¹¹Let the desert and its cities shout out, the towns where the nomads of Kedar live! Let the residents of Sela shout joyfully; let them shout loudly from the mountaintops.

¹²Let them give the Lord the honor he deserves; let them praise his deeds in the coastlands.

¹³The Lord emerges like a hero, like a warrior he inspires himself for battle; he shouts, yes, he yells, he shows his enemies his power.

¹⁴"I have been inactive for a long time; I kept quiet and held back. Like a woman in labor I groan; I pant and gasp.

¹⁵I will make the trees on the mountains and hills wither up; I will dry up all their vegetation. I will turn streams into islands, and dry up pools of water.

¹⁶I will lead the blind along an unfamiliar way; I will guide them down paths they have never traveled. I will turn the darkness in front of them into light, and level out the rough ground. This is what I will do for them. I will not abandon them.

¹⁷Those who trust in idols will turn back and be utterly humiliated, those who say to metal images, 'You are our gods.'"

¹⁸"Listen, you deaf ones! Take notice, you blind ones!

¹⁹My servant is truly blind, my messenger is truly deaf. My covenant partner, the servant of the Lord, is truly blind.

²⁰You see many things, but don't comprehend; their ears are open, but do not hear."

²¹The Lord wanted to exhibit his justice by magnifying his law and displaying it.

²²But these people are looted and plundered; all of them are trapped in

pits and held captive in prisons. They were carried away as loot with no one to rescue them; they were carried away as plunder, and no one says, "Bring that back!"

²³Who among you will pay attention to this? Who will listen attentively in the future?

²⁴Who handed Jacob over to the robber? Who handed Israel over to the looters? Was it not the Lord, against whom we sinned? They refused to follow his commands; they disobeyed his law.

²⁵So he poured out his fierce anger on them, along with the devastation of war. Its flames encircled them, but they did not realize it; it burned against them, but they did notice.

43¹ Now, this is what the Lord says, the one who created you, O Jacob, and formed you, O Israel: "Don't be afraid, for I will protect you. I call you by name, you are mine.

²When you pass through the waters, I am with you; when you pass through the streams, they will not overwhelm you. When you walk through the fire, you will

not be burned; the flames will not harm you.

³For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your deliverer. I have handed over Egypt as a ransom price, Ethiopia and Seba in place of you.

⁴Since you are precious and special in my sight, and I love you, I will hand over people in place of you, nations in place of your life.

⁵Don't be afraid, for I am with you. From the east I will bring your descendants; from the west I will gather you.

⁶I will say to the north, 'Hand them over!' and to the south, 'Don't hold any back!' Bring my sons from distant lands, and my daughters from the remote regions of the earth,

⁷everyone who belongs to me, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed - yes, whom I made!

⁸Bring out the people who are blind, even though they have eyes, those who are deaf, even though they have ears!

⁹All nations gather together, the peoples assemble. Who among them announced this? Who predicted earlier

events for us? Let them produce their witnesses to testify they were right; let them listen and affirm, 'It is true.'

¹⁰You are my witnesses," says the Lord, "my servant whom I have chosen, so that you may consider and believe in me, and understand that I am he. No god was formed before me, and none will outlive me.

¹¹I, I am the Lord, and there is no deliverer besides me.

¹²I decreed and delivered and proclaimed, and there was no other god among you. You are my witnesses," says the Lord, "that I am God.

¹³From this day forward I am he; no one can deliver from my power; I will act, and who can prevent it?"

¹⁴This is what the Lord says, your protector, the Holy One of Israel: "For your sake I send to Babylon and make them all fugitives, turning the Babylonians' joyful shouts into mourning songs.

¹⁵I am the Lord, your Holy One, the one who created Israel, your king."

¹⁶This is what the Lord says, the one who made a road through the sea, a pathway through the surging waters,

¹⁷the one who led chariots and horses to destruction, together with a mighty army. They fell down, never to rise again; they were extinguished, put out like a burning wick:

¹⁸"Don't remember these earlier events; don't recall these former events.

¹⁹"Look, I am about to do something new. Now it begins to happen! Do you not recognize it? Yes, I will make a road in the desert and paths in the wilderness.

²⁰The wild animals of the desert honor me, the jackals and ostriches, because I put water in the desert and streams in the wilderness, to quench the thirst of my chosen people,

²¹the people whom I formed for myself, so they might praise me."

²²"But you did not call for me, O Jacob; you did not long for me, O Israel.

²³You did not bring me lambs for your burnt offerings; you did not honor me with your sacrifices. I did not burden you with offerings; I did not make you weary by demanding incense.

²⁴You did not buy me aromatic reeds; you did not present to me the fat of your sacrifices. Yet you burdened me with your sins; you made me weary with your evil deeds.

²⁵I, I am the one who blots out your rebellious deeds for my sake; your sins I do not remember.

²⁶Remind me of what happened! Let's debate! You, prove to me that you are right!

²⁷The father of your nation sinned; your spokesmen rebelled against me.

²⁸So I defiled your holy princes, and handed Jacob over to destruction, and subjected Israel to humiliating abuse."

44¹ "Now, listen, Jacob my servant, Israel whom I have chosen!"

²This is what the Lord, the one who made you, says – the one who formed you in the womb and helps you: "Don't be afraid, my servant Jacob, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen!

³For I will pour water on the parched ground and cause streams to flow on the dry land. I will pour my spirit on your offspring and my blessing on your children.

⁴They will sprout up like a tree in the grass, like poplars beside channels of water.

⁵One will say, 'I belong to the Lord,' and another will use the name 'Jacob.' One will write on his hand, 'The Lord's,' and use the name 'Israel.'"

⁶This is what the Lord, Israel's king, says, their protector, the Lord who commands armies: "I am the first and I am the last, there is no God but me.

⁷Who is like me? Let him make his claim! Let him announce it and explain it to me – since I established an ancient people – let them announce future events!

⁸Don't panic! Don't be afraid! Did I not tell you beforehand and decree it? You are my witnesses! Is there any God but me? There is no other sheltering rock; I know of none.

⁹All who form idols are nothing; the things in which they delight are worthless. Their witnesses cannot see; they recognize nothing, so they are put to shame.

¹⁰Who forms a god and casts an idol that will prove worthless?

¹¹ Look, all his associates will be put to shame; the craftsmen are mere humans. Let them all assemble and take their stand! They will panic and be put to shame.

¹² A blacksmith works with his tool and forges metal over the coals. He forms it with hammers; he makes it with his strong arm. He gets hungry and loses his energy; he drinks no water and gets tired.

¹³ A carpenter takes measurements; he marks out an outline of its form; he scrapes it with chisels, and marks it with a compass. He patterns it after the human form, like a well-built human being, and puts it in a shrine.

¹⁴ He cuts down cedars and acquires a cypress or an oak. He gets trees from the forest; he plants a cedar and the rain makes it grow.

¹⁵ A man uses it to make a fire; he takes some of it and warms himself. Yes, he kindles a fire and bakes bread. Then he makes a god and worships it; he makes an idol and bows down to it.

¹⁶ Half of it he burns in the fire – over that half he cooks meat; he roasts a

meal and fills himself. Yes, he warms himself and says, 'Ah! I am warm as I look at the fire.'

¹⁷With the rest of it he makes a god, his idol; he bows down to it and worships it. He prays to it, saying, 'Rescue me, for you are my god!'

¹⁸They do not comprehend or understand, for their eyes are blind and cannot see; their minds do not discern.

¹⁹No one thinks to himself, nor do they comprehend or understand and say to themselves: 'I burned half of it in the fire - yes, I baked bread over the coals; I roasted meat and ate it. With the rest of it should I make a disgusting idol? Should I bow down to dry wood?'

²⁰He feeds on ashes; his deceived mind misleads him. He cannot rescue himself, nor does he say, 'Is this not a false god I hold in my right hand?'

²¹Remember these things, O Jacob, O Israel, for you are my servant. I formed you to be my servant; O Israel, I will not forget you!

²²I remove the guilt of your rebellious deeds as if they were a cloud, the guilt of

your sins as if they were a cloud. Come back to me, for I protect you."

²³Shout for joy, O sky, for the Lord intervenes; shout out, you subterranean regions of the earth. O mountains, give a joyful shout; you too, O forest and all your trees! For the Lord protects Jacob; he reveals his splendor through Israel.

²⁴This is what the Lord, your protector, says, the one who formed you in the womb: "I am the Lord, who made everything, who alone stretched out the sky, who fashioned the earth all by myself,

²⁵who frustrates the omens of the empty talkers and humiliates the omen readers, who overturns the counsel of the wise men and makes their advice seem foolish,

²⁶who fulfills the oracles of his prophetic servants and brings to pass the announcements of his messengers, who says about Jerusalem, 'She will be inhabited,' and about the towns of Judah, 'They will be rebuilt, her ruins I will raise up,'

²⁷who says to the deep sea, 'Be dry! I will dry up your sea currents,'

²⁸who commissions Cyrus, the one I appointed as shepherd to carry out all my wishes and to decree concerning Jerusalem, 'She will be rebuilt,' and concerning the temple, 'It will be reconstructed.'"

45¹This is what the Lord says to his chosen one, to Cyrus, whose right hand I hold in order to subdue nations before him, and disarm kings, to open doors before him, so gates remain unclosed:

²"I will go before you and level mountains. Bronze doors I will shatter and iron bars I will hack through.

³I will give you hidden treasures, riches stashed away in secret places, so you may recognize that I am the Lord, the one who calls you by name, the God of Israel.

⁴For the sake of my servant Jacob, Israel, my chosen one, I call you by name and give you a title of respect, even though you do not recognize me.

⁵I am the Lord, I have no peer, there is no God but me. I arm you for battle, even though you do not recognize me.

⁶I do this so people will recognize from east to west that there is no God but me; I am the Lord, I have no peer.

⁷I am the one who forms light and creates darkness; the one who brings about peace and creates calamity. I am the Lord, who accomplishes all these things.

⁸O sky, rain down from above! Let the clouds send down showers of deliverance! Let the earth absorb it so salvation may grow, and deliverance may sprout up along with it. I, the Lord, create it.

⁹One who argues with his creator is in grave danger, one who is like a mere shard among the other shards on the ground! The clay should not say to the potter, "What in the world are you doing? Your work lacks skill!"

¹⁰Danger awaits one who says to his father, "What in the world are you fathering?" and to his mother, "What in the world are you bringing forth?"

¹¹This is what the Lord says, the Holy One of Israel, the one who formed him, concerning things to come: "How dare you question me about my children! How

dare you tell me what to do with the work of my own hands!

¹²I made the earth, I created the people who live on it. It was me – my hands stretched out the sky, I give orders to all the heavenly lights.

¹³It is me – I stir him up and commission him; I will make all his ways level. He will rebuild my city; he will send my exiled people home, but not for a price or a bribe," says the Lord who commands armies.

¹⁴This is what the Lord says: "The profit of Egypt and the revenue of Ethiopia, along with the Sabeans, those tall men, will be brought to you and become yours. They will walk behind you, coming along in chains. They will bow down to you and pray to you: 'Truly God is with you; he has no peer; there is no other God!'"

¹⁵Yes, you are a God who keeps hidden, O God of Israel, deliverer!

¹⁶They will all be ashamed and embarrassed; those who fashion idols will all be humiliated.

¹⁷Israel will be delivered once and for all by the Lord; you will never again be ashamed or humiliated.

¹⁸For this is what the Lord says, the one who created the sky – he is the true God, the one who formed the earth and made it; he established it, he did not create it without order, he formed it to be inhabited – “I am the Lord, I have no peer.

¹⁹I have not spoken in secret, in some hidden place. I did not tell Jacob’s descendants, ‘Seek me in vain!’ I am the Lord, the one who speaks honestly, who makes reliable announcements.

²⁰Gather together and come! Approach together, you refugees from the nations! Those who carry wooden idols know nothing, those who pray to a god that cannot deliver.

²¹Tell me! Present the evidence! Let them consult with one another! Who predicted this in the past? Who announced it beforehand? Was it not I, the Lord? I have no peer, there is no God but me, a God who vindicates and delivers; there is none but me.

²²Turn to me so you can be delivered, all you who live in the earth’s remote regions! For I am God, and I have no peer.

²³I solemnly make this oath – what I say is true and reliable: ‘Surely every knee will bow to me, every tongue will solemnly affirm;

²⁴they will say about me, “Yes, the Lord is a powerful deliverer.”” All who are angry at him will cower before him.

²⁵All the descendants of Israel will be vindicated by the Lord and will boast in him.

46¹ Bel kneels down, Nebo bends low. Their images weigh down animals and beasts. Your heavy images are burdensome to tired animals.

²Together they bend low and kneel down; they are unable to rescue the images; they themselves head off into captivity.

³“Listen to me, O family of Jacob, all you who are left from the family of Israel, you who have been carried from birth, you who have been supported from the time you left the womb.

⁴Even when you are old, I will take care of you, even when you have gray hair, I will carry you. I made you and I will support you; I will carry you and rescue you.

⁵To whom can you compare and liken me? Tell me whom you think I resemble, so we can be compared!

⁶Those who empty out gold from a purse and weigh out silver on the scale hire a metalsmith, who makes it into a god. They then bow down and worship it.

⁷They put it on their shoulder and carry it; they put it in its place and it just stands there; it does not move from its place. Even when someone cries out to it, it does not reply; it does not deliver him from his distress.

⁸Remember this, so you can be brave! Think about it, you rebels!

⁹Remember what I accomplished in antiquity! Truly I am God, I have no peer; I am God, and there is none like me,

¹⁰who announces the end from the beginning and reveals beforehand what has not yet occurred, who says, 'My plan will be realized, I will accomplish what I desire,'

¹¹who summons an eagle from the east, from a distant land, one who carries out my plan. Yes, I have decreed, yes, I

will bring it to pass; I have formulated a plan, yes, I will carry it out.

¹²Listen to me, you stubborn people, you who distance yourself from doing what is right.

¹³I am bringing my deliverance near, it is not far away; I am bringing my salvation near, it does not wait. I will save Zion; I will adorn Israel with my splendor."

47 ¹"Fall down! Sit in the dirt, O virgin daughter Babylon! Sit on the ground, not on a throne, O daughter of the Babylonians! Indeed, you will no longer be called delicate and pampered.

²Pick up millstones and grind flour! Remove your veil, strip off your skirt, expose your legs, cross the streams!

³Let your private parts be exposed! Your genitals will be on display! I will get revenge; I will not have pity on anyone,"

⁴says our protector – the Lord who commands armies is his name, the Holy One of Israel.

⁵"Sit silently! Go to a hiding place, O daughter of the Babylonians! Indeed, you will no longer be called 'Queen of kingdoms.'

⁶I was angry at my people; I defiled my special possession and handed them over to you. You showed them no mercy; you even placed a very heavy burden on old people.

⁷You said, 'I will rule forever as permanent queen!' You did not think about these things; you did not consider how it would turn out.

⁸So now, listen to this, O one who lives so lavishly, who lives securely, who says to herself, 'I am unique! No one can compare to me! I will never have to live as a widow; I will never lose my children.'

⁹Both of these will come upon you suddenly, in one day! You will lose your children and be widowed. You will be overwhelmed by these tragedies, despite your many incantations and your numerous amulets.

¹⁰You were complacent in your evil deeds; you thought, 'No one sees me.' Your self-professed wisdom and knowledge lead you astray, when you say, 'I am unique! No one can compare to me!'

¹¹ Disaster will overtake you; you will not know how to charm it away. Destruction will fall on you; you will not be able to appease it. Calamity will strike you suddenly, before you recognize it.

¹² Persist in trusting your amulets and your many incantations, which you have faithfully recited since your youth! Maybe you will be successful – maybe you will scare away disaster.

¹³ You are tired out from listening to so much advice. Let them take their stand – the ones who see omens in the sky, who gaze at the stars, who make monthly predictions – let them rescue you from the disaster that is about to overtake you!

¹⁴ Look, they are like straw, which the fire burns up; they cannot rescue themselves from the heat of the flames. There are no coals to warm them, no firelight to enjoy.

¹⁵ They will disappoint you, those you have so faithfully dealt with since your youth. Each strays off in his own direction, leaving no one to rescue you."

48¹ Listen to this, O family of Jacob, you who are called by the name

'Israel,' and are descended from Judah, who take oaths in the name of the Lord, and invoke the God of Israel – but not in an honest and just manner.

²Indeed, they live in the holy city; they trust in the God of Israel, whose name is the Lord who commands armies.

³"I announced events beforehand, I issued the decrees and made the predictions; suddenly I acted and they came to pass.

⁴I did this because I know how stubborn you are. Your neck muscles are like iron and your forehead like bronze.

⁵I announced them to you beforehand; before they happened, I predicted them for you, so you could never say, 'My image did these things, my idol, my cast image, decreed them.'

⁶You have heard; now look at all the evidence! Will you not admit that what I say is true? From this point on I am announcing to you new events that are previously unrevealed and you do not know about.

⁷Now they come into being, not in the past; before today you did not hear

about them, so you could not say, 'Yes, I know about them.'

⁸You did not hear, you do not know, you were not told beforehand. For I know that you are very deceitful; you were labeled a rebel from birth.

⁹For the sake of my reputation I hold back my anger; for the sake of my prestige I restrain myself from destroying you.

¹⁰Look, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have purified you in the furnace of misery.

¹¹For my sake alone I will act, for how can I allow my name to be defiled? I will not share my glory with anyone else!

¹²Listen to me, O Jacob, Israel, whom I summoned! I am the one; I am present at the very beginning and at the very end.

¹³Yes, my hand founded the earth; my right hand spread out the sky. I summon them; they stand together.

¹⁴All of you, gather together and listen! Who among them announced these things? The Lord's ally will carry out his desire against Babylon; he will exert his power against the Babylonians.

¹⁵I, I have spoken – yes, I have summoned him; I lead him and he will succeed.

¹⁶Approach me! Listen to this! From the very first I have not spoken in secret; when it happens, I am there.” So now, the sovereign Lord has sent me, accompanied by his spirit.

¹⁷This is what the Lord, your protector, says, the Holy One of Israel: “I am the Lord your God, who teaches you how to succeed, who leads you in the way you should go.

¹⁸If only you had obeyed my commandments, prosperity would have flowed to you like a river, deliverance would have come to you like the waves of the sea.

¹⁹Your descendants would have been as numerous as sand, and your children like its granules. Their name would not have been cut off and eliminated from my presence.

²⁰Leave Babylon! Flee from the Babylonians! Announce it with a shout of joy! Make this known! Proclaim it throughout the earth! Say, ‘The Lord protects his servant Jacob.

²¹ They do not thirst as he leads them through dry regions; he makes water flow out of a rock for them; he splits open a rock and water flows out.'

²² There will be no prosperity for the wicked," says the Lord.

49¹ Listen to me, you coastlands! Pay attention, you people who live far away! The Lord summoned me from birth; he commissioned me when my mother brought me into the world.

² He made my mouth like a sharp sword, he hid me in the hollow of his hand; he made me like a sharpened arrow, he hid me in his quiver.

³ He said to me, "You are my servant, Israel, through whom I will reveal my splendor."

⁴ But I thought, "I have worked in vain; I have expended my energy for absolutely nothing." But the Lord will vindicate me; my God will reward me.

⁵ So now the Lord says, the one who formed me from birth to be his servant – he did this to restore Jacob to himself, so that Israel might be gathered to him; and I will be honored in the Lord's sight, for my God is my source of strength –

⁶he says, "Is it too insignificant a task for you to be my servant, to reestablish the tribes of Jacob, and restore the remnant of Israel? I will make you a light to the nations, so you can bring my deliverance to the remote regions of the earth."

⁷This is what the Lord, the protector of Israel, their Holy One, says to the one who is despised and rejected by nations, a servant of rulers: "Kings will see and rise in respect, princes will bow down, because of the faithful Lord, the Holy One of Israel who has chosen you."

⁸This is what the Lord says: "At the time I decide to show my favor, I will respond to you; in the day of deliverance I will help you; I will protect you and make you a covenant mediator for people, to rebuild the land and to reassign the desolate property."

⁹You will say to the prisoners, 'Come out,' and to those who are in dark dungeons, 'Emerge.' They will graze beside the roads; on all the slopes they will find pasture.

¹⁰They will not be hungry or thirsty; the sun's oppressive heat will not beat down

on them, for one who has compassion on them will guide them; he will lead them to springs of water.

¹¹ I will make all my mountains into a road; I will construct my roadways."

¹² Look, they come from far away! Look, some come from the north and west, and others from the land of Sinim!

¹³ Shout for joy, O sky! Rejoice, O earth! Let the mountains give a joyful shout! For the Lord consoles his people and shows compassion to the oppressed.

¹⁴ "Zion said, 'The Lord has abandoned me, the sovereign master has forgotten me.'

¹⁵ Can a woman forget her baby who nurses at her breast? Can she withhold compassion from the child she has borne? Even if mothers were to forget, I could never forget you!

¹⁶ Look, I have inscribed your name on my palms; your walls are constantly before me.

¹⁷ Your children hurry back, while those who destroyed and devastated you depart.

¹⁸ Look all around you! All of them gather to you. As surely as I live," says

the Lord, "you will certainly wear all of them like jewelry; you will put them on as if you were a bride.

¹⁹Yes, your land lies in ruins; it is desolate and devastated. But now you will be too small to hold your residents, and those who devoured you will be far away.

²⁰Yet the children born during your time of bereavement will say within your hearing, 'This place is too cramped for us, make room for us so we can live here.'

²¹Then you will think to yourself, 'Who bore these children for me? I was bereaved and barren, dismissed and divorced. Who raised these children? Look, I was left all alone; where did these children come from?'"

²²This is what the sovereign Lord says: "Look I will raise my hand to the nations; I will raise my signal flag to the peoples. They will bring your sons in their arms and carry your daughters on their shoulders.

²³Kings will be your children's guardians; their princesses will nurse your children. With their faces to the

ground they will bow down to you and they will lick the dirt on your feet. Then you will recognize that I am the Lord; those who wait patiently for me are not put to shame.

²⁴ Can spoils be taken from a warrior, or captives be rescued from a conqueror?

²⁵ Indeed," says the Lord, "captives will be taken from a warrior; spoils will be rescued from a conqueror. I will oppose your adversary and I will rescue your children.

²⁶ I will make your oppressors eat their own flesh; they will get drunk on their own blood, as if it were wine. Then all humankind will recognize that I am the Lord, your deliverer, your protector, the powerful ruler of Jacob."

50¹ This is what the Lord says: "Where is your mother's divorce certificate by which I divorced her? Or to which of my creditors did I sell you? Look, you were sold because of your sins; because of your rebellious acts I divorced your mother.

² Why does no one challenge me when I come? Why does no one respond when I call? Is my hand too weak to deliver

you? Do I lack the power to rescue you? Look, with a mere shout I can dry up the sea; I can turn streams into a desert, so the fish rot away and die from lack of water.

³I can clothe the sky in darkness; I can cover it with sackcloth."

⁴The sovereign Lord has given me the capacity to be his spokesman, so that I know how to help the weary. He wakes me up every morning; he makes me alert so I can listen attentively as disciples do.

⁵The sovereign Lord has spoken to me clearly; I have not rebelled, I have not turned back.

⁶I offered my back to those who attacked, my jaws to those who tore out my beard; I did not hide my face from insults and spitting.

⁷But the sovereign Lord helps me, so I am not humiliated. For that reason I am steadfastly resolved; I know I will not be put to shame.

⁸The one who vindicates me is close by. Who dares to argue with me? Let us confront each other! Who is my accuser? Let him challenge me!

⁹Look, the sovereign Lord helps me. Who dares to condemn me? Look, all of them will wear out like clothes; a moth will eat away at them.

¹⁰Who among you fears the Lord? Who obeys his servant? Whoever walks in deep darkness, without light, should trust in the name of the Lord and rely on his God.

¹¹Look, all of you who start a fire and who equip yourselves with flaming arrows, walk in the light of the fire you started and among the flaming arrows you ignited! This is what you will receive from me: you will lie down in a place of pain.

51 ¹“Listen to me, you who pursue godliness, who seek the Lord! Look at the rock from which you were chiseled, at the quarry from which you were dug!

²Look at Abraham, your father, and Sarah, who gave you birth. When I summoned him, he was a lone individual, but I blessed him and gave him numerous descendants.

³Certainly the Lord will console Zion; he will console all her ruins. He will make

her wilderness like Eden, her desert like the Garden of the Lord. Happiness and joy will be restored to her, thanksgiving and the sound of music.

⁴Pay attention to me, my people! Listen to me, my people! For I will issue a decree, I will make my justice a light to the nations.

⁵I am ready to vindicate, I am ready to deliver, I will establish justice among the nations. The coastlands wait patiently for me; they wait in anticipation for the revelation of my power.

⁶Look up at the sky! Look at the earth below! For the sky will dissipate like smoke, and the earth will wear out like clothes; its residents will die like gnats. But the deliverance I give is permanent; the vindication I provide will not disappear.

⁷Listen to me, you who know what is right, you people who are aware of my law! Don't be afraid of the insults of men; don't be discouraged because of their abuse!

⁸For a moth will eat away at them like clothes; a clothes moth will devour them like wool. But the vindication I provide

will be permanent; the deliverance I give will last."

⁹Wake up! Wake up! Clothe yourself with strength, O arm of the Lord! Wake up as in former times, as in antiquity! Did you not smash the Proud One? Did you not wound the sea monster?

¹⁰Did you not dry up the sea, the waters of the great deep? Did you not make a path through the depths of the sea, so those delivered from bondage could cross over?

¹¹Those whom the Lord has ransomed will return; they will enter Zion with a happy shout. Unending joy will crown them, happiness and joy will overwhelm them; grief and suffering will disappear.

¹²"I, I am the one who consoles you. Why are you afraid of mortal men, of mere human beings who are as short-lived as grass?

¹³Why do you forget the Lord, who made you, who stretched out the sky and founded the earth? Why do you constantly tremble all day long at the anger of the oppressor, when he makes plans to destroy? Where is the anger of the oppressor?

¹⁴The one who suffers will soon be released; he will not die in prison, he will not go hungry.

¹⁵I am the Lord your God, who churns up the sea so that its waves surge. The Lord who commands armies is his name!

¹⁶I commission you as my spokesman; I cover you with the palm of my hand, to establish the sky and to found the earth, to say to Zion, 'You are my people.'"

¹⁷Wake up! Wake up! Get up, O Jerusalem! You drank from the cup the Lord passed to you, which was full of his anger! You drained dry the goblet full of intoxicating wine.

¹⁸There was no one to lead her among all the children she bore; there was no one to take her by the hand among all the children she raised.

¹⁹These double disasters confronted you. But who feels sorry for you? Destruction and devastation, famine and sword. But who consoles you?

²⁰Your children faint; they lie at the head of every street like an antelope in a snare. They are left in a stupor by the Lord's anger, by the battle cry of your God.

²¹ So listen to this, oppressed one, who is drunk, but not from wine!

²² This is what your sovereign master, the Lord your God, says: "Look, I have removed from your hand the cup of intoxicating wine, the goblet full of my anger. You will no longer have to drink it.

²³ I will put it into the hand of your tormentors who said to you, 'Lie down, so we can walk over you.' You made your back like the ground, and like the street for those who walked over you."

52¹ Wake up! Wake up! Clothe yourself with strength, O Zion! Put on your beautiful clothes, O Jerusalem, holy city! For uncircumcised and unclean pagans will no longer invade you.

² Shake off the dirt! Get up, captive Jerusalem! Take off the iron chains around your neck, O captive daughter Zion!

³ For this is what the Lord says: "You were sold for nothing, and you will not be redeemed for money."

⁴ For this is what the sovereign Lord says: "In the beginning my people went

to live temporarily in Egypt; Assyria oppressed them for no good reason.

⁵And now, what do we have here?" says the Lord. "Indeed my people have been carried away for nothing, those who rule over them taunt," says the Lord, "and my name is constantly slandered all day long.

⁶For this reason my people will know my name, for this reason they will know at that time that I am the one who says, 'Here I am.'"

⁷How delightful it is to see approaching over the mountains the feet of a messenger who announces peace, a messenger who brings good news, who announces deliverance, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns!"

⁸Listen, your watchmen shout; in unison they shout for joy, for they see with their very own eyes the Lord's return to Zion.

⁹In unison give a joyful shout, O ruins of Jerusalem! For the Lord consoles his people; he protects Jerusalem.

¹⁰The Lord reveals his royal power in the sight of all the nations; the entire earth sees our God deliver.

¹¹ Leave! Leave! Get out of there! Don't touch anything unclean! Get out of it! Stay pure, you who carry the Lord's holy items!

¹² Yet do not depart quickly or leave in a panic. For the Lord goes before you; the God of Israel is your rear guard.

¹³ "Look, my servant will succeed! He will be elevated, lifted high, and greatly exalted –

¹⁴ (just as many were horrified by the sight of you) he was so disfigured he no longer looked like a man;

¹⁵ his form was so marred he no longer looked human – so now he will startle many nations. Kings will be shocked by his exaltation, for they will witness something unannounced to them, and they will understand something they had not heard about.

53 ¹ Who would have believed what we just heard? When was the Lord's power revealed through him?

² He sprouted up like a twig before God, like a root out of parched soil; he had no stately form or majesty that might catch our attention, no special appearance that we should want to follow him.

³He was despised and rejected by people, one who experienced pain and was acquainted with illness; people hid their faces from him; he was despised, and we considered him insignificant.

⁴But he lifted up our illnesses, he carried our pain; even though we thought he was being punished, attacked by God, and afflicted for something he had done.

⁵He was wounded because of our rebellious deeds, crushed because of our sins; he endured punishment that made us well; because of his wounds we have been healed.

⁶All of us had wandered off like sheep; each of us had strayed off on his own path, but the Lord caused the sin of all of us to attack him.

⁷He was treated harshly and afflicted, but he did not even open his mouth. Like a lamb led to the slaughtering block, like a sheep silent before her shearers, he did not even open his mouth.

⁸He was led away after an unjust trial – but who even cared? Indeed, he was cut off from the land of the living; because

of the rebellion of his own people he was wounded.

⁹They intended to bury him with criminals, but he ended up in a rich man's tomb, because he had committed no violent deeds, nor had he spoken deceitfully.

¹⁰Though the Lord desired to crush him and make him ill, once restitution is made, he will see descendants and enjoy long life, and the Lord's purpose will be accomplished through him.

¹¹Having suffered, he will reflect on his work, he will be satisfied when he understands what he has done. "My servant will acquit many, for he carried their sins.

¹²So I will assign him a portion with the multitudes, he will divide the spoils of victory with the powerful, because he willingly submitted to death and was numbered with the rebels, when he lifted up the sin of many and intervened on behalf of the rebels."

54¹ "Shout for joy, O barren one who has not given birth! Give a joyful shout and cry out, you who have not been in labor! For the children of the

desolate one are more numerous than the children of the married woman," says the Lord.

²Make your tent larger, stretch your tent curtains farther out! Spare no effort, lengthen your ropes, and pound your stakes deep.

³For you will spread out to the right and to the left; your children will conquer nations and will resettle desolate cities.

⁴Don't be afraid, for you will not be put to shame! Don't be intimidated, for you will not be humiliated! You will forget about the shame you experienced in your youth; you will no longer remember the disgrace of your abandonment.

⁵For your husband is the one who made you – the Lord who commands armies is his name. He is your protector, the Holy One of Israel. He is called "God of the entire earth."

⁶"Indeed, the Lord will call you back like a wife who has been abandoned and suffers from depression, like a young wife when she has been rejected," says your God.

⁷ "For a short time I abandoned you, but with great compassion I will gather you.

⁸ "In a burst of anger I rejected you momentarily, but with lasting devotion I will have compassion on you," says your protector, the Lord.

⁹ "As far as I am concerned, this is like in Noah's time, when I vowed that the waters of Noah's flood would never again cover the earth. In the same way I have vowed that I will not be angry at you or shout at you.

¹⁰ "Even if the mountains are removed and the hills displaced, my devotion will not be removed from you, nor will my covenant of friendship be displaced," says the Lord, the one who has compassion on you.

¹¹ "O afflicted one, driven away, and unconsoled! Look, I am about to set your stones in antimony and I lay your foundation with lapis-lazuli.

¹² I will make your pinnacles out of gems, your gates out of beryl, and your outer wall out of beautiful stones.

¹³All your children will be followers of the Lord, and your children will enjoy great prosperity.

¹⁴You will be reestablished when I vindicate you. You will not experience oppression; indeed, you will not be afraid. You will not be terrified, for nothing frightening will come near you.

¹⁵If anyone dares to challenge you, it will not be my doing! Whoever tries to challenge you will be defeated.

¹⁶Look, I create the craftsman, who fans the coals into a fire and forges a weapon. I create the destroyer so he might devastate.

¹⁷No weapon forged to be used against you will succeed; you will refute everyone who tries to accuse you. This is what the Lord will do for his servants – I will vindicate them,” says the Lord.

55¹ “Hey, all who are thirsty, come to the water! You who have no money, come! Buy and eat! Come! Buy wine and milk without money and without cost!

²Why pay money for something that will not nourish you? Why spend your hard-earned money on something that

will not satisfy? Listen carefully to me and eat what is nourishing! Enjoy fine food!

³Pay attention and come to me! Listen, so you can live! Then I will make an unconditional covenantal promise to you, just like the reliable covenantal promises I made to David.

⁴Look, I made him a witness to nations, a ruler and commander of nations."

⁵Look, you will summon nations you did not previously know; nations that did not previously know you will run to you, because of the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he bestows honor on you.

⁶Seek the Lord while he makes himself available; call to him while he is nearby!

⁷The wicked need to abandon their lifestyle and sinful people their plans. They should return to the Lord, and he will show mercy to them, and to their God, for he will freely forgive them.

⁸"Indeed, my plans are not like your plans, and my deeds are not like your deeds,

⁹for just as the sky is higher than the earth, so my deeds are superior to your

deeds and my plans superior to your plans.

¹⁰The rain and snow fall from the sky and do not return, but instead water the earth and make it produce and yield crops, and provide seed for the planter and food for those who must eat.

¹¹In the same way, the promise that I make does not return to me, having accomplished nothing. No, it is realized as I desire and is fulfilled as I intend."

¹²Indeed you will go out with joy; you will be led along in peace; the mountains and hills will give a joyful shout before you, and all the trees in the field will clap their hands.

¹³Evergreens will grow in place of thorn bushes, firs will grow in place of nettles; they will be a monument to the Lord, a permanent reminder that will remain.

56¹This is what the Lord says, "Promote justice! Do what is right! For I am ready to deliver you; I am ready to vindicate you openly.

²The people who do this will be blessed, the people who commit themselves to obedience, who observe the Sabbath

and do not defile it, who refrain from doing anything that is wrong.

³No foreigner who becomes a follower of the Lord should say, 'The Lord will certainly exclude me from his people.' The eunuch should not say, 'Look, I am like a dried-up tree.'"

⁴For this is what the Lord says: "For the eunuchs who observe my Sabbaths and choose what pleases me and are faithful to my covenant,

⁵I will set up within my temple and my walls a monument that will be better than sons and daughters. I will set up a permanent monument for them that will remain.

⁶As for foreigners who become followers of the Lord and serve him, who love the name of the Lord and want to be his servants – all who observe the Sabbath and do not defile it, and who are faithful to my covenant –

⁷I will bring them to my holy mountain; I will make them happy in the temple where people pray to me. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar, for my temple will be known as a temple where all nations may pray."

⁸The sovereign Lord says this, the one who gathers the dispersed of Israel: "I will still gather them up."

⁹All you wild animals in the fields, come and devour, all you wild animals in the forest!

¹⁰All their watchmen are blind, they are unaware. All of them are like mute dogs, unable to bark. They pant, lie down, and love to snooze.

¹¹The dogs have big appetites; they are never full. They are shepherds who have no understanding; they all go their own way, each one looking for monetary gain.

¹²Each one says, 'Come on, I'll get some wine! Let's guzzle some beer! Tomorrow will be just like today! We'll have everything we want!'

57 ¹The godly perish, but no one cares. Honest people disappear, when no one minds that the godly disappear because of evil.

²Those who live uprightly enter a place of peace; they rest on their beds.

³But approach, you sons of omen readers, you offspring of adulteresses and prostitutes!

⁴At whom are you laughing? At whom are you opening your mouth and sticking out your tongue? You are the children of rebels, the offspring of liars,

⁵you who practice ritual sex under the oaks and every green tree, who slaughter children near the streams under the rocky overhangs.

⁶Among the smooth stones of the stream are the idols you love; they, they are the object of your devotion. You pour out liquid offerings to them, you make an offering. Because of these things I will seek vengeance.

⁷On every high, elevated hill you prepare your bed; you go up there to offer sacrifices.

⁸Behind the door and doorpost you put your symbols. Indeed, you depart from me and go up and invite them into bed with you. You purchase favors from them, you love their bed, and gaze longingly on their genitals.

⁹You take olive oil as tribute to your king, along with many perfumes. You send your messengers to a distant place; you go all the way to Sheol.

¹⁰Because of the long distance you must travel, you get tired, but you do not say, 'I give up.' You get renewed energy, so you don't collapse.

¹¹Whom are you worried about? Whom do you fear, that you would act so deceitfully and not remember me or think about me? Because I have been silent for so long, you are not afraid of me.

¹²I will denounce your so-called righteousness and your deeds, but they will not help you.

¹³When you cry out for help, let your idols help you! The wind blows them all away, a breeze carries them away. But the one who looks to me for help will inherit the land and will have access to my holy mountain."

¹⁴He says, "Build it! Build it! Clear a way! Remove all the obstacles out of the way of my people!"

¹⁵For this is what the high and exalted one says, the one who rules forever, whose name is holy: "I dwell in an exalted and holy place, but also with the discouraged and humiliated, in

order to cheer up the humiliated and to encourage the discouraged.

¹⁶For I will not be hostile forever or perpetually angry, for then man's spirit would grow faint before me, the life-giving breath I created.

¹⁷I was angry because of their sinful greed; I attacked them and angrily rejected them, yet they remained disobedient and stubborn.

¹⁸I have seen their behavior, but I will heal them and give them rest, and I will once again console those who mourn.

¹⁹I am the one who gives them reason to celebrate. Complete prosperity is available both to those who are far away and those who are nearby," says the Lord, "and I will heal them.

²⁰But the wicked are like a surging sea that is unable to be quiet; its waves toss up mud and sand.

²¹There will be no prosperity," says my God, "for the wicked."

58¹ "Shout loudly! Don't be quiet! Yell as loud as a trumpet! Confront my people with their rebellious deeds; confront Jacob's family with their sin!

²They seek me day after day; they want to know my requirements, like a nation that does what is right and does not reject the law of their God. They ask me for just decrees; they want to be near God.

³They lament, 'Why don't you notice when we fast? Why don't you pay attention when we humble ourselves?' Look, at the same time you fast, you satisfy your selfish desires, you oppress your workers.

⁴Look, your fasting is accompanied by arguments, brawls, and fistfights. Do not fast as you do today, trying to make your voice heard in heaven.

⁵Is this really the kind of fasting I want? Do I want a day when people merely humble themselves, bowing their heads like a reed and stretching out on sackcloth and ashes? Is this really what you call a fast, a day that is pleasing to the Lord?

⁶No, this is the kind of fast I want. I want you to remove the sinful chains, to tear away the ropes of the burdensome yoke, to set free the oppressed, and to break every burdensome yoke.

⁷ I want you to share your food with the hungry and to provide shelter for homeless, oppressed people. When you see someone naked, clothe him! Don't turn your back on your own flesh and blood!

⁸ Then your light will shine like the sunrise; your restoration will quickly arrive; your godly behavior will go before you, and the Lord's splendor will be your rear guard.

⁹ Then you will call out, and the Lord will respond; you will cry out, and he will reply, 'Here I am.' You must remove the burdensome yoke from among you and stop pointing fingers and speaking sinfully.

¹⁰ You must actively help the hungry and feed the oppressed. Then your light will dispel the darkness, and your darkness will be transformed into noonday.

¹¹ The Lord will continually lead you; he will feed you even in parched regions. He will give you renewed strength, and you will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring that continually produces water.

¹²Your perpetual ruins will be rebuilt; you will reestablish the ancient foundations. You will be called, 'The one who repairs broken walls, the one who makes the streets inhabitable again.'

¹³You must observe the Sabbath rather than doing anything you please on my holy day. You must look forward to the Sabbath and treat the Lord's holy day with respect. You must treat it with respect by refraining from your normal activities, and by refraining from your selfish pursuits and from making business deals.

¹⁴Then you will find joy in your relationship to the Lord, and I will give you great prosperity, and cause crops to grow on the land I gave to your ancestor Jacob." Know for certain that the Lord has spoken.

59¹ Look, the Lord's hand is not too weak to deliver you; his ear is not too deaf to hear you.

²But your sinful acts have alienated you from your God; your sins have caused him to reject you and not listen to your prayers.

³For your hands are stained with blood and your fingers with sin; your lips speak lies, your tongue utters malicious words.

⁴No one is concerned about justice; no one sets forth his case truthfully. They depend on false words and tell lies; they conceive of oppression and give birth to sin.

⁵They hatch the eggs of a poisonous snake and spin a spider's web. Whoever eats their eggs will die, a poisonous snake is hatched.

⁶Their webs cannot be used for clothing; they cannot cover themselves with what they make. Their deeds are sinful; they commit violent crimes.

⁷They are eager to do evil, quick to shed innocent blood. Their thoughts are sinful; they crush and destroy.

⁸They are unfamiliar with peace; their deeds are unjust. They use deceitful methods, and whoever deals with them is unfamiliar with peace.

⁹For this reason deliverance is far from us and salvation does not reach us. We wait for light, but see only darkness; we wait for a bright light, but live in deep darkness.

¹⁰We grope along the wall like the blind, we grope like those who cannot see; we stumble at noontime as if it were evening. Though others are strong, we are like dead men.

¹¹We all growl like bears, we coo mournfully like doves; we wait for deliverance, but there is none, for salvation, but it is far from us.

¹²For you are aware of our many rebellious deeds, and our sins testify against us; indeed, we are aware of our rebellious deeds; we know our sins all too well.

¹³We have rebelled and tried to deceive the Lord; we turned back from following our God. We stir up oppression and rebellion; we tell lies we concocted in our minds.

¹⁴Justice is driven back; godliness stands far off. Indeed, honesty stumbles in the city square and morality is not even able to enter.

¹⁵Honesty has disappeared; the one who tries to avoid evil is robbed. The Lord watches and is displeased, for there is no justice.

¹⁶He sees there is no advocate; he is shocked that no one intervenes. So he takes matters into his own hands; his desire for justice drives him on.

¹⁷He wears his desire for justice like body armor, and his desire to deliver is like a helmet on his head. He puts on the garments of vengeance and wears zeal like a robe.

¹⁸He repays them for what they have done, dispensing angry judgment to his adversaries and punishing his enemies. He repays the coastlands.

¹⁹In the west, people respect the Lord's reputation; in the east they recognize his splendor. For he comes like a rushing stream driven on by wind sent from the Lord.

²⁰"A protector comes to Zion, to those in Jacob who repent of their rebellious deeds," says the Lord.

²¹"As for me, this is my promise to them," says the Lord. "My spirit, who is upon you, and my words, which I have placed in your mouth, will not depart from your mouth or from the mouths of your children and descendants from this time forward," says the Lord.

60¹ “Arise! Shine! For your light arrives! The splendor of the Lord shines on you!

²For, look, darkness covers the earth and deep darkness covers the nations, but the Lord shines on you; his splendor appears over you.

³Nations come to your light, kings to your bright light.

⁴Look all around you! They all gather and come to you – your sons come from far away and your daughters are escorted by guardians.

⁵Then you will look and smile, you will be excited and your heart will swell with pride. For the riches of distant lands will belong to you and the wealth of nations will come to you.

⁶Camel caravans will cover your roads, young camels from Midian and Ephah. All the merchants of Sheba will come, bringing gold and incense and singing praises to the Lord.

⁷All the sheep of Kedar will be gathered to you; the rams of Nebaioth will be available to you as sacrifices. They will go up on my altar acceptably, and I will bestow honor on my majestic temple.

⁸Who are these who float along like a cloud, who fly like doves to their shelters?

⁹Indeed, the coastlands look eagerly for me, the large ships are in the lead, bringing your sons from far away, along with their silver and gold, to honor the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has bestowed honor on you.

¹⁰Foreigners will rebuild your walls; their kings will serve you. Even though I struck you down in my anger, I will restore my favor and have compassion on you.

¹¹Your gates will remain open at all times; they will not be shut during the day or at night, so that the wealth of nations may be delivered, with their kings leading the way.

¹²Indeed, nations or kingdoms that do not serve you will perish; such nations will be totally destroyed.

¹³The splendor of Lebanon will come to you, its evergreens, firs, and cypresses together, to beautify my palace; I will bestow honor on my throne room.

¹⁴The children of your oppressors will come bowing to you; all who treated you

with disrespect will bow down at your feet. They will call you, 'The City of the Lord, Zion of the Holy One of Israel.'

¹⁵You were once abandoned and despised, with no one passing through, but I will make you a permanent source of pride and joy to coming generations.

¹⁶You will drink the milk of nations; you will nurse at the breasts of kings. Then you will recognize that I, the Lord, am your deliverer, your protector, the powerful ruler of Jacob.

¹⁷Instead of bronze, I will bring you gold, instead of iron, I will bring you silver, instead of wood, I will bring you bronze, instead of stones, I will bring you iron. I will make prosperity your overseer, and vindication your sovereign ruler.

¹⁸Sounds of violence will no longer be heard in your land, or the sounds of destruction and devastation within your borders. You will name your walls, 'Deliverance,' and your gates, 'Praise.'

¹⁹The sun will no longer supply light for you by day, nor will the moon's brightness shine on you; the Lord will be your permanent source of light - the

splendor of your God will shine upon you.

²⁰Your sun will no longer set; your moon will not disappear; the Lord will be your permanent source of light; your time of sorrow will be over.

²¹All of your people will be godly; they will possess the land permanently. I will plant them like a shoot; they will be the product of my labor, through whom I reveal my splendor.

²²The least of you will multiply into a thousand; the smallest of you will become a large nation. When the right time comes, I the Lord will quickly do this!"

61 ¹The spirit of the sovereign Lord is upon me, because the Lord has chosen me. He has commissioned me to encourage the poor, to help the brokenhearted, to decree the release of captives, and the freeing of prisoners,

²to announce the year when the Lord will show his favor, the day when our God will seek vengeance, to console all who mourn,

³to strengthen those who mourn in Zion, by giving them a turban, instead

of ashes, oil symbolizing joy, instead of mourning, a garment symbolizing praise, instead of discouragement. They will be called oaks of righteousness, trees planted by the Lord to reveal his splendor.

⁴They will rebuild the perpetual ruins and restore the places that were desolate; they will reestablish the ruined cities, the places that have been desolate since ancient times.

⁵"Foreigners will take care of your sheep; foreigners will work in your fields and vineyards.

⁶You will be called, 'the Lord's priests, servants of our God.' You will enjoy the wealth of nations and boast about the riches you receive from them.

⁷Instead of shame, you will get a double portion; instead of humiliation, they will rejoice over the land they receive. Yes, they will possess a double portion in their land and experience lasting joy.

⁸For I, the Lord, love justice and hate robbery and sin. I will repay them because of my faithfulness; I will make a permanent covenant with them.

⁹Their descendants will be known among the nations, their offspring among the peoples. All who see them will recognize that the Lord has blessed them."

¹⁰I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; I will be overjoyed because of my God. For he clothes me in garments of deliverance; he puts on me a robe symbolizing vindication. I look like a bridegroom when he wears a turban as a priest would; I look like a bride when she puts on her jewelry.

¹¹For just as the ground produces its crops and a garden yields its produce, so the sovereign Lord will cause deliverance to grow, and give his people reason to praise him in the sight of all the nations.

62¹ "For the sake of Zion I will not be silent; for the sake of Jerusalem I will not be quiet, until her vindication shines brightly and her deliverance burns like a torch."

²Nations will see your vindication, and all kings your splendor. You will be called by a new name that the Lord himself will give you.

³You will be a majestic crown in the hand of the Lord, a royal turban in the hand of your God.

⁴You will no longer be called, "Abandoned," and your land will no longer be called "Desolate." Indeed, you will be called "My Delight is in Her," and your land "Married." For the Lord will take delight in you, and your land will be married to him.

⁵As a young man marries a young woman, so your sons will marry you. As a bridegroom rejoices over a bride, so your God will rejoice over you.

⁶I post watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem; they should keep praying all day and all night. You who pray to the Lord, don't be silent!

⁷Don't allow him to rest until he reestablishes Jerusalem, until he makes Jerusalem the pride of the earth.

⁸The Lord swears an oath by his right hand, by his strong arm: "I will never again give your grain to your enemies as food, and foreigners will not drink your wine, which you worked hard to produce.

⁹But those who harvest the grain will eat it, and will praise the Lord. Those

who pick the grapes will drink the wine in the courts of my holy sanctuary."

¹⁰Come through! Come through the gates! Prepare the way for the people! Build it! Build the roadway! Remove the stones! Lift a signal flag for the nations!

¹¹Look, the Lord announces to the entire earth: "Say to Daughter Zion, 'Look, your deliverer comes! Look, his reward is with him and his reward goes before him!'"

¹²They will be called, "The Holy People, the Ones Protected by the Lord." You will be called, "Sought After, City Not Abandoned."

63¹Who is this who comes from Edom, dressed in bright red, coming from Bozrah? Who is this one wearing royal attire, who marches confidently because of his great strength? "It is I, the one who announces vindication, and who is able to deliver!"

²Why are your clothes red? Why do you look like someone who has stomped on grapes in a vat?

³"I have stomped grapes in the winepress all by myself; no one from the nations joined me. I stomped on them

in my anger; I trampled them down in my rage. Their juice splashed on my garments, and stained all my clothes.

⁴For I looked forward to the day of vengeance, and then payback time arrived.

⁵I looked, but there was no one to help; I was shocked because there was no one offering support. So my right arm accomplished deliverance; my raging anger drove me on.

⁶I trampled nations in my anger, I made them drunk in my rage, I splashed their blood on the ground."

⁷I will tell of the faithful acts of the Lord, of the Lord's praiseworthy deeds. I will tell about all the Lord did for us, the many good things he did for the family of Israel, because of his compassion and great faithfulness.

⁸He said, "Certainly they will be my people, children who are not disloyal." He became their deliverer.

⁹Through all that they suffered, he suffered too. The messenger sent from his very presence delivered them. In his love and mercy he protected them;

he lifted them up and carried them throughout ancient times.

¹⁰But they rebelled and offended his holy Spirit, so he turned into an enemy and fought against them.

¹¹His people remembered the ancient times. Where is the one who brought them up out of the sea, along with the shepherd of his flock? Where is the one who placed his holy Spirit among them,

¹²the one who made his majestic power available to Moses, who divided the water before them, gaining for himself a lasting reputation,

¹³who led them through the deep water? Like a horse running on flat land they did not stumble.

¹⁴Like an animal that goes down into a valley to graze, so the Spirit of the Lord granted them rest. In this way you guided your people, gaining for yourself an honored reputation.

¹⁵Look down from heaven and take notice, from your holy, majestic palace! Where are your zeal and power? Do not hold back your tender compassion!

¹⁶For you are our father, though Abraham does not know us and Israel

does not recognize us. You, Lord, are our father; you have been called our protector from ancient times.

¹⁷Why, Lord, do you make us stray from your ways, and make our minds stubborn so that we do not obey you? Return for the sake of your servants, the tribes of your inheritance!

¹⁸For a short time your special nation possessed a land, but then our adversaries knocked down your holy sanctuary.

¹⁹We existed from ancient times, but you did not rule over them, they were not your subjects.

64¹ If only you would tear apart the sky and come down! The mountains would tremble before you!

²As when fire ignites dry wood, or fire makes water boil, let your adversaries know who you are, and may the nations shake at your presence!

³When you performed awesome deeds that took us by surprise, you came down, and the mountains trembled before you.

⁴Since ancient times no one has heard or perceived, no eye has seen any God

besides you, who intervenes for those who wait for him.

⁵You assist those who delight in doing what is right, who observe your commandments. Look, you were angry because we violated them continually. How then can we be saved?

⁶We are all like one who is unclean, all our so-called righteous acts are like a menstrual rag in your sight. We all wither like a leaf; our sins carry us away like the wind.

⁷No one invokes your name, or makes an effort to take hold of you. For you have rejected us and handed us over to our own sins.

⁸Yet, Lord, you are our father. We are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the product of your labor.

⁹Lord, do not be too angry! Do not hold our sins against us continually! Take a good look at your people, at all of us!

¹⁰Your chosen cities have become a desert; Zion has become a desert, Jerusalem is a desolate ruin.

¹¹Our holy temple, our pride and joy, the place where our ancestors praised

you, has been burned with fire; all our prized possessions have been destroyed.

¹²In light of all this, how can you still hold back, Lord? How can you be silent and continue to humiliate us?

65¹ “I made myself available to those who did not ask for me; I appeared to those who did not look for me. I said, ‘Here I am! Here I am!’ to a nation that did not invoke my name.

²I spread out my hands all day long to my rebellious people, who lived in a way that is morally unacceptable, and who did what they desired.

³These people continually and blatantly offend me as they sacrifice in their sacred orchards and burn incense on brick altars.

⁴They sit among the tombs and keep watch all night long. They eat pork, and broth from unclean sacrificial meat is in their pans.

⁵They say, ‘Keep to yourself! Don’t get near me, for I am holier than you!’ These people are like smoke in my nostrils, like a fire that keeps burning all day long.

⁶Look, I have decreed: I will not keep silent, but will pay them back; I will pay them back exactly what they deserve,
⁷for your sins and your ancestors' sins," says the Lord. "Because they burned incense on the mountains and offended me on the hills, I will punish them in full measure."

⁸This is what the Lord says: "When juice is discovered in a cluster of grapes, someone says, 'Don't destroy it, for it contains juice.' So I will do for the sake of my servants – I will not destroy everyone.

⁹I will bring forth descendants from Jacob, and from Judah people to take possession of my mountains. My chosen ones will take possession of the land; my servants will live there.

¹⁰Sharon will become a pasture for sheep, and the Valley of Achor a place where cattle graze; they will belong to my people, who seek me.

¹¹But as for you who abandon the Lord and forget about worshiping at my holy mountain, who prepare a feast for the god called 'Fortune,' and fill up wine jugs for the god called 'Destiny' –

¹²I predestine you to die by the sword, all of you will kneel down at the slaughtering block, because I called to you, and you did not respond, I spoke and you did not listen. You did evil before me; you chose to do what displeases me."

¹³So this is what the sovereign Lord says: "Look, my servants will eat, but you will be hungry! Look, my servants will drink, but you will be thirsty! Look, my servants will rejoice, but you will be humiliated!

¹⁴Look, my servants will shout for joy as happiness fills their hearts! But you will cry out as sorrow fills your hearts; you will wail because your spirits will be crushed.

¹⁵Your names will live on in the curse formulas of my chosen ones. The sovereign Lord will kill you, but he will give his servants another name.

¹⁶Whoever pronounces a blessing in the earth will do so in the name of the faithful God; whoever makes an oath in the earth will do so in the name of the faithful God. For past problems will be

forgotten; I will no longer think about them.

¹⁷For look, I am ready to create new heavens and a new earth! The former ones will not be remembered; no one will think about them anymore.

¹⁸But be happy and rejoice forevermore over what I am about to create! For look, I am ready to create Jerusalem to be a source of joy, and her people to be a source of happiness.

¹⁹Jerusalem will bring me joy, and my people will bring me happiness. The sound of weeping or cries of sorrow will never be heard in her again.

²⁰Never again will one of her infants live just a few days or an old man die before his time. Indeed, no one will die before the age of a hundred, anyone who fails to reach the age of a hundred will be considered cursed.

²¹They will build houses and live in them; they will plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

²²No longer will they build a house only to have another live in it, or plant a vineyard only to have another eat its fruit, for my people will live as long as

trees, and my chosen ones will enjoy to the fullest what they have produced.

²³They will not work in vain, or give birth to children that will experience disaster. For the Lord will bless their children and their descendants.

²⁴Before they even call out, I will respond; while they are still speaking, I will hear.

²⁵A wolf and a lamb will graze together; a lion, like an ox, will eat straw, and a snake's food will be dirt. They will no longer injure or destroy on my entire royal mountain," says the Lord.

66¹This is what the Lord says: "The heavens are my throne and the earth is my footstool. Where then is the house you will build for me? Where is the place where I will rest?

²My hand made them; that is how they came to be," says the Lord. I show special favor to the humble and contrite, who respect what I have to say.

³The one who slaughters a bull also strikes down a man; the one who sacrifices a lamb also breaks a dog's neck; the one who presents an offering includes pig's blood with it; the one who

offers incense also praises an idol. They have decided to behave this way; they enjoy these disgusting practices.

⁴So I will choose severe punishment for them; I will bring on them what they dread, because I called, and no one responded, I spoke and they did not listen. They did evil before me; they chose to do what displeases me."

⁵Hear the word of the Lord, you who respect what he has to say! Your countrymen, who hate you and exclude you, supposedly for the sake of my name, say, "May the Lord be glorified, then we will witness your joy." But they will be put to shame.

⁶The sound of battle comes from the city; the sound comes from the temple! It is the sound of the Lord paying back his enemies.

⁷Before she goes into labor, she gives birth! Before her contractions begin, she delivers a boy!

⁸Who has ever heard of such a thing? Who has ever seen this? Can a country be brought forth in one day? Can a nation be born in a single moment? Yet

as soon as Zion goes into labor she gives birth to sons!

⁹“Do I bring a baby to the birth opening and then not deliver it?” asks the Lord. “Or do I bring a baby to the point of delivery and then hold it back?” asks your God.

¹⁰Be happy for Jerusalem and rejoice with her, all you who love her! Share in her great joy, all you who have mourned over her!

¹¹For you will nurse from her satisfying breasts and be nourished; you will feed with joy from her milk-filled breasts.

¹²For this is what the Lord says: “Look, I am ready to extend to her prosperity that will flow like a river, the riches of nations will flow into her like a stream that floods its banks. You will nurse from her breast and be carried at her side; you will play on her knees.

¹³As a mother consoles a child, so I will console you, and you will be consoled over Jerusalem.”

¹⁴When you see this, you will be happy, and you will be revived. The Lord will reveal his power to his servants and his anger to his enemies.

¹⁵For look, the Lord comes with fire, his chariots come like a windstorm, to reveal his raging anger, his battle cry, and his flaming arrows.

¹⁶For the Lord judges all humanity with fire and his sword; the Lord will kill many.

¹⁷"As for those who consecrate and ritually purify themselves so they can follow their leader and worship in the sacred orchards, those who eat the flesh of pigs and other disgusting creatures, like mice – they will all be destroyed together," says the Lord.

¹⁸"I hate their deeds and thoughts! So I am coming to gather all the nations and ethnic groups; they will come and witness my splendor.

¹⁹I will perform a mighty act among them and then send some of those who remain to the nations – to Tarshish, Pul, Lud (known for its archers), Tubal, Javan, and to the distant coastlands that have not heard about me or seen my splendor. They will tell the nations of my splendor.

²⁰They will bring back all your countrymen from all the nations as an

offering to the Lord. They will bring them on horses, in chariots, in wagons, on mules, and on camels to my holy hill Jerusalem," says the Lord, "just as the Israelites bring offerings to the Lord's temple in ritually pure containers.

²¹ And I will choose some of them as priests and Levites," says the Lord.

²² "For just as the new heavens and the new earth I am about to make will remain standing before me," says the Lord, "so your descendants and your name will remain.

²³ From one month to the next and from one Sabbath to the next, all people will come to worship me," says the Lord.

²⁴ "They will go out and observe the corpses of those who rebelled against me, for the maggots that eat them will not die, and the fire that consumes them will not die out. All people will find the sight abhorrent."

Jeremiah

1 ¹The following is a record of what Jeremiah son of Hilkiyah prophesied. He was one of the priests who lived at Anathoth in the territory of the tribe of Benjamin.

²The Lord began to speak to him in the thirteenth year that Josiah son of Amon ruled over Judah.

³The Lord also spoke to him when Jehoiakim son of Josiah ruled over Judah, and he continued to speak to him until the fifth month of the eleventh year that Zedekiah son of Josiah ruled over Judah. That was when the people of Jerusalem were taken into exile.

⁴The Lord said to me,

⁵"Before I formed you in your mother's womb I chose you. Before you were born I set you apart. I appointed you to be a prophet to the nations."

⁶I answered, "Oh, Lord God, I really do not know how to speak well enough for that, for I am too young."

⁷The Lord said to me, "Do not say, 'I am too young.' But go to whomever I send you and say whatever I tell you.

⁸Do not be afraid of those to whom I send you, for I will be with you to protect you," says the Lord.

⁹Then the Lord reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, "I will most assuredly give you the words you are to speak for me.

¹⁰Know for certain that I hereby give you the authority to announce to nations and kingdoms that they will be uprooted and torn down, destroyed and demolished, rebuilt and firmly planted."

¹¹Later the Lord asked me, "What do you see, Jeremiah?" I answered, "I see a branch of an almond tree."

¹²Then the Lord said, "You have observed correctly. This means I am watching to make sure my threats are carried out."

¹³The Lord again asked me, "What do you see?" I answered, "I see a pot of boiling water; it is tipped toward us from the north."

¹⁴Then the Lord said, "This means destruction will break out from the north on all who live in the land.

¹⁵For I will soon summon all the peoples of the kingdoms of the north," says the Lord. "They will come and their kings will set up their thrones near the entrances of the gates of Jerusalem. They will attack all the walls surrounding it, and all the towns in Judah.

¹⁶In this way I will pass sentence on the people of Jerusalem and Judah because of all their wickedness. For they rejected me and offered sacrifices to other gods, worshiping what they made with their own hands."

¹⁷"But you, Jeremiah, get yourself ready! Go and tell these people everything I instruct you to say. Do not be terrified of them, or I will give you good reason to be terrified of them.

¹⁸I, the Lord, hereby promise to make you as strong as a fortified city, an iron pillar, and a bronze wall. You will be able to stand up against all who live in the land, including the kings of Judah, its officials, its priests and all the people of the land.

¹⁹They will attack you but they will not be able to overcome you, for I will be with you to rescue you," says the Lord.

2¹The Lord spoke to me. He said:
²"Go and declare in the hearing of the people of Jerusalem: 'This is what the Lord says: "I have fond memories of you, how devoted you were to me in your early years. I remember how you loved me like a new bride; you followed me through the wilderness, through a land that had never been planted.

³Israel was set apart to the Lord; they were like the first fruits of a harvest to him. All who tried to devour them were punished; disaster came upon them," says the Lord.'"

⁴Now listen to what the Lord has to say, you descendants of Jacob, all you family groups from the nation of Israel.

⁵This is what the Lord says: "What fault could your ancestors have possibly found in me that they strayed so far from me? They paid allegiance to worthless idols, and so became worthless to me.

⁶They did not ask: 'Where is the Lord who delivered us out of Egypt, who brought us through the wilderness,

through a land of desert sands and rift valleys, through a land of drought and deep darkness, through a land in which no one travels, and where no one lives?’

⁷ I brought you into a fertile land so you could enjoy its fruits and its rich bounty. But when you entered my land, you defiled it; you made the land I call my own loathsome to me.

⁸ Your priests did not ask, ‘Where is the Lord?’ Those responsible for teaching my law did not really know me. Your rulers rebelled against me. Your prophets prophesied in the name of the god Baal. They all worshiped idols that could not help them.

⁹ “So, once more I will state my case against you,” says the Lord. “I will also state it against your children and grandchildren.

¹⁰ Go west across the sea to the coasts of Cyprus and see. Send someone east to Kedar and have them look carefully. See if such a thing as this has ever happened:

¹¹ Has a nation ever changed its gods (even though they are not really gods at all)? But my people have exchanged me,

their glorious God, for a god that cannot help them at all!

¹²Be amazed at this, O heavens! Be shocked and utterly dumbfounded," says the Lord.

¹³"Do so because my people have committed a double wrong: they have rejected me, the fountain of life-giving water, and they have dug cisterns for themselves, cracked cisterns which cannot even hold water."

¹⁴"Israel is not a slave, is he? He was not born into slavery, was he? If not, why then is he being carried off?

¹⁵Like lions his enemies roar victoriously over him; they raise their voices in triumph. They have laid his land waste; his cities have been burned down and deserted.

¹⁶Even the soldiers from Memphis and Tahpanhes have cracked your skulls, people of Israel.

¹⁷You have brought all this on yourself, Israel, by deserting the Lord your God when he was leading you along the right path.

¹⁸What good will it do you then to go down to Egypt to seek help from the

Egyptians? What good will it do you to go over to Assyria to seek help from the Assyrians?

¹⁹Your own wickedness will bring about your punishment. Your unfaithful acts will bring down discipline on you. Know, then, and realize how utterly harmful it was for you to reject me, the Lord your God, to show no respect for me," says the Lord God who rules over all.

²⁰"Indeed, long ago you threw off my authority and refused to be subject to me. You said, 'I will not serve you.' Instead, you gave yourself to other gods on every high hill and under every green tree, like a prostitute sprawls out before her lovers.

²¹I planted you in the land like a special vine of the very best stock. Why in the world have you turned into something like a wild vine that produces rotten, foul-smelling grapes?

²²You can try to wash away your guilt with a strong detergent. You can use as much soap as you want. But the stain of your guilt is still there for me to see," says the Lord God.

²³ "How can you say, 'I have not made myself unclean. I have not paid allegiance to the gods called Baal.' Just look at the way you have behaved in the Valley of Hinnom! Think about the things you have done there! You are like a flighty, young female camel that rushes here and there, crisscrossing its path.

²⁴ You are like a wild female donkey brought up in the wilderness. In her lust she sniffs the wind to get the scent of a male. No one can hold her back when she is in heat. None of the males need wear themselves out chasing after her. At mating time she is easy to find.

²⁵ Do not chase after other gods until your shoes wear out and your throats become dry. But you say, 'It is useless for you to try and stop me because I love those foreign gods and want to pursue them!'

²⁶ Just as a thief has to suffer dishonor when he is caught, so the people of Israel will suffer dishonor for what they have done. So will their kings and officials, their priests and their prophets.

²⁷ They say to a wooden idol, 'You are my father.' They say to a stone image,

'You gave birth to me.' Yes, they have turned away from me instead of turning to me. Yet when they are in trouble, they say, 'Come and save us!'

²⁸ But where are the gods you made for yourselves? Let them save you when you are in trouble. The sad fact is that you have as many gods as you have towns, Judah.

²⁹ "Why do you try to refute me? All of you have rebelled against me," says the Lord.

³⁰ "It did no good for me to punish your people. They did not respond to such correction. You slaughtered your prophets like a voracious lion."

³¹ You people of this generation, listen to what the Lord says. "Have I been like a wilderness to you, Israel? Have I been like a dark and dangerous land to you? Why then do you say, 'We are free to wander. We will not come to you any more?'

³² Does a young woman forget to put on her jewels? Does a bride forget to put on her bridal attire? But my people have forgotten me for more days than can even be counted.

³³ “My, how good you have become at chasing after your lovers! Why, you could even teach prostitutes a thing or two!

³⁴ Even your clothes are stained with the lifeblood of the poor who had not done anything wrong; you did not catch them breaking into your homes. Yet, in spite of all these things you have done,

³⁵ you say, ‘I have not done anything wrong, so the Lord cannot really be angry with me any more.’ But, watch out! I will bring down judgment on you because you say, ‘I have not committed any sin.’

³⁶ Why do you constantly go about changing your political allegiances? You will get no help from Egypt just as you got no help from Assyria.

³⁷ Moreover, you will come away from Egypt with your hands covering your faces in sorrow and shame because the Lord will not allow your reliance on them to be successful and you will not gain any help from them.

3¹ “If a man divorces his wife and she leaves him and becomes another man’s wife, he may not take her back again. Doing that would utterly defile the

land. But you, Israel, have given yourself as a prostitute to many gods. So what makes you think you can return to me?" says the Lord.

²"Look up at the hilltops and consider this. You have had sex with other gods on every one of them. You waited for those gods like a thief lying in wait in the desert. You defiled the land by your wicked prostitution to other gods.

³That is why the rains have been withheld, and the spring rains have not come. Yet in spite of this you are obstinate as a prostitute. You refuse to be ashamed of what you have done.

⁴Even now you say to me, 'You are my father! You have been my faithful companion ever since I was young.

⁵You will not always be angry with me, will you? You will not be mad at me forever, will you?' That is what you say, but you continually do all the evil that you can."

⁶When Josiah was king of Judah, the Lord said to me, "Jeremiah, you have no doubt seen what wayward Israel has done. You have seen how she went up to every high hill and under every green

tree to give herself like a prostitute to other gods.

⁷ Yet even after she had done all that, I thought that she might come back to me. But she did not. Her sister, unfaithful Judah, saw what she did.

⁸ She also saw that I gave wayward Israel her divorce papers and sent her away because of her adulterous worship of other gods. Even after her unfaithful sister Judah had seen this, she still was not afraid, and she too went and gave herself like a prostitute to other gods.

⁹ Because she took her prostitution so lightly, she defiled the land through her adulterous worship of gods made of wood and stone.

¹⁰ In spite of all this, Israel's sister, unfaithful Judah, has not turned back to me with any sincerity; she has only pretended to do so," says the Lord.

¹¹ Then the Lord said to me, "Under the circumstances, wayward Israel could even be considered less guilty than unfaithful Judah.

¹² "Go and shout this message to my people in the countries in the north. Tell them, 'Come back to me, wayward

Israel,' says the Lord. 'I will not continue to look on you with displeasure. For I am merciful,' says the Lord. 'I will not be angry with you forever.

¹³However, you must confess that you have done wrong, and that you have rebelled against the Lord your God. You must confess that you have given yourself to foreign gods under every green tree, and have not obeyed my commands,' says the Lord.

¹⁴"Come back to me, my wayward sons," says the Lord, "for I am your true master. If you do, I will take one of you from each town and two of you from each family group, and I will bring you back to Zion.

¹⁵I will give you leaders who will be faithful to me. They will lead you with knowledge and insight.

¹⁶In those days, your population will greatly increase in the land. At that time," says the Lord, "people will no longer talk about having the ark that contains the Lord's covenant with us. They will not call it to mind, remember it, or miss it. No, that will not be done any more!

¹⁷ At that time the city of Jerusalem will be called the Lord's throne. All nations will gather there in Jerusalem to honor the Lord's name. They will no longer follow the stubborn inclinations of their own evil hearts.

¹⁸ At that time the nation of Judah and the nation of Israel will be reunited. Together they will come back from a land in the north to the land that I gave to your ancestors as a permanent possession. "

¹⁹ "I thought to myself, 'Oh what a joy it would be for me to treat you like a son! What a joy it would be for me to give you a pleasant land, the most beautiful piece of property there is in all the world!' I thought you would call me, 'Father' and would never cease being loyal to me.

²⁰ But, you have been unfaithful to me, nation of Israel, like an unfaithful wife who has left her husband," says the Lord.

²¹ "A noise is heard on the hilltops. It is the sound of the people of Israel crying and pleading to their gods. Indeed they have followed sinful ways; they have

forgotten to be true to the Lord their God.

²²Come back to me, you wayward people. I want to cure your waywardness. Say, 'Here we are. We come to you because you are the Lord our God.

²³We know our noisy worship of false gods on the hills and mountains did not help us. We know that the Lord our God is the only one who can deliver Israel.

²⁴From earliest times our worship of that shameful god, Baal, has taken away all that our ancestors worked for. It has taken away our flocks and our herds, and even our sons and daughters.

²⁵Let us acknowledge our shame. Let us bear the disgrace that we deserve. For we have sinned against the Lord our God, both we and our ancestors. From earliest times to this very day we have not obeyed the Lord our God.'

4¹ "If you, Israel, want to come back," says the Lord, "if you want to come back to me you must get those disgusting idols out of my sight and must no longer go astray.

²You must be truthful, honest and upright when you take an oath saying,

'As surely as the Lord lives!' If you do, the nations will pray to be as blessed by him as you are and will make him the object of their boasting."

³Yes, the Lord has this to say to the people of Judah and Jerusalem: "Like a farmer breaking up hard unplowed ground, you must break your rebellious will and make a new beginning; just as a farmer must clear away thorns lest the seed is wasted, you must get rid of the sin that is ruining your lives.

⁴Just as ritual circumcision cuts away the foreskin as an external symbol of dedicated covenant commitment, you must genuinely dedicate yourselves to the Lord and get rid of everything that hinders your commitment to me, people of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem. If you do not, my anger will blaze up like a flaming fire against you that no one will be able to extinguish. That will happen because of the evil you have done."

⁵The Lord said, "Announce this in Judah and proclaim it in Jerusalem: 'Sound the trumpet throughout the land!' Shout out loudly, 'Gather together! Let us flee into the fortified cities!'

⁶Raise a signal flag that tells people to go to Zion. Run for safety! Do not delay! For I am about to bring disaster out of the north. It will bring great destruction.

⁷Like a lion that has come up from its lair the one who destroys nations has set out from his home base. He is coming out to lay your land waste. Your cities will become ruins and lie uninhabited.

⁸So put on sackcloth! Mourn and wail, saying, 'The fierce anger of the Lord has not turned away from us!'"

⁹"When this happens," says the Lord, "the king and his officials will lose their courage. The priests will be struck with horror, and the prophets will be speechless in astonishment."

¹⁰In response to all this I said, "Ah, Lord God, you have surely allowed the people of Judah and Jerusalem to be deceived by those who say, 'You will be safe!' But in fact a sword is already at our throats."

¹¹"At that time the people of Judah and Jerusalem will be told, 'A scorching wind will sweep down from the hilltops in the desert on my dear people. It will not be

a gentle breeze for winnowing the grain and blowing away the chaff.

¹²No, a wind too strong for that will come at my bidding. Yes, even now I, myself, am calling down judgment on them.'

¹³Look! The enemy is approaching like gathering clouds. The roar of his chariots is like that of a whirlwind. His horses move more swiftly than eagles." I cry out, "We are doomed, for we will be destroyed!"

¹⁴"Oh people of Jerusalem, purify your hearts from evil so that you may yet be delivered. How long will you continue to harbor up wicked schemes within you?

¹⁵For messengers are coming, heralding disaster, from the city of Dan and from the hills of Ephraim.

¹⁶They are saying, 'Announce to the surrounding nations, "The enemy is coming!" Proclaim this message to Jerusalem: "Those who besiege cities are coming from a distant land. They are ready to raise the battle cry against the towns in Judah."'

¹⁷They will surround Jerusalem like men guarding a field because they have rebelled against me," says the Lord.

¹⁸"The way you have lived and the things you have done will bring this on you. This is the punishment you deserve, and it will be painful indeed. The pain will be so bad it will pierce your heart."

¹⁹I said, "Oh, the feeling in the pit of my stomach! I writhe in anguish. Oh, the pain in my heart! My heart pounds within me. I cannot keep silent. For I hear the sound of the trumpet; the sound of the battle cry pierces my soul!

²⁰I see one destruction after another taking place, so that the whole land lies in ruins. I see our tents suddenly destroyed, their curtains torn down in a mere instant.

²¹"How long must I see the enemy's battle flags and hear the military signals of their bugles?"

²²The Lord answered, "This will happen because my people are foolish. They do not know me. They are like children who have no sense. They have no understanding. They are skilled at doing evil. They do not know how to do good."

²³ “I looked at the land and saw that it was an empty wasteland. I looked up at the sky, and its light had vanished.

²⁴ I looked at the mountains and saw that they were shaking. All the hills were swaying back and forth!

²⁵ I looked and saw that there were no more people, and that all the birds in the sky had flown away.

²⁶ I looked and saw that the fruitful land had become a desert and that all of the cities had been laid in ruins. The Lord had brought this all about because of his blazing anger.

²⁷ All this will happen because the Lord said, “The whole land will be desolate; however, I will not completely destroy it.

²⁸ Because of this the land will mourn and the sky above will grow black. For I have made my purpose known and I will not relent or turn back from carrying it out.”

²⁹ At the sound of the approaching horsemen and archers the people of every town will flee. Some of them will hide in the thickets. Others will climb up among the rocks. All the cities will be deserted. No one will remain in them.

³⁰And you, Zion, city doomed to destruction, you accomplish nothing by wearing a beautiful dress, decking yourself out in jewels of gold, and putting on eye shadow! You are making yourself beautiful for nothing. Your lovers spurn you. They want to kill you.

³¹In fact, I hear a cry like that of a woman in labor, a cry of anguish like that of a woman giving birth to her first baby. It is the cry of Daughter Zion gasping for breath, reaching out for help, saying, "I am done in! My life is ebbing away before these murderers!"

5¹The Lord said, "Go up and down through the streets of Jerusalem. Look around and see for yourselves. Search through its public squares. See if any of you can find a single person who deals honestly and tries to be truthful. If you can, then I will not punish this city.

²These people make promises in the name of the Lord. But the fact is, what they swear to is really a lie."

³Lord, I know you look for faithfulness. But even when you punish these people, they feel no remorse. Even when you nearly destroy them, they refuse to

be corrected. They have become as hardheaded as a rock. They refuse to change their ways.

⁴I thought, "Surely it is only the ignorant poor who act this way. They act like fools because they do not know what the Lord demands. They do not know what their God requires of them.

⁵I will go to the leaders and speak with them. Surely they know what the Lord demands. Surely they know what their God requires of them." Yet all of them, too, have rejected his authority and refuse to submit to him.

⁶So like a lion from the thicket their enemies will kill them. Like a wolf from the desert they will destroy them. Like a leopard they will lie in wait outside their cities and totally destroy anyone who ventures out. For they have rebelled so much and done so many unfaithful things.

⁷The Lord asked, "How can I leave you unpunished, Jerusalem? Your people have rejected me and have worshiped gods that are not gods at all. Even though I supplied all their needs, they were like an unfaithful wife to me.

They went flocking to the houses of prostitutes.

⁸They are like lusty, well-fed stallions. Each of them lusts after his neighbor's wife.

⁹I will surely punish them for doing such things!" says the Lord. "I will surely bring retribution on such a nation as this!"

¹⁰The Lord commanded the enemy, "March through the vineyards of Israel and Judah and ruin them. But do not destroy them completely. Strip off their branches for these people do not belong to the Lord.

¹¹For the nations of Israel and Judah have been very unfaithful to me," says the Lord.

¹²"These people have denied what the Lord says. They have said, 'That is not so! No harm will come to us. We will not experience war and famine.

¹³The prophets will prove to be full of wind. The Lord has not spoken through them. So, let what they say happen to them.'"

¹⁴Because of that, the Lord, the God who rules over all, said to me, "Because

these people have spoken like this, I will make the words that I put in your mouth like fire. And I will make this people like wood which the fiery judgments you speak will burn up."

¹⁵The Lord says, "Listen, nation of Israel! I am about to bring a nation from far away to attack you. It will be a nation that was founded long ago and has lasted for a long time. It will be a nation whose language you will not know. Its people will speak words that you will not be able to understand.

¹⁶All of its soldiers are strong and mighty. Their arrows will send you to your grave.

¹⁷They will eat up your crops and your food. They will kill off your sons and your daughters. They will eat up your sheep and your cattle. They will destroy your vines and your fig trees. Their weapons will batter down the fortified cities you trust in.

¹⁸Yet even then I will not completely destroy you," says the Lord.

¹⁹"So then, Jeremiah, when your people ask, 'Why has the Lord our God done all this to us?' tell them, 'It is

because you rejected me and served foreign gods in your own land. So you must serve foreigners in a land that does not belong to you.'

²⁰ "Proclaim this message among the descendants of Jacob. Make it known throughout Judah.

²¹ Tell them: 'Hear this, you foolish people who have no understanding, who have eyes but do not discern, who have ears but do not perceive:

²² "You should fear me!" says the Lord. "You should tremble in awe before me! I made the sand to be a boundary for the sea, a permanent barrier that it can never cross. Its waves may roll, but they can never prevail. They may roar, but they can never cross beyond that boundary."

²³ But these people have stubborn and rebellious hearts. They have turned aside and gone their own way.

²⁴ They do not say to themselves, "Let us revere the Lord our God. It is he who gives us the autumn rains and the spring rains at the proper time. It is he who assures us of the regular weeks of harvest."

²⁵Your misdeeds have stopped these things from coming. Your sins have deprived you of my bounty.'

²⁶"Indeed, there are wicked scoundrels among my people. They lie in wait like bird catchers hiding in ambush. They set deadly traps to catch people.

²⁷Like a cage filled with the birds that have been caught, their houses are filled with the gains of their fraud and deceit. That is how they have gotten so rich and powerful.

²⁸That is how they have grown fat and sleek. There is no limit to the evil things they do. They do not plead the cause of the fatherless in such a way as to win it. They do not defend the rights of the poor.

²⁹I will certainly punish them for doing such things!" says the Lord. "I will certainly bring retribution on such a nation as this!

³⁰"Something horrible and shocking is going on in the land of Judah:

³¹The prophets prophesy lies. The priests exercise power by their own authority. And my people love to have it

this way. But they will not be able to help you when the time of judgment comes!

6¹ “Run for safety, people of Benjamin! Get out of Jerusalem! Sound the trumpet in Tekoa! Light the signal fires at Beth Hakkerem! For disaster lurks out of the north; it will bring great destruction.

²I will destroy Daughter Zion, who is as delicate and defenseless as a young maiden.

³Kings will come against it with their armies. They will encamp in siege all around it. Each of them will devastate the portion assigned to him.

⁴They will say, ‘Prepare to do battle against it! Come on! Let’s attack it at noon!’ But later they will say, ‘Oh, oh! Too bad! The day is almost over and the shadows of evening are getting long.

⁵So come on, let’s go ahead and attack it by night and destroy all its fortified buildings.’

⁶All of this is because the Lord who rules over all has said: ‘Cut down the trees around Jerusalem and build up a siege ramp against its walls. This is the city which is to be punished. Nothing but oppression happens in it.

⁷As a well continually pours out fresh water so it continually pours out wicked deeds. Sounds of violence and destruction echo throughout it. All I see are sick and wounded people.'

⁸So take warning, Jerusalem, or I will abandon you in disgust and make you desolate, a place where no one can live."

⁹This is what the Lord who rules over all said to me: "Those who remain in Israel will be like the grapes thoroughly gleaned from a vine. So go over them again, as though you were a grape harvester passing your hand over the branches one last time."

¹⁰I answered, "Who would listen if I spoke to them and warned them? Their ears are so closed that they cannot hear! Indeed, what the Lord says is offensive to them. They do not like it at all.

¹¹I am as full of anger as you are, Lord, I am tired of trying to hold it in." The Lord answered, "Vent it, then, on the children who play in the street and on the young men who are gathered together. Husbands and wives are to be included, as well as the old and those who are advanced in years.

¹² Their houses will be turned over to others as will their fields and their wives. For I will unleash my power against those who live in this land," says the Lord.

¹³ "That is because, from the least important to the most important of them, all of them are greedy for dishonest gain. Prophets and priests alike, all of them practice deceit.

¹⁴ They offer only superficial help for the harm my people have suffered. They say, 'Everything will be all right!' But everything is not all right!

¹⁵ Are they ashamed because they have done such shameful things? No, they are not at all ashamed. They do not even know how to blush! So they will die, just like others have died. They will be brought to ruin when I punish them," says the Lord.

¹⁶ The Lord said to his people: "You are standing at the crossroads. So consider your path. Ask where the old, reliable paths are. Ask where the path is that leads to blessing and follow it. If you do, you will find rest for your souls." But they said, "We will not follow it!"

¹⁷The Lord said, "I appointed prophets as watchmen to warn you, saying: 'Pay attention to the warning sound of the trumpet!'" But they said, "We will not pay attention!"

¹⁸So the Lord said, "Hear, you nations! Be witnesses and take note of what will happen to these people.

¹⁹Hear this, you peoples of the earth: 'Take note! I am about to bring disaster on these people. It will come as punishment for their scheming. For they have paid no attention to what I have said, and they have rejected my law.

²⁰I take no delight when they offer up to me frankincense that comes from Sheba or sweet-smelling cane imported from a faraway land. I cannot accept the burnt offerings they bring me. I get no pleasure from the sacrifices they offer to me.'

²¹So, this is what the Lord says: 'I will assuredly make these people stumble to their doom. Parents and children will stumble and fall to their destruction. Friends and neighbors will die.'

²²"This is what the Lord says: 'Beware! An army is coming from a land in the

north. A mighty nation is stirring into action in faraway parts of the earth.

²³Its soldiers are armed with bows and spears. They are cruel and show no mercy. They sound like the roaring sea as they ride forth on their horses. Lined up in formation like men going into battle to attack you, Daughter Zion.'"

²⁴The people cry out, "We have heard reports about them! We have become helpless with fear! Anguish grips us, agony like that of a woman giving birth to a baby!

²⁵Do not go out into the countryside. Do not travel on the roads. For the enemy is there with sword in hand. They are spreading terror everywhere."

²⁶So I said, "Oh, my dear people, put on sackcloth and roll in ashes. Mourn with painful sobs as though you had lost your only child. For any moment now that destructive army will come against us."

²⁷The Lord said to me, "I have made you like a metal assayer to test my people like ore. You are to observe them and evaluate how they behave."

²⁸I reported, "All of them are the most stubborn of rebels! They are as hard as bronze or iron. They go about telling lies. They all deal corruptly.

²⁹The fiery bellows of judgment burn fiercely. But there is too much dross to be removed. The process of refining them has proved useless. The wicked have not been purged.

³⁰They are regarded as 'rejected silver' because the Lord rejects them."

7¹ The Lord said to Jeremiah:

²"Stand in the gate of the Lord's temple and proclaim this message: 'Listen, all you people of Judah who have passed through these gates to worship the Lord. Hear what the Lord has to say.

³The Lord God of Israel who rules over all says: Change the way you have been living and do what is right. If you do, I will allow you to continue to live in this land.

⁴Stop putting your confidence in the false belief that says, "We are safe! The temple of the Lord is here! The temple of the Lord is here! The temple of the Lord is here!"

⁵You must change the way you have been living and do what is right. You must treat one another fairly.

⁶Stop oppressing foreigners who live in your land, children who have lost their fathers, and women who have lost their husbands. Stop killing innocent people in this land. Stop paying allegiance to other gods. That will only bring about your ruin.

⁷If you stop doing these things, I will allow you to continue to live in this land which I gave to your ancestors as a lasting possession.

⁸“But just look at you! You are putting your confidence in a false belief that will not deliver you.

⁹You steal. You murder. You commit adultery. You lie when you swear on oath. You sacrifice to the god Baal. You pay allegiance to other gods whom you have not previously known.

¹⁰Then you come and stand in my presence in this temple I have claimed as my own and say, “We are safe!” You think you are so safe that you go on doing all those hateful sins!

¹¹ Do you think this temple I have claimed as my own is to be a hideout for robbers? You had better take note! I have seen for myself what you have done! says the Lord.

¹² So, go to the place in Shiloh where I allowed myself to be worshiped in the early days. See what I did to it because of the wicked things my people Israel did.

¹³ You also have done all these things, says the Lord, and I have spoken to you over and over again. But you have not listened! You have refused to respond when I called you to repent!

¹⁴ So I will destroy this temple which I have claimed as my own, this temple that you are trusting to protect you. I will destroy this place that I gave to you and your ancestors, just like I destroyed Shiloh.

¹⁵ And I will drive you out of my sight just like I drove out your relatives, the people of Israel."

¹⁶ Then the Lord said, "As for you, Jeremiah, do not pray for these people! Do not cry out to me or petition me on their behalf! Do not plead with me to

save them, because I will not listen to you.

¹⁷Do you see what they are doing in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem?

¹⁸Children are gathering firewood, fathers are building fires with it, and women are mixing dough to bake cakes to offer to the goddess they call the Queen of Heaven. They are also pouring out drink offerings to other gods. They seem to do all this just to trouble me.

¹⁹But I am not really the one being troubled!" says the Lord. "Rather they are bringing trouble on themselves to their own shame!

²⁰So," the Lord God says, "my raging fury will be poured out on this land. It will be poured out on human beings and animals, on trees and crops. And it will burn like a fire which cannot be extinguished."

²¹The Lord said to the people of Judah, "The Lord God of Israel who rules over all says: 'You might as well go ahead and add the meat of your burnt offerings to that of the other sacrifices and eat it, too!

²² Consider this: When I spoke to your ancestors after I brought them out of Egypt, I did not merely give them commands about burnt offerings and sacrifices.

²³ I also explicitly commanded them: "Obey me. If you do, I will be your God and you will be my people. Live exactly the way I tell you and things will go well with you."

²⁴ But they did not listen to me or pay any attention to me. They followed the stubborn inclinations of their own wicked hearts. They acted worse and worse instead of better.

²⁵ From the time your ancestors departed the land of Egypt until now, I sent my servants the prophets to you again and again, day after day.

²⁶ But your ancestors did not listen to me nor pay attention to me. They became obstinate and were more wicked than even their own forefathers."

²⁷ Then the Lord said to me, "When you tell them all this, they will not listen to you. When you call out to them, they will not respond to you.

²⁸ So tell them: 'This is a nation that has not obeyed the Lord their God and has not accepted correction. Faithfulness is nowhere to be found in it. These people do not even profess it anymore.

²⁹ So, mourn, you people of this nation. Cut off your hair and throw it away. Sing a song of mourning on the hilltops. For the Lord has decided to reject and forsake this generation that has provoked his wrath!'"

³⁰ The Lord says, "I have rejected them because the people of Judah have done what I consider evil. They have set up their disgusting idols in the temple which I have claimed for my own and have defiled it.

³¹ They have also built places of worship in a place called Topheth in the Valley of Ben Hinnom so that they can sacrifice their sons and daughters by fire. That is something I never commanded them to do! Indeed, it never even entered my mind to command such a thing!

³² So, watch out!" says the Lord. "The time will soon come when people will no longer call those places Topheth or the Valley of Ben Hinnom. But they will call

that valley the Valley of Slaughter and they will bury so many people in Topheth they will run out of room.

³³Then the dead bodies of these people will be left on the ground for the birds and wild animals to eat. There will not be any survivors to scare them away.

³⁴I will put an end to the sounds of joy and gladness, or the glad celebration of brides and grooms throughout the towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem. For the whole land will become a desolate wasteland."

8¹The Lord says, "When that time comes, the bones of the kings of Judah and its leaders, the bones of the priests and prophets and of all the other people who lived in Jerusalem will be dug up from their graves.

²They will be spread out and exposed to the sun, the moon and the stars. These are things they adored and served, things to which they paid allegiance, from which they sought guidance, and worshiped. The bones of these people will never be regathered and reburied. They will be like manure used to fertilize the ground.

³ However, I will leave some of these wicked people alive and banish them to other places. But wherever these people who survive may go, they will wish they had died rather than lived," says the Lord who rules over all.

⁴ The Lord said to me, "Tell them, 'The Lord says, Do people not get back up when they fall down? Do they not turn around when they go the wrong way?

⁵ Why, then, do these people of Jerusalem continually turn away from me in apostasy? They hold fast to their deception. They refuse to turn back to me.

⁶ I have listened to them very carefully, but they do not speak honestly. None of them regrets the evil he has done. None of them says, "I have done wrong!" All of them persist in their own wayward course like a horse charging recklessly into battle.

⁷ Even the stork knows when it is time to move on. The turtledove, swallow, and crane recognize the normal times for their migration. But my people pay no attention to what I, the Lord, require of them.

⁸How can you say, "We are wise! We have the law of the Lord"? The truth is, those who teach it have used their writings to make it say what it does not really mean.

⁹Your wise men will be put to shame. They will be dumbfounded and be brought to judgment. Since they have rejected the word of the Lord, what wisdom do they really have?

¹⁰So I will give their wives to other men and their fields to new owners. For from the least important to the most important of them, all of them are greedy for dishonest gain. Prophets and priests alike, all practice deceit.

¹¹They offer only superficial help for the hurt my dear people have suffered. They say, "Everything will be all right!" But everything is not all right!

¹²Are they ashamed because they have done such disgusting things? No, they are not at all ashamed! They do not even know how to blush! So they will die just like others have died. They will be brought to ruin when I punish them, says the Lord.

¹³I will take away their harvests, says the Lord. There will be no grapes on their vines. There will be no figs on their fig trees. Even the leaves on their trees will wither. The crops that I gave them will be taken away."

¹⁴The people say, "Why are we just sitting here? Let us gather together inside the fortified cities. Let us at least die there fighting, since the Lord our God has condemned us to die. He has condemned us to drink the poison waters of judgment because we have sinned against him.

¹⁵We hoped for good fortune, but nothing good has come of it. We hoped for a time of relief, but instead we experience terror.

¹⁶The snorting of the enemy's horses is already being heard in the city of Dan. The sound of the neighing of their stallions causes the whole land to tremble with fear. They are coming to destroy the land and everything in it! They are coming to destroy the cities and everyone who lives in them!"

¹⁷The Lord says, "Yes indeed, I am sending an enemy against you that will

be like poisonous snakes which cannot be charmed away. And they will inflict fatal wounds on you."

¹⁸Then I said, "There is no cure for my grief! I am sick at heart!

¹⁹I hear my dear people crying out throughout the length and breadth of the land. They are crying, 'Is the Lord no longer in Zion? Is her divine King no longer there?'" The Lord answers, "Why then do they provoke me to anger with their images, with their worthless foreign idols?"

²⁰"They cry, 'Harvest time has come and gone, and the summer is over, and still we have not been delivered.'

²¹My heart is crushed because my dear people are being crushed. I go about crying and grieving. I am overwhelmed with dismay.

²²There is still medicinal ointment available in Gilead! There is still a physician there! Why then have my dear people not been restored to health?

9¹I wish that my head were a well full of water and my eyes were a fountain full of tears! If they were, I

could cry day and night for those of my dear people who have been killed.

²I wish I had a lodging place in the desert where I could spend some time like a weary traveler. Then I would desert my people and walk away from them because they are all unfaithful to God, a congregation of people that has been disloyal to him.

³The Lord says, "These people are like soldiers who have readied their bows. Their tongues are always ready to shoot out lies. They have become powerful in the land, but they have not done so by honest means. Indeed, they do one evil thing after another and do not pay attention to me.

⁴Everyone must be on his guard around his friends. He must not even trust any of his relatives. For every one of them will find some way to cheat him. And all of his friends will tell lies about him.

⁵One friend deceives another and no one tells the truth. These people have trained themselves to tell lies. They do wrong and are unable to repent.

⁶They do one act of violence after another, and one deceitful thing after

another. They refuse to pay attention to me," says the Lord.

⁷Therefore the Lord who rules over all says, "I will now purify them in the fires of affliction and test them. The wickedness of my dear people has left me no choice. What else can I do?

⁸Their tongues are like deadly arrows. They are always telling lies. Friendly words for their neighbors come from their mouths. But their minds are thinking up ways to trap them.

⁹I will certainly punish them for doing such things!" says the Lord. "I will certainly bring retribution on such a nation as this!"

¹⁰I said, "I will weep and mourn for the grasslands on the mountains, I will sing a mournful song for the pastures in the wilderness because they are so scorched no one travels through them. The sound of livestock is no longer heard there. Even the birds in the sky and the wild animals in the fields have fled and are gone."

¹¹The Lord said, "I will make Jerusalem a heap of ruins. Jackals will make their home there. I will destroy the towns of

Judah so that no one will be able to live in them."

¹²I said, "Who is wise enough to understand why this has happened? Who has a word from the Lord that can explain it? Why does the land lie in ruins? Why is it as scorched as a desert through which no one travels?"

¹³The Lord answered, "This has happened because these people have rejected my laws which I gave them. They have not obeyed me or followed those laws.

¹⁴Instead they have followed the stubborn inclinations of their own hearts. They have paid allegiance to the gods called Baal, as their fathers taught them to do.

¹⁵So then, listen to what I, the Lord God of Israel who rules over all, say. 'I will make these people eat the bitter food of suffering and drink the poison water of judgment.

¹⁶I will scatter them among nations that neither they nor their ancestors have known anything about. I will send people chasing after them with swords until I have destroyed them.'"

¹⁷The Lord who rules over all told me to say to this people, "Take note of what I say. Call for the women who mourn for the dead! Summon those who are the most skilled at it!"

¹⁸I said, "Indeed, let them come quickly and sing a song of mourning for us. Let them wail loudly until tears stream from our own eyes and our eyelids overflow with water.

¹⁹For the sound of wailing is soon to be heard in Zion. They will wail, 'We are utterly ruined! We are completely disgraced! For our houses have been torn down and we must leave our land.'

²⁰I said, "So now, you wailing women, hear what the Lord says. Open your ears to the words from his mouth. Teach your daughters this mournful song, and each of you teach your neighbor this lament.

²¹'Death has climbed in through our windows. It has entered into our fortified houses. It has taken away our children who play in the streets. It has taken away our young men who gather in the city squares.'

²²Tell your daughters and neighbors, 'The Lord says, "The dead bodies of

people will lie scattered everywhere like manure scattered on a field. They will lie scattered on the ground like grain that has been cut down but has not been gathered."'"

²³The Lord says, "Wise people should not boast that they are wise. Powerful people should not boast that they are powerful. Rich people should not boast that they are rich.

²⁴If people want to boast, they should boast about this: They should boast that they understand and know me. They should boast that they know and understand that I, the Lord, act out of faithfulness, fairness, and justice in the earth and that I desire people to do these things," says the Lord.

²⁵The Lord says, "Watch out! The time is soon coming when I will punish all those who are circumcised only in the flesh.

²⁶That is, I will punish the Egyptians, the Judeans, the Edomites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, and all the desert people who cut their hair short at the temples. I will do so because none of the people of those nations are

really circumcised in the Lord's sight. Moreover, none of the people of Israel are circumcised when it comes to their hearts."

10¹ You people of Israel, listen to what the Lord has to say to you.

²The Lord says, "Do not start following pagan religious practices. Do not be in awe of signs that occur in the sky even though the nations hold them in awe.

³For the religion of these people is worthless. They cut down a tree in the forest, and a craftsman makes it into an idol with his tools.

⁴He decorates it with overlays of silver and gold. He uses hammer and nails to fasten it together so that it will not fall over.

⁵Such idols are like scarecrows in a cucumber field. They cannot talk. They must be carried because they cannot walk. Do not be afraid of them because they cannot hurt you. And they do not have any power to help you."

⁶I said, "There is no one like you, Lord. You are great. And you are renowned for your power.

⁷ Everyone should revere you, O King of all nations, because you deserve to be revered. For there is no one like you among any of the wise people of the nations nor among any of their kings.

⁸ The people of those nations are both stupid and foolish. Instruction from a wooden idol is worthless!

⁹ Hammered-out silver is brought from Tarshish and gold is brought from Uphaz to cover those idols. They are the handiwork of carpenters and goldsmiths. They are clothed in blue and purple clothes. They are all made by skillful workers.

¹⁰ The Lord is the only true God. He is the living God and the everlasting King. When he shows his anger the earth shakes. None of the nations can stand up to his fury.

¹¹ You people of Israel should tell those nations this: 'These gods did not make heaven and earth. They will disappear from the earth and from under the heavens.'

¹² The Lord is the one who by his power made the earth. He is the one who by his wisdom established the world. And

by his understanding he spread out the skies.

¹³When his voice thunders, the heavenly ocean roars. He makes the clouds rise from the far-off horizons. He makes the lightning flash out in the midst of the rain. He unleashes the wind from the places where he stores it.

¹⁴All these idolaters will prove to be stupid and ignorant. Every goldsmith will be disgraced by the idol he made. For the image he forges is merely a sham. There is no breath in any of those idols.

¹⁵They are worthless, mere objects to be mocked. When the time comes to punish them, they will be destroyed.

¹⁶The Lord, who is the inheritance of Jacob's descendants, is not like them. He is the one who created everything. And the people of Israel are those he claims as his own. He is known as the Lord who rules over all."

¹⁷Gather your belongings together and prepare to leave the land, you people of Jerusalem who are being besieged.

¹⁸For the Lord says, "I will now throw out those who live in this land. I will

bring so much trouble on them that they will actually feel it.”

¹⁹And I cried out, “We are doomed! Our wound is severe! We once thought, ‘This is only an illness. And we will be able to bear it!’

²⁰But our tents have been destroyed. The ropes that held them in place have been ripped apart. Our children are gone and are not coming back. There is no survivor to put our tents back up, no one left to hang their tent curtains in place.

²¹For our leaders are stupid. They have not sought the Lord’s advice. So they do not act wisely, and the people they are responsible for have all been scattered.

²²Listen! News is coming even now. The rumble of a great army is heard approaching from a land in the north. It is coming to turn the towns of Judah into rubble, places where only jackals live.

²³Lord, we know that people do not control their own destiny. It is not in their power to determine what will happen to them.

²⁴Correct us, Lord, but only in due measure. Do not punish us in anger or you will reduce us to nothing.

²⁵Vent your anger on the nations that do not acknowledge you. Vent it on the peoples who do not worship you. For they have destroyed the people of Jacob. They have completely destroyed them and left their homeland in utter ruin.

11 ¹The Lord said to Jeremiah:
²“Hear the terms of the covenant I made with Israel and pass them on to the people of Judah and the citizens of Jerusalem.

³Tell them that the Lord, the God of Israel, says, ‘Anyone who does not keep the terms of the covenant will be under a curse.

⁴Those are the terms that I charged your ancestors to keep when I brought them out of Egypt, that place which was like an iron-smelting furnace. I said at that time, “Obey me and carry out the terms of the agreement exactly as I commanded you. If you do, you will be my people and I will be your God.

⁵Then I will keep the promise I swore on oath to your ancestors to give them a land flowing with milk and honey.”
That is the very land that you still live in

today.'" And I responded, "Amen! Let it be so, Lord!"

⁶The Lord said to me, "Announce all the following words in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem: 'Listen to the terms of my covenant with you and carry them out!

⁷For I solemnly warned your ancestors to obey me. I warned them again and again, ever since I delivered them out of Egypt until this very day.

⁸But they did not listen to me or pay any attention to me! Each one of them followed the stubborn inclinations of his own wicked heart. So I brought on them all the punishments threatened in the covenant because they did not carry out its terms as I commanded them to do.'"

⁹The Lord said to me, "The people of Judah and the citizens of Jerusalem have plotted rebellion against me!

¹⁰They have gone back to the evil ways of their ancestors of old who refused to obey what I told them. They, too, have paid allegiance to other gods and worshiped them. Both the nation of Israel and the nation of Judah have

violated the covenant I made with their ancestors.

¹¹ So I, the Lord, say this: 'I will soon bring disaster on them which they will not be able to escape! When they cry out to me for help, I will not listen to them.

¹² Then those living in the towns of Judah and in Jerusalem will go and cry out for help to the gods to whom they have been sacrificing. However, those gods will by no means be able to save them when disaster strikes them.

¹³ This is in spite of the fact that the people of Judah have as many gods as they have towns and the citizens of Jerusalem have set up as many altars to sacrifice to that disgusting god, Baal, as they have streets in the city!

¹⁴ So, Jeremiah, do not pray for these people. Do not cry out to me or petition me on their behalf. Do not plead with me to save them. For I will not listen to them when they call out to me for help when disaster strikes them."

¹⁵ The Lord says to the people of Judah, "What right do you have to be in my temple, my beloved people? Many of you have done wicked things. Can your

acts of treachery be so easily canceled by sacred offerings that you take joy in doing evil even while you make them?

¹⁶I, the Lord, once called you a thriving olive tree, one that produced beautiful fruit. But I will set you on fire, fire that will blaze with a mighty roar. Then all your branches will be good for nothing.

¹⁷For though I, the Lord who rules over all, planted you in the land, I now decree that disaster will come on you because the nations of Israel and Judah have done evil and have made me angry by offering sacrifices to the god Baal."

¹⁸The Lord gave me knowledge, that I might have understanding. Then he showed me what the people were doing.

¹⁹Before this I had been like a docile lamb ready to be led to the slaughter. I did not know they were making plans to kill me. I did not know they were saying, "Let's destroy the tree along with its fruit! Let's remove Jeremiah from the world of the living so people will not even be reminded of him any more."

²⁰So I said to the Lord, "O Lord who rules over all, you are a just judge! You examine people's hearts and minds. I

want to see you pay them back for what they have done because I trust you to vindicate my cause.”

²¹ Then the Lord told me about some men from Anathoth who were threatening to kill me. They had threatened, “Stop prophesying in the name of the Lord or we will kill you!”

²² So the Lord who rules over all said, “I will surely punish them! Their young men will be killed in battle. Their sons and daughters will die of starvation.

²³ Not one of them will survive. I will bring disaster on those men from Anathoth who threatened you. A day of reckoning is coming for them.”

12¹ Lord, you have always been fair whenever I have complained to you. However, I would like to speak with you about the disposition of justice. Why are wicked people successful? Why do all dishonest people have such easy lives?

² You plant them like trees and they put down their roots. They grow prosperous and are very fruitful. They always talk about you, but they really care nothing about you.

³ But you, Lord, know all about me. You watch me and test my devotion to you. Drag these wicked men away like sheep to be slaughtered! Appoint a time when they will be killed!

⁴ How long must the land be parched and the grass in every field be withered? How long must the animals and the birds die because of the wickedness of the people who live in this land? For these people boast, "God will not see what happens to us."

⁵ The Lord answered, "If you have raced on foot against men and they have worn you out, how will you be able to compete with horses? And if you feel secure only in safe and open country, how will you manage in the thick undergrowth along the Jordan River?"

⁶ As a matter of fact, even your own brothers and the members of your own family have betrayed you too. Even they have plotted to do away with you. So do not trust them even when they say kind things to you.

⁷ "I will abandon my nation. I will forsake the people I call my own. I will

turn my beloved people over to the power of their enemies.

⁸The people I call my own have turned on me like a lion in the forest. They have roared defiantly at me. So I will treat them as though I hate them.

⁹The people I call my own attack me like birds of prey or like hyenas. But other birds of prey are all around them. Let all the nations gather together like wild beasts. Let them come and destroy these people I call my own.

¹⁰Many foreign rulers will ruin the land where I planted my people. They will trample all over my chosen land. They will turn my beautiful land into a desolate wasteland.

¹¹They will lay it waste. It will lie parched and empty before me. The whole land will be laid waste. But no one living in it will pay any heed.

¹²A destructive army will come marching over the hilltops in the desert. For the Lord will use them as his destructive weapon against everyone from one end of the land to the other. No one will be safe.

¹³ My people will sow wheat, but will harvest weeds. They will work until they are exhausted, but will get nothing from it. They will be disappointed in their harvests because the Lord will take them away in his fierce anger.

¹⁴ "I, the Lord, also have something to say concerning the wicked nations who surround my land and have attacked and plundered the land that I gave to my people as a permanent possession. I say: 'I will uproot the people of those nations from their lands and I will free the people of Judah who have been taken there.'

¹⁵ But after I have uprooted the people of those nations, I will relent and have pity on them. I will restore the people of each of those nations to their own lands and to their own country.

¹⁶ But they must make sure you learn to follow the religious practices of my people. Once they taught my people to swear their oaths using the name of the god Baal. But then, they must swear oaths using my name, saying, "As surely as the Lord lives, I swear." If they do

these things, then they will be included among the people I call my own.

¹⁷But I will completely uproot and destroy any of those nations that will not pay heed," says the Lord.

13¹The Lord said to me, "Go and buy some linen shorts and put them on. Do not put them in water."

²So I bought the shorts as the Lord had told me to do and put them on.

³Then the Lord spoke to me again and said,

⁴"Take the shorts that you bought and are wearing and go at once to Perath. Bury the shorts there in a crack in the rocks."

⁵So I went and buried them at Perath as the Lord had ordered me to do.

⁶Many days later the Lord said to me, "Go at once to Perath and get the shorts I ordered you to bury there."

⁷So I went to Perath and dug up the shorts from the place where I had buried them. I found that they were ruined; they were good for nothing.

⁸Then the Lord said to me,

⁹“I, the Lord, say: ‘This shows how I will ruin the highly exalted position in which Judah and Jerusalem take pride.

¹⁰These wicked people refuse to obey what I have said. They follow the stubborn inclinations of their own hearts and pay allegiance to other gods by worshiping and serving them. So they will become just like these linen shorts which are good for nothing.

¹¹For, I say, ‘just as shorts cling tightly to a person’s body, so I bound the whole nation of Israel and the whole nation of Judah tightly to me.’ I intended for them to be my special people and to bring me fame, honor, and praise. But they would not obey me.

¹²“So tell them, ‘The Lord, the God of Israel, says, “Every wine jar is made to be filled with wine.”’ And they will probably say to you, ‘Do you not think we know that every wine jar is supposed to be filled with wine?’

¹³Then tell them, ‘The Lord says, “I will soon fill all the people who live in this land with stupor. I will also fill the kings from David’s dynasty, the priests, the

prophets, and the citizens of Jerusalem with stupor.

¹⁴And I will smash them like wine bottles against one another, children and parents alike. I will not show any pity, mercy, or compassion. Nothing will keep me from destroying them,' says the Lord."

¹⁵Then I said to the people of Judah, "Listen and pay attention! Do not be arrogant! For the Lord has spoken.

¹⁶Show the Lord your God the respect that is due him. Do it before he brings the darkness of disaster. Do it before you stumble into distress like a traveler on the mountains at twilight. Do it before he turns the light of deliverance you hope for into the darkness and gloom of exile.

¹⁷But if you will not pay attention to this warning, I will weep alone because of your arrogant pride. I will weep bitterly and my eyes will overflow with tears because you, the Lord's flock, will be carried into exile."

¹⁸The Lord told me, "Tell the king and the queen mother, 'Surrender your thrones, for your glorious crowns will be removed from your heads.

¹⁹The gates of the towns in southern Judah will be shut tight. No one will be able to go in or out of them. All Judah will be carried off into exile. They will be completely carried off into exile.'"

²⁰Then I said, "Look up, Jerusalem, and see the enemy that is coming from the north. Where now is the flock of people that were entrusted to your care? Where now are the 'sheep' that you take such pride in?"

²¹What will you say when the Lord appoints as rulers over you those allies that you, yourself, had actually prepared as such? Then anguish and agony will grip you like that of a woman giving birth to a baby.

²²You will probably ask yourself, 'Why have these things happened to me? Why have I been treated like a disgraced adulteress whose skirt has been torn off and her limbs exposed?' It is because you have sinned so much.

²³But there is little hope for you ever doing good, you who are so accustomed to doing evil. Can an Ethiopian change the color of his skin? Can a leopard remove its spots?

²⁴ "The Lord says, 'That is why I will scatter your people like chaff that is blown away by a desert wind.

²⁵ This is your fate, the destiny to which I have appointed you, because you have forgotten me and have trusted in false gods.

²⁶ So I will pull your skirt up over your face and expose you to shame like a disgraced adulteress!

²⁷ People of Jerusalem, I have seen your adulterous worship, your shameless prostitution to, and your lustful pursuit of, other gods. I have seen your disgusting acts of worship on the hills throughout the countryside. You are doomed to destruction! How long will you continue to be unclean?"

14¹ The Lord spoke to Jeremiah about the drought.

² "The people of Judah are in mourning. The people in her cities are pining away. They lie on the ground expressing their sorrow. Cries of distress come up to me from Jerusalem.

³ The leading men of the cities send their servants for water. They go to the cisterns, but they do not find any water

there. They return with their containers empty. Disappointed and dismayed, they bury their faces in their hands.

⁴They are dismayed because the ground is cracked because there has been no rain in the land. The farmers, too, are dismayed and bury their faces in their hands.

⁵Even the doe abandons her newborn fawn in the field because there is no grass.

⁶Wild donkeys stand on the hilltops and pant for breath like jackals. Their eyes are strained looking for food, because there is none to be found."

⁷Then I said, "O Lord, intervene for the honor of your name even though our sins speak out against us. Indeed, we have turned away from you many times. We have sinned against you.

⁸You have been the object of Israel's hopes. You have saved them when they were in trouble. Why have you become like a resident foreigner in the land? Why have you become like a traveler who only stops in to spend the night?

⁹Why should you be like someone who is helpless, like a champion who cannot

save anyone? You are indeed with us, and we belong to you. Do not abandon us!"

¹⁰Then the Lord spoke about these people. "They truly love to go astray. They cannot keep from running away from me. So I am not pleased with them. I will now call to mind the wrongs they have done and punish them for their sins."

¹¹Then the Lord said to me, "Do not pray for good to come to these people!

¹²Even if they fast, I will not hear their cries for help. Even if they offer burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them. Instead, I will kill them through wars, famines, and plagues."

¹³Then I said, "Oh, Lord God, look! The prophets are telling them that you said, 'You will not experience war or suffer famine. I will give you lasting peace and prosperity in this land.'"

¹⁴Then the Lord said to me, "Those prophets are prophesying lies while claiming my authority! I did not send them. I did not commission them. I did not speak to them. They are prophesying to these people false visions, worthless

predictions, and the delusions of their own mind.

¹⁵I did not send those prophets, though they claim to be prophesying in my name. They may be saying, 'No war or famine will happen in this land.' But I, the Lord, say this about them: 'War and starvation will kill those prophets.'

¹⁶The people to whom they are prophesying will die through war and famine. Their bodies will be thrown out into the streets of Jerusalem and there will be no one to bury them. This will happen to the men and their wives, their sons, and their daughters. For I will pour out on them the destruction they deserve."

¹⁷"Tell these people this, Jeremiah: 'My eyes overflow with tears day and night without ceasing. For my people, my dear children, have suffered a crushing blow. They have suffered a serious wound.

¹⁸If I go out into the countryside, I see those who have been killed in battle. If I go into the city, I see those who are sick because of starvation. For both prophet and priest go about their own

business in the land without having any real understanding.”

¹⁹Then I said, “Lord, have you completely rejected the nation of Judah? Do you despise the city of Zion? Why have you struck us with such force that we are beyond recovery? We hope for peace, but nothing good has come of it. We hope for a time of relief from our troubles, but experience terror.

²⁰Lord, we confess that we have been wicked. We confess that our ancestors have done wrong. We have indeed sinned against you.

²¹For the honor of your name, do not treat Jerusalem with contempt. Do not treat with disdain the place where your glorious throne sits. Be mindful of your covenant with us. Do not break it!

²²Do any of the worthless idols of the nations cause rain to fall? Do the skies themselves send showers? Is it not you, O Lord our God, who does this? So we put our hopes in you because you alone do all this.”

15¹ Then the Lord said to me, “Even if Moses and Samuel stood before me pleading for these people, I would

not feel pity for them! Get them away from me! Tell them to go away!

²If they ask you, 'Where should we go?' tell them the Lord says this: "Those who are destined to die of disease will go to death by disease. Those who are destined to die in war will go to death in war. Those who are destined to die of starvation will go to death by starvation. Those who are destined to go into exile will go into exile."

³"I will punish them in four different ways: I will have war kill them. I will have dogs drag off their dead bodies. I will have birds and wild beasts devour and destroy their corpses.

⁴I will make all the people in all the kingdoms of the world horrified at what has happened to them because of what Hezekiah's son Manasseh, king of Judah, did in Jerusalem."

⁵The Lord cried out, "Who in the world will have pity on you, Jerusalem? Who will grieve over you? Who will stop long enough to inquire about how you are doing?"

⁶I, the Lord, say: 'You people have deserted me! You keep turning your back

on me.' So I have unleashed my power against you and have begun to destroy you. I have grown tired of feeling sorry for you!"

⁷The Lord continued, "In every town in the land I will purge them like straw blown away by the wind. I will destroy my people. I will kill off their children. I will do so because they did not change their behavior.

⁸Their widows will become in my sight more numerous than the grains of sand on the seashores. At noontime I will bring a destroyer against the mothers of their young men. I will cause anguish and terror to fall suddenly upon them.

⁹The mother who had seven children will grow faint. All the breath will go out of her. Her pride and joy will be taken from her in the prime of their life. It will seem as if the sun had set while it was still day. She will suffer shame and humiliation. I will cause any of them who are still left alive to be killed in war by the onslaughts of their enemies," says the Lord.

¹⁰I said, "Oh, mother, how I regret that you ever gave birth to me! I am

always starting arguments and quarrels with the people of this land. I have not lent money to anyone and I have not borrowed from anyone. Yet all of these people are treating me with contempt.”

¹¹The Lord said, “Jerusalem, I will surely send you away for your own good. I will surely bring the enemy upon you in a time of trouble and distress.

¹²Can you people who are like iron and bronze break that iron fist from the north?

¹³I will give away your wealth and your treasures as plunder. I will give it away free of charge for the sins you have committed throughout your land.

¹⁴I will make you serve your enemies in a land that you know nothing about. For my anger is like a fire that will burn against you.”

¹⁵I said, “Lord, you know how I suffer. Take thought of me and care for me. Pay back for me those who have been persecuting me. Do not be so patient with them that you allow them to kill me. Be mindful of how I have put up with their insults for your sake.

¹⁶As your words came to me I drank them in, and they filled my heart with joy and happiness because I belong to you.

¹⁷I did not spend my time in the company of other people, laughing and having a good time. I stayed to myself because I felt obligated to you and because I was filled with anger at what they had done.

¹⁸Why must I continually suffer such painful anguish? Why must I endure the sting of their insults like an incurable wound? Will you let me down when I need you like a brook one goes to for water, but that cannot be relied on?"

¹⁹Because of this, the Lord said, "You must repent of such words and thoughts! If you do, I will restore you to the privilege of serving me. If you say what is worthwhile instead of what is worthless, I will again allow you to be my spokesman. They must become as you have been. You must not become like them.

²⁰I will make you as strong as a wall to these people, a fortified wall of bronze. They will attack you, but they will not be

able to overcome you. For I will be with you to rescue you and deliver you," says the Lord.

²¹ "I will deliver you from the power of the wicked. I will free you from the clutches of violent people."

16 ¹ The Lord said to me,
² "Do not get married and do not have children here in this land.

³ For I, the Lord, tell you what will happen to the children who are born here in this land and to the men and women who are their mothers and fathers.

⁴ They will die of deadly diseases. No one will mourn for them. They will not be buried. Their dead bodies will lie like manure spread on the ground. They will be killed in war or die of starvation. Their corpses will be food for the birds and wild animals.

⁵ "Moreover I, the Lord, tell you: 'Do not go into a house where they are having a funeral meal. Do not go there to mourn and express your sorrow for them. For I have stopped showing them my good favor, my love, and my compassion. I, the Lord, so affirm it!

⁶ Rich and poor alike will die in this land. They will not be buried or mourned. People will not cut their bodies or shave off their hair to show their grief for them.

⁷ No one will take any food to those who mourn for the dead to comfort them. No one will give them any wine to drink to console them for the loss of their father or mother.

⁸ "Do not go to a house where people are feasting and sit down to eat and drink with them either.

⁹ For I, the Lord God of Israel who rules over all, tell you what will happen. I will put an end to the sounds of joy and gladness, to the glad celebration of brides and grooms in this land. You and the rest of the people will live to see this happen."

¹⁰ "When you tell these people about all this, they will undoubtedly ask you, 'Why has the Lord threatened us with such great disaster? What wrong have we done? What sin have we done to offend the Lord our God?'

¹¹ Then tell them that the Lord says, 'It is because your ancestors rejected me and paid allegiance to other gods.

They have served them and worshiped them. But they have rejected me and not obeyed my law.

¹²And you have acted even more wickedly than your ancestors! Each one of you has followed the stubborn inclinations of your own wicked heart and not obeyed me.

¹³So I will throw you out of this land into a land that neither you nor your ancestors have ever known. There you must worship other gods day and night, for I will show you no mercy."

¹⁴Yet I, the Lord, say: "A new time will certainly come. People now affirm their oaths with 'I swear as surely as the Lord lives who delivered the people of Israel out of Egypt.'

¹⁵But in that time they will affirm them with 'I swear as surely as the Lord lives who delivered the people of Israel from the land of the north and from all the other lands where he had banished them.' At that time I will bring them back to the land I gave their ancestors."

¹⁶But for now I, the Lord, say: "I will send many enemies who will catch these people like fishermen. After that I will

send others who will hunt them out like hunters from all the mountains, all the hills, and the crevices in the rocks.

¹⁷For I see everything they do. Their wicked ways are not hidden from me. Their sin is not hidden away where I cannot see it.

¹⁸Before I restore them I will punish them in full for their sins and the wrongs they have done. For they have polluted my land with the lifeless statues of their disgusting idols. They have filled the land I have claimed as my own with their detestable idols."

¹⁹Then I said, "Lord, you give me strength and protect me. You are the one I can run to for safety when I am in trouble. Nations from all over the earth will come to you and say, 'Our ancestors had nothing but false gods – worthless idols that could not help them at all.

²⁰Can people make their own gods? No, what they make are not gods at all."

²¹The Lord said, "So I will now let this wicked people know – I will let them know my mighty power in judgment. Then they will know that my name is the Lord."

17 ¹The sin of Judah is engraved with an iron chisel on their stone-hard hearts. It is inscribed with a diamond point on the horns of their altars.

²Their children are always thinking about their altars and their sacred poles dedicated to the goddess Asherah, set up beside the green trees on the high hills

³and on the mountains and in the fields. I will give your wealth and all your treasures away as plunder. I will give it away as the price for the sins you have committed throughout your land.

⁴You will lose your hold on the land which I gave to you as a permanent possession. I will make you serve your enemies in a land that you know nothing about. For you have made my anger burn like a fire that will never be put out."

⁵The Lord says, "I will put a curse on people who trust in mere human beings, who depend on mere flesh and blood for their strength, and whose hearts have turned away from the Lord.

⁶They will be like a shrub in the desert. They will not experience good things

even when they happen. It will be as though they were growing in the desert, in a salt land where no one can live.

⁷ My blessing is on those people who trust in me, who put their confidence in me.

⁸ They will be like a tree planted near a stream whose roots spread out toward the water. It has nothing to fear when the heat comes. Its leaves are always green. It has no need to be concerned in a year of drought. It does not stop bearing fruit.

⁹ The human mind is more deceitful than anything else. It is incurably bad. Who can understand it?

¹⁰ I, the Lord, probe into people's minds. I examine people's hearts. I deal with each person according to how he has behaved. I give them what they deserve based on what they have done.

¹¹ The person who gathers wealth by unjust means is like the partridge that broods over eggs but does not hatch them. Before his life is half over he will lose his ill-gotten gains. At the end of his life it will be clear he was a fool."

¹²Then I said, "Lord, from the very beginning you have been seated on your glorious throne on high. You are the place where we can find refuge.

¹³You are the one in whom Israel may find hope. All who leave you will suffer shame. Those who turn away from you will be consigned to the nether world. For they have rejected you, the Lord, the fountain of life.

¹⁴Lord, grant me relief from my suffering so that I may have some relief. Rescue me from those who persecute me so that I may be rescued.

¹⁵Listen to what they are saying to me. They are saying, "Where are the things the Lord threatens us with? Come on! Let's see them happen!"

¹⁶But I have not pestered you to bring disaster. I have not desired the time of irreparable devastation. You know that. You are fully aware of every word that I have spoken.

¹⁷Do not cause me dismay! You are my source of safety in times of trouble.

¹⁸May those who persecute me be disgraced. Do not let me be disgraced. May they be dismayed. Do not let me

be dismayed. Bring days of disaster on them. Bring on them the destruction they deserve.”

¹⁹The Lord told me, “Go and stand in the People’s Gate through which the kings of Judah enter and leave the city. Then go and stand in all the other gates of the city of Jerusalem.

²⁰As you stand in those places announce, ‘Listen, all you people who pass through these gates. Listen, all you kings of Judah, all you people of Judah and all you citizens of Jerusalem. Listen to what the Lord says.

²¹The Lord says, ‘Be very careful if you value your lives! Do not carry any loads in through the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day.

²²Do not carry any loads out of your houses or do any work on the Sabbath day. But observe the Sabbath day as a day set apart to the Lord, as I commanded your ancestors.

²³Your ancestors, however, did not listen to me or pay any attention to me. They stubbornly refused to pay attention or to respond to any discipline.’

²⁴The Lord says, 'You must make sure to obey me. You must not bring any loads through the gates of this city on the Sabbath day. You must set the Sabbath day apart to me. You must not do any work on that day.

²⁵If you do this, then the kings and princes who follow in David's succession and ride in chariots or on horses will continue to enter through these gates, as well as their officials and the people of Judah and the citizens of Jerusalem. This city will always be filled with people.

²⁶Then people will come here from the towns in Judah, from the villages surrounding Jerusalem, from the territory of Benjamin, from the western foothills, from the southern hill country, and from the southern part of Judah. They will come bringing offerings to the temple of the Lord: burnt offerings, sacrifices, grain offerings, and incense along with their thank offerings.

²⁷But you must obey me and set the Sabbath day apart to me. You must not carry any loads in through the gates of Jerusalem on the Sabbath day. If you disobey, I will set the gates of Jerusalem

on fire. It will burn down all the fortified dwellings in Jerusalem and no one will be able to put it out.”

18¹ The Lord said to Jeremiah:
² “Go down at once to the potter’s house. I will speak to you further there.”

³ So I went down to the potter’s house and found him working at his wheel.

⁴ Now and then there would be something wrong with the pot he was molding from the clay with his hands. So he would rework the clay into another kind of pot as he saw fit.

⁵ Then the Lord said to me,

⁶ “I, the Lord, say: ‘O nation of Israel, can I not deal with you as this potter deals with the clay? In my hands, you, O nation of Israel, are just like the clay in this potter’s hand.’

⁷ There are times, Jeremiah, when I threaten to uproot, tear down, and destroy a nation or kingdom.

⁸ But if that nation I threatened stops doing wrong, I will cancel the destruction I intended to do to it.

⁹And there are times when I promise to build up and establish a nation or kingdom.

¹⁰But if that nation does what displeases me and does not obey me, then I will cancel the good I promised to do to it.

¹¹So now, tell the people of Judah and the citizens of Jerusalem this: The Lord says, 'I am preparing to bring disaster on you! I am making plans to punish you. So, every one of you, stop the evil things you have been doing. Correct the way you have been living and do what is right.'

¹²But they just keep saying, 'We do not care what you say! We will do whatever we want to do! We will continue to behave wickedly and stubbornly!'"

¹³Therefore, the Lord says, "Ask the people of other nations whether they have heard of anything like this. Israel should have been like a virgin. But she has done something utterly revolting!

¹⁴Does the snow ever completely vanish from the rocky slopes of Lebanon? Do the cool waters from those distant mountains ever cease to flow?

¹⁵ Yet my people have forgotten me and offered sacrifices to worthless idols! This makes them stumble along in the way they live and leave the old reliable path of their fathers. They have left them to walk in bypaths, in roads that are not smooth and level.

¹⁶ So their land will become an object of horror. People will forever hiss out their scorn over it. All who pass that way will be filled with horror and will shake their heads in derision.

¹⁷ I will scatter them before their enemies like dust blowing in front of a burning east wind. I will turn my back on them and not look favorably on them when disaster strikes them."

¹⁸ Then some people said, "Come on! Let us consider how to deal with Jeremiah! There will still be priests to instruct us, wise men to give us advice, and prophets to declare God's word. Come on! Let's bring charges against him and get rid of him! Then we will not need to pay attention to anything he says."

¹⁹Then I said, “Lord, pay attention to me. Listen to what my enemies are saying.

²⁰Should good be paid back with evil? Yet they are virtually digging a pit to kill me. Just remember how I stood before you pleading on their behalf to keep you from venting your anger on them.

²¹So let their children die of starvation. Let them be cut down by the sword. Let their wives lose their husbands and children. Let the older men die of disease and the younger men die by the sword in battle.

²²Let cries of terror be heard in their houses when you send bands of raiders unexpectedly to plunder them. For they have virtually dug a pit to capture me and have hidden traps for me to step into.

²³But you, Lord, know all their plots to kill me. Do not pardon their crimes! Do not ignore their sins as though you had erased them! Let them be brought down in defeat before you! Deal with them while you are still angry!

19¹The Lord told Jeremiah, “Go and buy a clay jar from a potter.

Take with you some of the leaders of the people and some of the leaders of the priests.

²Go out to the part of the Hinnom Valley which is near the entrance of the Potsherd Gate. Announce there what I tell you.

³Say, 'Listen to what the Lord says, you kings of Judah and citizens of Jerusalem! The Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, "I will bring a disaster on this place that will make the ears of everyone who hears about it ring!

⁴I will do so because these people have rejected me and have defiled this place. They have offered sacrifices in it to other gods which neither they nor their ancestors nor the kings of Judah knew anything about. They have filled it with the blood of innocent children.

⁵They have built places here for worship of the god Baal so that they could sacrifice their children as burnt offerings to him in the fire. Such sacrifices are something I never commanded them to make! They are something I never told them to do!

Indeed, such a thing never even entered my mind!

⁶So I, the Lord, say: "The time will soon come that people will no longer call this place Topheth or the Hinnom Valley. But they will call this valley the Valley of Slaughter!

⁷In this place I will thwart the plans of the people of Judah and Jerusalem. I will deliver them over to the power of their enemies who are seeking to kill them. They will die by the sword at the hands of their enemies. I will make their dead bodies food for the birds and wild beasts to eat.

⁸I will make this city an object of horror, a thing to be hissed at. All who pass by it will be filled with horror and will hiss out their scorn because of all the disasters that have happened to it.

⁹I will reduce the people of this city to desperate straits during the siege imposed on it by their enemies who are seeking to kill them. I will make them so desperate that they will eat the flesh of their own sons and daughters and the flesh of one another."'''

¹⁰The Lord continued, "Now break the jar in front of those who have come here with you.

¹¹Tell them the Lord who rules over all says, 'I will do just as Jeremiah has done. I will smash this nation and this city as though it were a potter's vessel which is broken beyond repair. The dead will be buried here in Topheth until there is no more room to bury them.'

¹²I, the Lord, say: 'That is how I will deal with this city and its citizens. I will make it like Topheth.

¹³The houses in Jerusalem and the houses of the kings of Judah will be defiled by dead bodies just like this place, Topheth. For they offered sacrifice to the stars and poured out drink offerings to other gods on the roofs of those houses.'"

¹⁴Then Jeremiah left Topheth where the Lord had sent him to give that prophecy. He went to the Lord's temple and stood in its courtyard and called out to all the people.

¹⁵"The Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, 'I will soon bring on this city and all the towns surrounding it all

the disaster I threatened to do to it. I will do so because they have stubbornly refused to pay any attention to what I have said!”

20¹ Now Pashhur son of Immer heard Jeremiah prophesy these things. He was the priest who was chief of security in the Lord’s temple.

² When he heard Jeremiah’s prophecy, he had the prophet flogged. Then he put him in the stocks which were at the Upper Gate of Benjamin in the Lord’s temple.

³ But the next day Pashhur released Jeremiah from the stocks. When he did, Jeremiah said to him, “The Lord’s name for you is not ‘Pashhur’ but ‘Terror is Everywhere.’”

⁴ For the Lord says, ‘I will make both you and your friends terrified of what will happen to you. You will see all of them die by the swords of their enemies. I will hand all the people of Judah over to the king of Babylon. He will carry some of them away into exile in Babylon and he will kill others of them with the sword.’

⁵ I will hand over all the wealth of this city to their enemies. I will hand over

to them all the fruits of the labor of the people of this city and all their prized possessions, as well as all the treasures of the kings of Judah. Their enemies will seize it all as plunder and carry it off to Babylon.

⁶You, Pashhur, and all your household will go into exile in Babylon. You will die there and you will be buried there. The same thing will happen to all your friends to whom you have prophesied lies."

⁷Lord, you coerced me into being a prophet, and I allowed you to do it. You overcame my resistance and prevailed over me. Now I have become a constant laughingstock. Everyone ridicules me.

⁸For whenever I prophesy, I must cry out, "Violence and destruction are coming!" This message from the Lord has made me an object of continual insults and derision.

⁹Sometimes I think, "I will make no mention of his message. I will not speak as his messenger any more." But then his message becomes like a fire locked up inside of me, burning in my heart and soul. I grow weary of trying to hold it in; I cannot contain it.

¹⁰I hear many whispering words of intrigue against me. Those who would cause me terror are everywhere! They are saying, "Come on, let's publicly denounce him!" All my so-called friends are just watching for something that would lead to my downfall. They say, "Perhaps he can be enticed into slipping up, so we can prevail over him and get our revenge on him."

¹¹But the Lord is with me to help me like an awe-inspiring warrior. Therefore those who persecute me will fail and will not prevail over me. They will be thoroughly disgraced because they did not succeed. Their disgrace will never be forgotten.

¹²O Lord who rules over all, you test and prove the righteous. You see into people's hearts and minds. Pay them back for what they have done because I trust you to vindicate my cause.

¹³Sing to the Lord! Praise the Lord! For he rescues the oppressed from the clutches of evildoers.

¹⁴Cursed be the day I was born! May that day not be blessed when my mother gave birth to me.

¹⁵Cursed be the man who made my father very glad when he brought him the news that a baby boy had been born to him!

¹⁶May that man be like the cities that the Lord destroyed without showing any mercy. May he hear a cry of distress in the morning and a battle cry at noon.

¹⁷For he did not kill me before I came from the womb, making my pregnant mother's womb my grave forever.

¹⁸Why did I ever come forth from my mother's womb? All I experience is trouble and grief, and I spend my days in shame.

21 ¹The Lord spoke to Jeremiah when King Zedekiah sent to him Pashhur son of Malkijah and the priest Zephaniah son of Maaseiah. Zedekiah sent them to Jeremiah to ask,

²"Please ask the Lord to come and help us, because King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon is attacking us. Maybe the Lord will perform one of his miracles as in times past and make him stop attacking us and leave."

³Jeremiah answered them, "Tell Zedekiah

⁴ that the Lord, the God of Israel, says, 'The forces at your disposal are now outside the walls fighting against King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and the Babylonians who have you under siege. I will gather those forces back inside the city.

⁵ In anger, in fury, and in wrath I myself will fight against you with my mighty power and great strength!

⁶ I will kill everything living in Jerusalem, people and animals alike! They will die from terrible diseases.

⁷ Then I, the Lord, promise that I will hand over King Zedekiah of Judah, his officials, and any of the people who survive the war, starvation, and disease. I will hand them over to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and to their enemies who want to kill them. He will slaughter them with the sword. He will not show them any mercy, compassion, or pity.'

⁸ "But tell the people of Jerusalem that the Lord says, 'I will give you a choice between two courses of action. One will result in life; the other will result in death.

⁹Those who stay in this city will die in battle or of starvation or disease. Those who leave the city and surrender to the Babylonians who are besieging it will live. They will escape with their lives.

¹⁰For I, the Lord, say that I am determined not to deliver this city but to bring disaster on it. It will be handed over to the king of Babylon and he will destroy it with fire."

¹¹The Lord told me to say to the royal court of Judah, "Listen to what the Lord says,

¹²O royal family descended from David. The Lord says: 'See to it that people each day are judged fairly. Deliver those who have been robbed from those who oppress them. Otherwise, my wrath will blaze out against you. It will burn like a fire that cannot be put out because of the evil that you have done.

¹³Listen, you who sit enthroned above the valley on a rocky plateau. I am opposed to you,' says the Lord. 'You boast, "No one can swoop down on us. No one can penetrate into our places of refuge."

¹⁴But I will punish you as your deeds deserve,' says the Lord. 'I will set fire to your palace; it will burn up everything around it.'"

22¹The Lord told me, "Go down to the palace of the king of Judah. Give him a message from me there.

²Say: 'Listen, O king of Judah who follows in David's succession. You, your officials, and your subjects who pass through the gates of this palace must listen to what the Lord says.

³The Lord says, "Do what is just and right. Deliver those who have been robbed from those who oppress them. Do not exploit or mistreat foreigners who live in your land, children who have no fathers, or widows. Do not kill innocent people in this land.

⁴If you are careful to obey these commands, then the kings who follow in David's succession and ride in chariots or on horses will continue to come through the gates of this palace, as will their officials and their subjects.

⁵But, if you do not obey these commands, I solemnly swear that this

palace will become a pile of rubble. I, the Lord, affirm it!"

⁶ "'For the Lord says concerning the palace of the king of Judah, "This place looks like a veritable forest of Gilead to me. It is like the wooded heights of Lebanon in my eyes. But I swear that I will make it like a wilderness whose towns have all been deserted.

⁷ I will send men against it to destroy it with their axes and hatchets. They will hack up its fine cedar panels and columns and throw them into the fire.

⁸ "'People from other nations will pass by this city. They will ask one another, "Why has the Lord done such a thing to this great city?"

⁹ The answer will come back, "It is because they broke their covenant with the Lord their God and worshiped and served other gods."

¹⁰ "'Do not weep for the king who was killed. Do not grieve for him. But weep mournfully for the king who has gone into exile. For he will never return to see his native land again.

¹¹ "'For the Lord has spoken about Shallum son of Josiah, who succeeded

his father as king of Judah but was carried off into exile. He has said, "He will never return to this land.

¹²For he will die in the country where they took him as a captive. He will never see this land again."

¹³"Sure to be judged is the king who builds his palace using injustice and treats people unfairly while adding its upper rooms. He makes his countrymen work for him for nothing. He does not pay them for their labor.

¹⁴He says, "I will build myself a large palace with spacious upper rooms." He cuts windows in its walls, panels it with cedar, and paints its rooms red.

¹⁵Does it make you any more of a king that you outstrip everyone else in building with cedar? Just think about your father. He was content that he had food and drink. He did what was just and right. So things went well with him.

¹⁶He upheld the cause of the poor and needy. So things went well for Judah.' The Lord says, 'That is a good example of what it means to know me.'

¹⁷But you are always thinking and looking for ways to increase your wealth

by dishonest means. Your eyes and your heart are set on killing some innocent person and committing fraud and oppression.

¹⁸So the Lord has this to say about Josiah's son, King Jehoiakim of Judah: People will not mourn for him, saying, "This makes me sad, my brother! This makes me sad, my sister!" They will not mourn for him, saying, "Poor, poor lord! Poor, poor majesty!"

¹⁹He will be left unburied just like a dead donkey. His body will be dragged off and thrown outside the gates of Jerusalem."

²⁰People of Jerusalem, go up to Lebanon and cry out in mourning. Go to the land of Bashan and cry out loudly. Cry out in mourning from the mountains of Moab. For your allies have all been defeated.

²¹While you were feeling secure I gave you warning. But you said, "I refuse to listen to you." That is the way you have acted from your earliest history onward. Indeed, you have never paid attention to me.

²² My judgment will carry off all your leaders like a storm wind! Your allies will go into captivity. Then you will certainly be disgraced and put to shame because of all the wickedness you have done.

²³ You may feel as secure as a bird nesting in the cedars of Lebanon. But oh how you will groan when the pains of judgment come on you. They will be like those of a woman giving birth to a baby.

²⁴ The Lord says, "As surely as I am the living God, you, Jeconiah, king of Judah, son of Jehoiakim, will not be the earthly representative of my authority. Indeed, I will take that right away from you.

²⁵ I will hand you over to those who want to take your life and of whom you are afraid. I will hand you over to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and his Babylonian soldiers.

²⁶ I will force you and your mother who gave you birth into exile. You will be exiled to a country where neither of you were born, and you will both die there.

²⁷ You will never come back to this land to which you will long to return!"

²⁸ This man, Jeconiah, will be like a broken pot someone threw away. He will

be like a clay vessel that no one wants. Why will he and his children be forced into exile? Why will they be thrown out into a country they know nothing about?

²⁹O land of Judah, land of Judah, land of Judah! Listen to what the Lord has to say!

³⁰The Lord says, "Enroll this man in the register as though he were childless. Enroll him as a man who will not enjoy success during his lifetime. For none of his sons will succeed in occupying the throne of David or ever succeed in ruling over Judah."

23¹The Lord says, "The leaders of my people are sure to be judged. They were supposed to watch over my people like shepherds watch over their sheep. But they are causing my people to be destroyed and scattered.

²So the Lord God of Israel has this to say about the leaders who are ruling over his people: "You have caused my people to be dispersed and driven into exile. You have not taken care of them. So I will punish you for the evil that you have done. I, the Lord, affirm it!

³Then I myself will regather those of my people who are still alive from all the countries where I have driven them. I will bring them back to their homeland. They will greatly increase in number.

⁴I will install rulers over them who will care for them. Then they will no longer need to fear or be terrified. None of them will turn up missing. I, the Lord, promise it!

⁵"I, the Lord, promise that a new time will certainly come when I will raise up for them a righteous branch, a descendant of David. He will rule over them with wisdom and understanding and will do what is just and right in the land.

⁶Under his rule Judah will enjoy safety and Israel will live in security. This is the name he will go by: 'The Lord has provided us with justice.'

⁷"So I, the Lord, say: 'A new time will certainly come. People now affirm their oaths with "I swear as surely as the Lord lives who delivered the people of Israel out of Egypt."

⁸But at that time they will affirm them with "I swear as surely as the Lord lives

who delivered the descendants of the former nation of Israel from the land of the north and from all the other lands where he had banished them." At that time they will live in their own land."

⁹Here is what the Lord says concerning the false prophets: My heart and my mind are deeply disturbed. I tremble all over. I am like a drunk person, like a person who has had too much wine, because of the way the Lord and his holy word are being mistreated.

¹⁰For the land is full of people unfaithful to him. They live wicked lives and they misuse their power. So the land is dried up because it is under his curse. The pastures in the wilderness are withered.

¹¹Moreover, the Lord says, "Both the prophets and priests are godless. I have even found them doing evil in my temple!

¹²So the paths they follow will be dark and slippery. They will stumble and fall headlong. For I will bring disaster on them. A day of reckoning is coming for them." The Lord affirms it!

¹³The Lord says, "I saw the prophets of Samaria doing something that was

disgusting. They prophesied in the name of the god Baal and led my people Israel astray.

¹⁴But I see the prophets of Jerusalem doing something just as shocking. They are unfaithful to me and continually prophesy lies. So they give encouragement to people who are doing evil, with the result that they do not stop their evildoing. I consider all of them as bad as the people of Sodom, and the citizens of Jerusalem as bad as the people of Gomorrah.

¹⁵So then I, the Lord who rules over all, have something to say concerning the prophets of Jerusalem: "I will make these prophets eat the bitter food of suffering and drink the poison water of judgment. For the prophets of Jerusalem are the reason that ungodliness has spread throughout the land."

¹⁶The Lord who rules over all says to the people of Jerusalem: "Do not listen to what those prophets are saying to you. They are filling you with false hopes. They are reporting visions of their own imaginations, not something the Lord has given them to say.

¹⁷ They continually say to those who reject what the Lord has said, 'Things will go well for you!' They say to all those who follow the stubborn inclinations of their own hearts, 'Nothing bad will happen to you!'

¹⁸ Yet which of them has ever stood in the Lord's inner circle so they could see and hear what he has to say? Which of them have ever paid attention or listened to what he has said?

¹⁹ But just watch! The wrath of the Lord will come like a storm! Like a raging storm it will rage down on the heads of those who are wicked.

²⁰ The anger of the Lord will not turn back until he has fully carried out his intended purposes. In days to come you people will come to understand this clearly.

²¹ I did not send those prophets. Yet they were in a hurry to give their message. I did not tell them anything. Yet they prophesied anyway.

²² But if they had stood in my inner circle, they would have proclaimed my message to my people. They would have caused my people to turn from their

wicked ways and stop doing the evil things they are doing.

²³Do you people think that I am some local deity and not the transcendent God?" the Lord asks.

²⁴"Do you really think anyone can hide himself where I cannot see him?" the Lord asks. "Do you not know that I am everywhere?" the Lord asks.

²⁵The Lord says, "I have heard what those prophets who are prophesying lies in my name are saying. They are saying, 'I have had a dream! I have had a dream!'

²⁶Those prophets are just prophesying lies. They are prophesying the delusions of their own minds.

²⁷How long will they go on plotting to make my people forget who I am through the dreams they tell one another? That is just as bad as what their ancestors did when they forgot who I am by worshiping the god Baal.

²⁸Let the prophet who has had a dream go ahead and tell his dream. Let the person who has received my message report that message faithfully. What is

like straw cannot compare to what is like grain! I, the Lord, affirm it!

²⁹My message is like a fire that purges dross! It is like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces! I, the Lord, so affirm it!

³⁰So I, the Lord, affirm that I am opposed to those prophets who steal messages from one another that they claim are from me.

³¹I, the Lord, affirm that I am opposed to those prophets who are using their own tongues to declare, 'The Lord declares....'

³²I, the Lord, affirm that I am opposed to those prophets who dream up lies and report them. They are misleading my people with their reckless lies. I did not send them. I did not commission them. They are not helping these people at all. I, the Lord, affirm it!"

³³The Lord said to me, "Jeremiah, when one of these people, or a prophet, or a priest asks you, 'What burdensome message do you have from the Lord?' Tell them, 'You are the burden, and I will cast you away. I, the Lord, affirm it!

³⁴I will punish any prophet, priest, or other person who says "The Lord's

message is burdensome." I will punish both that person and his whole family.'"

³⁵ So I, Jeremiah, tell you, "Each of you people should say to his friend or his relative, 'How did the Lord answer? Or what did the Lord say?'

³⁶ You must no longer say that the Lord's message is burdensome. For what is 'burdensome' really pertains to what a person himself says. You are misrepresenting the words of our God, the living God, the Lord who rules over all.

³⁷ Each of you should merely ask the prophet, 'What answer did the Lord give you? Or what did the Lord say?'

³⁸ But just suppose you continue to say, 'The message of the Lord is burdensome.' Here is what the Lord says will happen: 'I sent word to you that you must not say, "The Lord's message is burdensome." But you used the words "The Lord's message is burdensome" anyway.

³⁹ So I will carry you far off and throw you away. I will send both you and the city I gave to you and to your ancestors out of my sight.

⁴⁰“I will bring on you lasting shame and lasting disgrace which will never be forgotten!”

24¹ The Lord showed me two baskets of figs sitting before his temple. This happened after King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon deported Jehoiakim’s son, King Jeconiah of Judah. He deported him and the leaders of Judah, along with the craftsmen and metal workers, and took them to Babylon.

² One basket had very good-looking figs in it. They looked like those that had ripened early. The other basket had very bad-looking figs in it, so bad they could not be eaten.

³ The Lord said to me, “What do you see, Jeremiah?” I answered, “I see figs. The good ones look very good. But the bad ones look very bad, so bad that they cannot be eaten.”

⁴ The Lord said to me,

⁵ “I, the Lord, the God of Israel, say: ‘The exiles whom I sent away from here to the land of Babylon are like those good figs. I consider them to be good.

⁶I will look after their welfare and will restore them to this land. There I will build them up and will not tear them down. I will plant them firmly in the land and will not uproot them.

⁷I will give them the desire to acknowledge that I am the Lord. I will be their God and they will be my people. For they will wholeheartedly return to me.'

⁸"I, the Lord, also solemnly assert: 'King Zedekiah of Judah, his officials, and the people who remain in Jerusalem or who have gone to live in Egypt are like those bad figs. I consider them to be just like those bad figs that are so bad they cannot be eaten.

⁹I will bring such disaster on them that all the kingdoms of the earth will be horrified. I will make them an object of reproach, a proverbial example of disaster. I will make them an object of ridicule, an example to be used in curses. That is how they will be remembered wherever I banish them.

¹⁰I will bring war, starvation, and disease on them until they are completely destroyed from the land I gave them and their ancestors.'"

25¹ In the fourth year that Jehoiakim son of Josiah was king of Judah, the Lord spoke to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah. (That was the same as the first year that Nebuchadnezzar was king of Babylon.)

² So the prophet Jeremiah spoke to all the people of Judah and to all the people who were living in Jerusalem.

³ "For the last twenty-three years, from the thirteenth year that Josiah son of Amon was ruling in Judah until now, the Lord has been speaking to me. I told you over and over again what he said. But you would not listen.

⁴ Over and over again the Lord has sent his servants the prophets to you. But you have not listened or paid attention.

⁵ He said through them, 'Each of you must turn from your wicked ways and stop doing the evil things you are doing. If you do, I will allow you to continue to live here in the land that I gave to you and your ancestors as a lasting possession.

⁶ Do not pay allegiance to other gods and worship and serve them. Do not

make me angry by the things that you do. Then I will not cause you any harm.'

⁷ So, now the Lord says, 'You have not listened to me. But you have made me angry by the things that you have done. Thus you have brought harm on yourselves.'

⁸ "Therefore, the Lord who rules over all says, 'You have not listened to what I said.'

⁹ So I, the Lord, affirm that I will send for all the peoples of the north and my servant, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants and all the nations that surround it. I will utterly destroy this land, its inhabitants, and all the nations that surround it and make them everlasting ruins. I will make them objects of horror and hissing scorn.

¹⁰ I will put an end to the sounds of joy and gladness, to the glad celebration of brides and grooms in these lands. I will put an end to the sound of people grinding meal. I will put an end to lamps shining in their houses.

¹¹ This whole area will become a desolate wasteland. These nations will

be subject to the king of Babylon for seventy years.'

¹²“‘But when the seventy years are over, I will punish the king of Babylon and his nation for their sins. I will make the land of Babylon an everlasting ruin. I, the Lord, affirm it!

¹³I will bring on that land everything that I said I would. I will bring on it everything that is written in this book. I will bring on it everything that Jeremiah has prophesied against all the nations.

¹⁴For many nations and great kings will make slaves of the king of Babylon and his nation too. I will repay them for all they have done!’”

¹⁵So the Lord, the God of Israel, spoke to me in a vision. “Take this cup from my hand. It is filled with the wine of my wrath. Take it and make the nations to whom I send you drink it.

¹⁶When they have drunk it, they will stagger to and fro and act insane. For I will send wars sweeping through them.”

¹⁷So I took the cup from the Lord’s hand. I made all the nations to whom he sent me drink the wine of his wrath.

¹⁸I made Jerusalem and the cities of Judah, its kings and its officials drink it. I did it so Judah would become a ruin. I did it so Judah, its kings, and its officials would become an object of horror and of hissing scorn, an example used in curses. Such is already becoming the case!

¹⁹I made all of these other people drink it: Pharaoh, king of Egypt; his attendants, his officials, his people,

²⁰the foreigners living in Egypt; all the kings of the land of Uz; all the kings of the land of the Philistines, the people of Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron, the people who had been left alive from Ashdod;

²¹all the people of Edom, Moab, Ammon;

²²all the kings of Tyre, all the kings of Sidon; all the kings of the coastlands along the sea;

²³the people of Dedan, Tema, Buz, all the desert people who cut their hair short at the temples;

²⁴all the kings of Arabia who live in the desert;

²⁵all the kings of Zimri; all the kings of Elam; all the kings of Media;

²⁶all the kings of the north, whether near or far from one another; and all the other kingdoms which are on the face of the earth. After all of them have drunk the wine of the Lord's wrath, the king of Babylon must drink it.

²⁷Then the Lord said to me, "Tell them that the Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, 'Drink this cup until you get drunk and vomit. Drink until you fall down and can't get up. For I will send wars sweeping through you.'

²⁸If they refuse to take the cup from your hand and drink it, tell them that the Lord who rules over all says 'You most certainly must drink it!

²⁹For take note, I am already beginning to bring disaster on the city that I call my own. So how can you possibly avoid being punished? You will not go unpunished! For I am proclaiming war against all who live on the earth. I, the Lord who rules over all, affirm it!

³⁰"Then, Jeremiah, make the following prophecy against them: 'Like a lion about to attack, the Lord will roar from the heights of heaven; from his holy dwelling on high he will roar loudly. He

will roar mightily against his land. He will shout in triumph like those stomping juice from the grapes against all those who live on the earth.

³¹ The sounds of battle will resound to the ends of the earth. For the Lord will bring charges against the nations. He will pass judgment on all humankind and will hand the wicked over to be killed in war.' The Lord so affirms it!

³² The Lord who rules over all says, 'Disaster will soon come on one nation after another. A mighty storm of military destruction is rising up from the distant parts of the earth.'

³³ Those who have been killed by the Lord at that time will be scattered from one end of the earth to the other. They will not be mourned over, gathered up, or buried. Their dead bodies will lie scattered over the ground like manure.

³⁴ Wail and cry out in anguish, you rulers! Roll in the dust, you who shepherd flocks of people! The time for you to be slaughtered has come. You will lie scattered and fallen like broken pieces of fine pottery.

³⁵The leaders will not be able to run away and hide. The shepherds of the flocks will not be able to escape.

³⁶Listen to the cries of anguish of the leaders. Listen to the wails of the shepherds of the flocks. They are wailing because the Lord is about to destroy their lands.

³⁷Their peaceful dwelling places will be laid waste by the fierce anger of the Lord.

³⁸The Lord is like a lion who has left his lair. So their lands will certainly be laid waste by the warfare of the oppressive nation and by the fierce anger of the Lord.”

26 ¹The Lord spoke to Jeremiah at the beginning of the reign of Josiah’s son, King Jehoiakim of Judah.

²The Lord said, “Go stand in the courtyard of the Lord’s temple. Speak out to all the people who are coming from the towns of Judah to worship in the Lord’s temple. Tell them everything I command you to tell them. Do not leave out a single word!

³Maybe they will pay attention and each of them will stop living the evil way

they do. If they do that, then I will forgo destroying them as I had intended to do because of the wicked things they have been doing.

⁴Tell them that the Lord says, 'You must obey me! You must live according to the way I have instructed you in my laws.

⁵You must pay attention to the exhortations of my servants the prophets. I have sent them to you over and over again. But you have not paid any attention to them.

⁶If you do not obey me, then I will do to this temple what I did to Shiloh. And I will make this city an example to be used in curses by people from all the nations on the earth.'"

⁷The priests, the prophets, and all the people heard Jeremiah say these things in the Lord's temple.

⁸Jeremiah had just barely finished saying all the Lord had commanded him to say to all the people. All at once some of the priests, the prophets, and the people grabbed him and shouted, "You deserve to die!

⁹How dare you claim the Lord's authority to prophesy such things! How dare you claim his authority to prophesy that this temple will become like Shiloh and that this city will become an uninhabited ruin!" Then all the people crowded around Jeremiah.

¹⁰However, some of the officials of Judah heard about what was happening and they rushed up to the Lord's temple from the royal palace. They set up court at the entrance of the New Gate of the Lord's temple.

¹¹Then the priests and the prophets made their charges before the officials and all the people. They said, "This man should be condemned to die because he prophesied against this city. You have heard him do so with your own ears."

¹²Then Jeremiah made his defense before all the officials and all the people. "The Lord sent me to prophesy everything you have heard me say against this temple and against this city.

¹³But correct the way you have been living and do what is right. Obey the Lord your God. If you do, the Lord will

forgo destroying you as he threatened he would.

¹⁴As to my case, I am in your power. Do to me what you deem fair and proper.

¹⁵But you should take careful note of this: If you put me to death, you will bring on yourselves and this city and those who live in it the guilt of murdering an innocent man. For the Lord has sent me to speak all this where you can hear it. That is the truth!"

¹⁶Then the officials and all the people rendered their verdict to the priests and the prophets. They said, "This man should not be condemned to die. For he has spoken to us under the authority of the Lord our God."

¹⁷Then some of the elders of Judah stepped forward and spoke to all the people gathered there. They said,

¹⁸"Micah from Moresheth prophesied during the time Hezekiah was king of Judah. He told all the people of Judah, 'The Lord who rules over all says, "Zion will become a plowed field. Jerusalem will become a pile of rubble. The temple mount will become a mere wooded ridge."'

¹⁹ King Hezekiah and all the people of Judah did not put him to death, did they? Did not Hezekiah show reverence for the Lord and seek the Lord's favor? Did not the Lord forgo destroying them as he threatened he would? But we are on the verge of bringing great disaster on ourselves."

²⁰ Now there was another man who prophesied as the Lord's representative against this city and this land just as Jeremiah did. His name was Uriah son of Shemaiah from Kiriath Jearim.

²¹ When the king and all his bodyguards and officials heard what he was prophesying, the king sought to have him executed. But Uriah found out about it and fled to Egypt out of fear.

²² However, King Jehoiakim sent some men to Egypt, including Elnathan son of Achbor,

²³ and they brought Uriah back from there. They took him to King Jehoiakim, who had him executed and had his body thrown into the burial place of the common people.

²⁴ However, Ahikam son of Shaphan used his influence to keep Jeremiah from

being handed over and executed by the people.

27 ¹The Lord spoke to Jeremiah early in the reign of Josiah's son, King Zedekiah of Judah.

²The Lord told me, "Make a yoke out of leather straps and wooden crossbars and put it on your neck.

³Use it to send messages to the kings of Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, and Sidon. Send them through the envoys who have come to Jerusalem to King Zedekiah of Judah.

⁴Charge them to give their masters a message from me. Tell them, 'The Lord God of Israel who rules over all says to give your masters this message.

⁵"I made the earth and the people and animals on it by my mighty power and great strength, and I give it to whomever I see fit.

⁶I have at this time placed all these nations of yours under the power of my servant, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. I have even made all the wild animals subject to him.

⁷All nations must serve him and his son and grandson until the time comes for

his own nation to fall. Then many nations and great kings will in turn subjugate Babylon.

⁸But suppose a nation or a kingdom will not be subject to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. Suppose it will not submit to the yoke of servitude to him. I, the Lord, affirm that I will punish that nation. I will use the king of Babylon to punish it with war, starvation, and disease until I have destroyed it.

⁹So do not listen to your prophets or to those who claim to predict the future by divination, by dreams, by consulting the dead, or by practicing magic. They keep telling you, 'You do not need to be subject to the king of Babylon.'

¹⁰Do not listen to them, because their prophecies are lies. Listening to them will only cause you to be taken far away from your native land. I will drive you out of your country and you will die in exile.

¹¹Things will go better for the nation that submits to the yoke of servitude to the king of Babylon and is subject to him. I will leave that nation in its native

land. Its people can continue to farm it and live in it. I, the Lord, affirm it!"

¹²I told King Zedekiah of Judah the same thing. I said, "Submit to the yoke of servitude to the king of Babylon. Be subject to him and his people. Then you will continue to live.

¹³There is no reason why you and your people should die in war or from starvation or disease! That's what the Lord says will happen to any nation that will not be subject to the king of Babylon.

¹⁴Do not listen to the prophets who are telling you that you do not need to serve the king of Babylon. For they are prophesying lies to you.

¹⁵For I, the Lord, affirm that I did not send them. They are prophesying lies to you. If you listen to them, I will drive you and the prophets who are prophesying lies out of the land and you will all die in exile."

¹⁶I also told the priests and all the people, "The Lord says, 'Do not listen to what your prophets are saying. They are prophesying to you that the valuable articles taken from the Lord's temple will be brought back from Babylon very

soon. But they are prophesying a lie to you.

¹⁷Do not listen to them. Be subject to the king of Babylon. Then you will continue to live. Why should this city be made a pile of rubble?"

¹⁸I also told them, "If they are really prophets and the Lord is speaking to them, let them pray earnestly to the Lord who rules over all. Let them plead with him not to let the valuable articles that are still left in the Lord's temple, in the royal palace, and in Jerusalem be taken away to Babylon.

¹⁹For the Lord who rules over all has already spoken about the two bronze pillars, the large bronze basin called 'The Sea,' and the movable bronze stands. He has already spoken about the rest of the valuable articles that are left in this city.

²⁰He has already spoken about these things that King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon did not take away when he carried Jehoiakim's son King Jeconiah of Judah and the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem away as captives.

²¹Indeed, the Lord God of Israel who rules over all has already spoken about

the valuable articles that are left in the Lord's temple, in the royal palace of Judah, and in Jerusalem.

²²He has said, 'They will be carried off to Babylon. They will remain there until it is time for me to show consideration for them again. Then I will bring them back and restore them to this place.' I, the Lord, affirm this!"

28¹The following events occurred in that same year, early in the reign of King Zedekiah of Judah. To be more precise, it was the fifth month of the fourth year of his reign. The prophet Hananiah son of Azzur, who was from Gibeon, spoke to Jeremiah in the Lord's temple in the presence of the priests and all the people.

²"The Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, 'I will break the yoke of servitude to the king of Babylon.

³Before two years are over, I will bring back to this place everything that King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon took from it and carried away to Babylon.

⁴I will also bring back to this place Jehoiakim's son King Jeconiah of Judah and all the exiles who were taken to

Babylon.' Indeed, the Lord affirms, 'I will break the yoke of servitude to the king of Babylon.'"

⁵Then the prophet Jeremiah responded to the prophet Hananiah in the presence of the priests and all the people who were standing in the Lord's temple.

⁶The prophet Jeremiah said, "Amen! May the Lord do all this! May the Lord make your prophecy come true! May he bring back to this place from Babylon all the valuable articles taken from the Lord's temple and the people who were carried into exile.

⁷But listen to what I say to you and to all these people.

⁸From earliest times, the prophets who preceded you and me invariably prophesied war, disaster, and plagues against many countries and great kingdoms.

⁹So if a prophet prophesied peace and prosperity, it was only known that the Lord truly sent him when what he prophesied came true."

¹⁰The prophet Hananiah then took the yoke off the prophet Jeremiah's neck and broke it.

¹¹ Then he spoke up in the presence of all the people. "The Lord says, 'In the same way I will break the yoke of servitude of all the nations to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon before two years are over.'" After he heard this, the prophet Jeremiah departed and went on his way.

¹² But shortly after the prophet Hananiah had broken the yoke off the prophet Jeremiah's neck, the Lord spoke to Jeremiah.

¹³ "Go and tell Hananiah that the Lord says, 'You have indeed broken the wooden yoke. But you have only succeeded in replacing it with an iron one!

¹⁴ For the Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, "I have put an irresistible yoke of servitude on all these nations so they will serve King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. And they will indeed serve him. I have even given him control over the wild animals."'"

¹⁵ Then the prophet Jeremiah told the prophet Hananiah, "Listen, Hananiah! The Lord did not send you! You are making these people trust in a lie!

¹⁶So the Lord says, 'I will most assuredly remove you from the face of the earth. You will die this very year because you have counseled rebellion against the Lord.'

¹⁷In the seventh month of that very same year the prophet Hananiah died.

29¹The prophet Jeremiah sent a letter to the exiles Nebuchadnezzar had carried off from Jerusalem to Babylon. It was addressed to the elders who were left among the exiles, to the priests, to the prophets, and to all the other people who were exiled in Babylon.

²He sent it after King Jeconiah, the queen mother, the palace officials, the leaders of Judah and Jerusalem, the craftsmen, and the metal workers had been exiled from Jerusalem.

³He sent it with Elasah son of Shaphan and Gemariah son of Hilkiyah. King Zedekiah of Judah had sent these men to Babylon to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. The letter said:

⁴"The Lord God of Israel who rules over all says to all those he sent into exile to Babylon from Jerusalem,

⁵ 'Build houses and settle down. Plant gardens and eat what they produce.

⁶ Marry and have sons and daughters. Find wives for your sons and allow your daughters get married so that they too can have sons and daughters. Grow in number; do not dwindle away.

⁷ Work to see that the city where I sent you as exiles enjoys peace and prosperity. Pray to the Lord for it. For as it prospers you will prosper.'

⁸ "For the Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, 'Do not let the prophets or those among you who claim to be able to predict the future by divination deceive you. And do not pay any attention to the dreams that you are encouraging them to dream.

⁹ They are prophesying lies to you and claiming my authority to do so. But I did not send them. I, the Lord, affirm it!'

¹⁰ "For the Lord says, 'Only when the seventy years of Babylonian rule are over will I again take up consideration for you. Then I will fulfill my gracious promise to you and restore you to your homeland.

¹¹ For I know what I have planned for you,' says the Lord. 'I have plans to prosper you, not to harm you. I have plans to give you a future filled with hope.

¹² When you call out to me and come to me in prayer, I will hear your prayers.

¹³ When you seek me in prayer and worship, you will find me available to you. If you seek me with all your heart and soul,

¹⁴ I will make myself available to you,' says the Lord. 'Then I will reverse your plight and will regather you from all the nations and all the places where I have exiled you,' says the Lord. 'I will bring you back to the place from which I exiled you.'

¹⁵ "You say, 'The Lord has raised up prophets of good news for us here in Babylon.'

¹⁶ But just listen to what the Lord has to say about the king who occupies David's throne and all your fellow countrymen who are still living in this city of Jerusalem and were not carried off into exile with you.

¹⁷ The Lord who rules over all says, 'I will bring war, starvation, and disease on them. I will treat them like figs that are so rotten they cannot be eaten.

¹⁸ I will chase after them with war, starvation, and disease. I will make all the kingdoms of the earth horrified at what happens to them. I will make them examples of those who are cursed, objects of horror, hissing scorn, and ridicule among all the nations where I exile them.

¹⁹ For they have not paid attention to what I said to them through my servants the prophets whom I sent to them over and over again,' says the Lord. 'And you exiles have not paid any attention to them either,' says the Lord.

²⁰ 'So pay attention to what I, the Lord, have said, all you exiles whom I have sent to Babylon from Jerusalem.'

²¹ "The Lord God of Israel who rules over all also has something to say about Ahab son of Kolaiah and Zedekiah son of Maaseiah, who are prophesying lies to you and claiming my authority to do so. 'I will hand them over to King

Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and he will execute them before your very eyes.

²²And all the exiles of Judah who are in Babylon will use them as examples when they put a curse on anyone. They will say, "May the Lord treat you like Zedekiah and Ahab whom the king of Babylon roasted to death in the fire!"

²³This will happen to them because they have done what is shameful in Israel. They have committed adultery with their neighbors' wives and have spoken lies while claiming my authority. They have spoken words that I did not command them to speak. I know what they have done. I have been a witness to it,' says the Lord."

²⁴The Lord told Jeremiah, "Tell Shemaiah the Nehelamite

²⁵that the Lord God of Israel who rules over all has a message for him. Tell him, 'On your own initiative you sent a letter to the priest Zephaniah son of Maaseiah and to all the other priests and to all the people in Jerusalem. In your letter you said to Zephaniah,

²⁶"The Lord has made you priest in place of Jehoiada. He has put you in

charge in the Lord's temple of controlling any lunatic who pretends to be a prophet. And it is your duty to put any such person in the stocks with an iron collar around his neck.

²⁷ You should have reprimanded Jeremiah from Anathoth who is pretending to be a prophet among you!

²⁸ For he has even sent a message to us here in Babylon. He wrote and told us, "You will be there a long time. Build houses and settle down. Plant gardens and eat what they produce.""

²⁹ Zephaniah the priest read that letter to the prophet Jeremiah.

³⁰ Then the Lord spoke to Jeremiah.

³¹ "Send a message to all the exiles in Babylon. Tell them, 'The Lord has spoken about Shemaiah the Nehelamite. "Shemaiah has spoken to you as a prophet even though I did not send him. He is making you trust in a lie.

³² Because he has done this," the Lord says, "I will punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite and his whole family. There will not be any of them left to experience the good things that I will do for my

people. I, the Lord, affirm it! For he counseled rebellion against the Lord."'"

30¹ The Lord spoke to Jeremiah.
² "The Lord God of Israel says, 'Write everything that I am about to tell you in a scroll.

³ For I, the Lord, affirm that the time will come when I will reverse the plight of my people, Israel and Judah,' says the Lord. 'I will bring them back to the land I gave their ancestors and they will take possession of it once again.'"

⁴ So here is what the Lord has to say about Israel and Judah.

⁵ Yes, here is what he says: "You hear cries of panic and of terror; there is no peace in sight.

⁶ Ask yourselves this and consider it carefully: Have you ever seen a man give birth to a baby? Why then do I see all these strong men grabbing their stomachs in pain like a woman giving birth? And why do their faces turn so deathly pale?

⁷ Alas, what a terrible time of trouble it is! There has never been any like it. It is a time of trouble for the descendants of

Jacob, but some of them will be rescued out of it.

⁸When the time for them to be rescued comes," says the Lord who rules over all, "I will rescue you from foreign subjugation. I will deliver you from captivity. Foreigners will then no longer subjugate them.

⁹But they will be subject to the Lord their God and to the Davidic ruler whom I will raise up as king over them.

¹⁰So I, the Lord, tell you not to be afraid, you descendants of Jacob, my servants. Do not be terrified, people of Israel. For I will rescue you and your descendants from a faraway land where you are captives. The descendants of Jacob will return to their land and enjoy peace. They will be secure and no one will terrify them.

¹¹For I, the Lord, affirm that I will be with you and will rescue you. I will completely destroy all the nations where I scattered you. But I will not completely destroy you. I will indeed discipline you, but only in due measure. I will not allow you to go entirely unpunished."

¹²Moreover, the Lord says to the people of Zion, "Your injuries are incurable; your wounds are severe.

¹³There is no one to plead your cause. There are no remedies for your wounds. There is no healing for you.

¹⁴All your allies have abandoned you. They no longer have any concern for you. For I have attacked you like an enemy would. I have chastened you cruelly. For your wickedness is so great and your sin is so much.

¹⁵Why do you complain about your injuries, that your pain is incurable? I have done all this to you because your wickedness is so great and your sin is so much.

¹⁶But all who destroyed you will be destroyed. All your enemies will go into exile. Those who plundered you will be plundered. I will cause those who pillaged you to be pillaged.

¹⁷Yes, I will restore you to health. I will heal your wounds. I, the Lord, affirm it! For you have been called an outcast, Zion, whom no one cares for."

¹⁸The Lord says, "I will restore the ruined houses of the descendants of

Jacob. I will show compassion on their ruined homes. Every city will be rebuilt on its former ruins. Every fortified dwelling will occupy its traditional site.

¹⁹Out of those places you will hear songs of thanksgiving and the sounds of laughter and merriment. I will increase their number and they will not dwindle away. I will bring them honor and they will no longer be despised.

²⁰The descendants of Jacob will enjoy their former privileges. Their community will be reestablished in my favor and I will punish all who try to oppress them.

²¹One of their own people will be their leader. Their ruler will come from their own number. I will invite him to approach me, and he will do so. For no one would dare approach me on his own. I, the Lord, affirm it!

²²Then you will again be my people and I will be your God.

²³Just watch! The wrath of the Lord will come like a storm. Like a raging storm it will rage down on the heads of those who are wicked.

²⁴The anger of the Lord will not turn back until he has fully carried out his

intended purposes. In days to come you will come to understand this.

31 ¹At that time I will be the God of all the clans of Israel and they will be my people. I, the Lord, affirm it!"

²The Lord says, "The people of Israel who survived death at the hands of the enemy will find favor in the wilderness as they journey to find rest for themselves.

³In a far-off land the Lord will manifest himself to them. He will say to them, 'I have loved you with an everlasting love. That is why I have continued to be faithful to you.

⁴I will rebuild you, my dear children Israel, so that you will once again be built up. Once again you will take up the tambourine and join in the happy throng of dancers.

⁵Once again you will plant vineyards on the hills of Samaria. Those who plant them will once again enjoy their fruit.

⁶Yes, a time is coming when watchmen will call out on the mountains of Ephraim, "Come! Let us go to Zion to worship the Lord our God!"

⁷Moreover, the Lord says, "Sing for joy for the descendants of Jacob. Utter glad

shouts for that foremost of the nations. Make your praises heard. Then say, 'Lord, rescue your people. Deliver those of Israel who remain alive.'

⁸Then I will reply, 'I will bring them back from the land of the north. I will gather them in from the distant parts of the earth. Blind and lame people will come with them, so will pregnant women and women about to give birth. A vast throng of people will come back here.

⁹They will come back shedding tears of contrition. I will bring them back praying prayers of repentance. I will lead them besides streams of water, along smooth paths where they will never stumble. I will do this because I am Israel's father; Ephraim is my firstborn son.'"

¹⁰Hear what the Lord has to say, O nations. Proclaim it in the faraway lands along the sea. Say, "The one who scattered Israel will regather them. He will watch over his people like a shepherd watches over his flock."

¹¹For the Lord will rescue the descendants of Jacob. He will secure their release from those who had overpowered them.

¹²They will come and shout for joy on Mount Zion. They will be radiant with joy over the good things the Lord provides, the grain, the fresh wine, the olive oil, the young sheep and calves he has given to them. They will be like a well-watered garden and will not grow faint or weary any more.

¹³The Lord says, "At that time young women will dance and be glad. Young men and old men will rejoice. I will turn their grief into gladness. I will give them comfort and joy in place of their sorrow.

¹⁴I will provide the priests with abundant provisions. My people will be filled to the full with the good things I provide."

¹⁵The Lord says, "A sound is heard in Ramah, a sound of crying in bitter grief. It is the sound of Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because her children are gone."

¹⁶The Lord says to her, "Stop crying! Do not shed any more tears! For your heartfelt repentance will be rewarded. Your children will return from the land of the enemy. I, the Lord, affirm it!

¹⁷ Indeed, there is hope for your posterity. Your children will return to their own territory. I, the Lord, affirm it!

¹⁸ I have indeed heard the people of Israel say mournfully, 'We were like a calf untrained to the yoke. You disciplined us and we learned from it. Let us come back to you and we will do so, for you are the Lord our God.

¹⁹ For after we turned away from you we repented. After we came to our senses we beat our breasts in sorrow. We are ashamed and humiliated because of the disgraceful things we did previously.'

²⁰ Indeed, the people of Israel are my dear children. They are the children I take delight in. For even though I must often rebuke them, I still remember them with fondness. So I am deeply moved with pity for them and will surely have compassion on them. I, the Lord, affirm it!

²¹ I will say, 'My dear children of Israel, keep in mind the road you took when you were carried off. Mark off in your minds the landmarks. Make a mental note of telltale signs marking the way

back. Return, my dear children of Israel. Return to these cities of yours.

²²How long will you vacillate, you who were once like an unfaithful daughter? For I, the Lord, promise to bring about something new on the earth, something as unique as a woman protecting a man!"

²³The Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, "I will restore the people of Judah to their land and to their towns. When I do, they will again say of Jerusalem, 'May the Lord bless you, you holy mountain, the place where righteousness dwells.'

²⁴The land of Judah will be inhabited by people who live in its towns as well as by farmers and shepherds with their flocks.

²⁵I will fully satisfy the needs of those who are weary and fully refresh the souls of those who are faint.

²⁶Then they will say, 'Under these conditions I can enjoy sweet sleep when I wake up and look around.'"

²⁷"Indeed, a time is coming," says the Lord, "when I will cause people and animals to sprout up in the lands of Israel and Judah.

²⁸In the past I saw to it that they were uprooted and torn down, that they were destroyed and demolished. But now I will see to it that they are built up and firmly planted. I, the Lord, affirm it!"

²⁹"When that time comes, people will no longer say, 'The parents have eaten sour grapes, but the children's teeth have grown numb.'

³⁰Rather, each person will die for his own sins. The teeth of the person who eats the sour grapes will themselves grow numb.

³¹"Indeed, a time is coming," says the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and Judah.

³²It will not be like the old covenant that I made with their ancestors when I delivered them from Egypt. For they violated that covenant, even though I was like a faithful husband to them," says the Lord.

³³"But I will make a new covenant with the whole nation of Israel after I plant them back in the land," says the Lord. "I will put my law within them and write it on their hearts and minds. I will be their God and they will be my people.

³⁴ “People will no longer need to teach their neighbors and relatives to know me. For all of them, from the least important to the most important, will know me,” says the Lord. “For I will forgive their sin and will no longer call to mind the wrong they have done.”

³⁵ The Lord has made a promise to Israel. He promises it as the one who fixed the sun to give light by day and the moon and stars to give light by night. He promises it as the one who stirs up the sea so that its waves roll. He promises it as the one who is known as the Lord who rules over all.

³⁶ The Lord affirms, “The descendants of Israel will not cease forever to be a nation in my sight. That could only happen if the fixed ordering of the heavenly lights were to cease to operate before me.”

³⁷ The Lord says, “I will not reject all the descendants of Israel because of all that they have done. That could only happen if the heavens above could be measured or the foundations of the earth below could all be explored,” says the Lord.

³⁸“Indeed a time is coming,” says the Lord, “when the city of Jerusalem will be rebuilt as my special city. It will be built from the Tower of Hananel westward to the Corner Gate.

³⁹The boundary line will extend beyond that, straight west from there to the Hill of Gareb and then turn southward to Goah.

⁴⁰The whole valley where dead bodies and sacrificial ashes are thrown and all the terraced fields out to the Kidron Valley on the east as far north as the Horse Gate will be included within this city that is sacred to the Lord. The city will never again be torn down or destroyed.”

32¹In the tenth year that Zedekiah was ruling over Judah the Lord spoke to Jeremiah. That was the same as the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar.

²Now at that time, the armies of the king of Babylon were besieging Jerusalem. The prophet Jeremiah was confined in the courtyard of the guardhouse attached to the royal palace of Judah.

³For King Zedekiah had confined Jeremiah there after he had reproved him for prophesying as he did. He had asked Jeremiah, "Why do you keep prophesying these things? Why do you keep saying that the Lord says, 'I will hand this city over to the king of Babylon? I will let him capture it.

⁴King Zedekiah of Judah will not escape from the Babylonians. He will certainly be handed over to the king of Babylon. He must answer personally to the king of Babylon and confront him face to face.

⁵Zedekiah will be carried off to Babylon and will remain there until I have fully dealt with him. I, the Lord, affirm it! Even if you continue to fight against the Babylonians, you cannot win.'"

⁶So now, Jeremiah said, "The Lord told me,

⁷'Hanamel, the son of your uncle Shallum, will come to you soon. He will say to you, "Buy my field at Anathoth because you are entitled as my closest relative to buy it.'"

⁸Now it happened just as the Lord had said! My cousin Hanamel came to me in the courtyard of the guardhouse. He said

to me, 'Buy my field which is at Anathoth in the territory of the tribe of Benjamin. Buy it for yourself since you are entitled as my closest relative to take possession of it for yourself.' When this happened, I recognized that the Lord had indeed spoken to me.

⁹So I bought the field at Anathoth from my cousin Hanamel. I weighed out seven ounces of silver and gave it to him to pay for it.

¹⁰I signed the deed of purchase, sealed it, and had some men serve as witnesses to the purchase. I weighed out the silver for him on a scale.

¹¹There were two copies of the deed of purchase. One was sealed and contained the order of transfer and the conditions of purchase. The other was left unsealed.

¹²I took both copies of the deed of purchase and gave them to Baruch son of Neriah, the son of Mahseiah. I gave them to him in the presence of my cousin Hanamel, the witnesses who had signed the deed of purchase, and all the Judeans who were housed in the courtyard of the guardhouse.

¹³In the presence of all these people I instructed Baruch,

¹⁴'The Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, "Take these documents, both the sealed copy of the deed of purchase and the unsealed copy. Put them in a clay jar so that they may be preserved for a long time to come.'"

¹⁵For the Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, "Houses, fields, and vineyards will again be bought in this land.'"

¹⁶"After I had given the copies of the deed of purchase to Baruch son of Neriah, I prayed to the Lord,

¹⁷'Oh, Lord God, you did indeed make heaven and earth by your mighty power and great strength. Nothing is too hard for you!

¹⁸You show unfailing love to thousands. But you also punish children for the sins of their parents. You are the great and powerful God who is known as the Lord who rules over all.

¹⁹You plan great things and you do mighty deeds. You see everything people do. You reward each of them for the way they live and for the things they do.

²⁰You did miracles and amazing deeds in the land of Egypt which have had lasting effect. By this means you gained both in Israel and among humankind a renown that lasts to this day.

²¹You used your mighty power and your great strength to perform miracles and amazing deeds and to bring great terror on the Egyptians. By this means you brought your people Israel out of the land of Egypt.

²²You kept the promise that you swore on oath to their ancestors. You gave them a land flowing with milk and honey.

²³But when they came in and took possession of it, they did not obey you or live as you had instructed them. They did not do anything that you commanded them to do. So you brought all this disaster on them.

²⁴Even now siege ramps have been built up around the city in order to capture it. War, starvation, and disease are sure to make the city fall into the hands of the Babylonians who are attacking it. Lord, you threatened that this would happen. Now you can see that it is already taking place.

²⁵The city is sure to fall into the hands of the Babylonians. Yet, in spite of this, you, Lord God, have said to me, "Buy that field with silver and have the transaction legally witnessed."'"

²⁶The Lord answered Jeremiah.

²⁷"I am the Lord, the God of all humankind. There is, indeed, nothing too difficult for me.

²⁸Therefore I, the Lord, say: 'I will indeed hand this city over to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon and the Babylonian army. They will capture it.

²⁹The Babylonian soldiers that are attacking this city will break into it and set it on fire. They will burn it down along with the houses where people have made me angry by offering sacrifices to the god Baal and by pouring out drink offerings to other gods on their rooftops.

³⁰This will happen because the people of Israel and Judah have repeatedly done what displeases me from their earliest history until now and because they have repeatedly made me angry by the things they have done. I, the Lord, affirm it!

³¹This will happen because the people of this city have aroused my anger and

my wrath since the time they built it until now. They have made me so angry that I am determined to remove it from my sight.

³²I am determined to do so because the people of Israel and Judah have made me angry with all their wickedness – they, their kings, their officials, their priests, their prophets, and especially the people of Judah and the citizens of Jerusalem have done this wickedness.

³³They have turned away from me instead of turning to me. I tried over and over again to instruct them, but they did not listen and respond to correction.

³⁴They set up their disgusting idols in the temple which I have claimed for my own and defiled it.

³⁵They built places of worship for the god Baal in the Valley of Ben Hinnom so that they could sacrifice their sons and daughters to the god Molech. Such a disgusting practice was not something I commanded them to do! It never even entered my mind to command them to do such a thing! So Judah is certainly liable for punishment.'

³⁶ "You and your people are right in saying, 'War, starvation, and disease are sure to make this city fall into the hands of the king of Babylon.' But now I, the Lord God of Israel, have something further to say about this city:

³⁷ 'I will certainly regather my people from all the countries where I will have exiled them in my anger, fury, and great wrath. I will bring them back to this place and allow them to live here in safety.

³⁸ They will be my people, and I will be their God.

³⁹ I will give them a single-minded purpose to live in a way that always shows respect for me. They will want to do that for their own good and the good of the children who descend from them.

⁴⁰ I will make a lasting covenant with them that I will never stop doing good to them. I will fill their hearts and minds with respect for me so that they will never again turn away from me.

⁴¹ I will take delight in doing good to them. I will faithfully and wholeheartedly plant them firmly in the land.'

⁴² "For I, the Lord, say: 'I will surely bring on these people all the good

fortune that I am hereby promising them. I will be just as sure to do that as I have been in bringing all this great disaster on them.

⁴³You and your people are saying that this land will become desolate, uninhabited by either people or animals. You are saying that it will be handed over to the Babylonians. But fields will again be bought in this land.

⁴⁴Fields will again be bought with silver, and deeds of purchase signed, sealed, and witnessed. This will happen in the territory of Benjamin, the villages surrounding Jerusalem, the towns in Judah, the southern hill country, the western foothills, and southern Judah. For I will restore them to their land. I, the Lord, affirm it!"

33¹The Lord spoke to Jeremiah a second time while he was still confined in the courtyard of the guardhouse.

²"I, the Lord, do these things. I, the Lord, form the plan to bring them about. I am known as the Lord. I say to you,

³'Call on me in prayer and I will answer you. I will show you great and

mysterious things which you still do not know about.'

⁴For I, the Lord God of Israel, have something more to say about the houses in this city and the royal buildings which have been torn down for defenses against the siege ramps and military incursions of the Babylonians:

⁵The defenders of the city will go out and fight with the Babylonians. But they will only fill those houses and buildings with the dead bodies of the people that I will kill in my anger and my wrath. That will happen because I have decided to turn my back on this city on account of the wicked things they have done.

⁶But I will most surely heal the wounds of this city and restore it and its people to health. I will show them abundant peace and security.

⁷I will restore Judah and Israel and will rebuild them as they were in days of old.

⁸I will purify them from all the sin that they committed against me. I will forgive all their sins which they committed in rebelling against me.

⁹All the nations will hear about all the good things which I will do to them. This

city will bring me fame, honor, and praise before them for the joy that I bring it. The nations will tremble in awe at all the peace and prosperity that I will provide for it.'

¹⁰ "I, the Lord, say: 'You and your people are saying about this place, "It lies in ruins. There are no people or animals in it." That is true. The towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem will soon be desolate, uninhabited either by people or by animals. But happy sounds will again be heard in these places.

¹¹ Once again there will be sounds of joy and gladness and the glad celebrations of brides and grooms. Once again people will bring their thank offerings to the temple of the Lord and will say, "Give thanks to the Lord who rules over all. For the Lord is good and his unfailing love lasts forever." For I, the Lord, affirm that I will restore the land to what it was in days of old.'

¹² "I, the Lord who rules over all, say: 'This place will indeed lie in ruins. There will be no people or animals in it. But there will again be in it and in its towns

sheepfolds where shepherds can rest their sheep.

¹³I, the Lord, say that shepherds will once again count their sheep as they pass into the fold. They will do this in all the towns in the southern hill country, the western foothills, the southern hill country, the territory of Benjamin, the villages surrounding Jerusalem, and the towns of Judah.'

¹⁴"I, the Lord, affirm: 'The time will certainly come when I will fulfill my gracious promise concerning the nations of Israel and Judah.

¹⁵In those days and at that time I will raise up for them a righteous descendant of David. "He will do what is just and right in the land.

¹⁶Under his rule Judah will enjoy safety and Jerusalem will live in security. At that time Jerusalem will be called "The Lord has provided us with justice."

¹⁷For I, the Lord, promise: "David will never lack a successor to occupy the throne over the nation of Israel.

¹⁸Nor will the Levitical priests ever lack someone to stand before me and continually offer up burnt offerings,

sacrifice cereal offerings, and offer the other sacrifices."'"

¹⁹The Lord spoke further to Jeremiah.

²⁰"I, Lord, make the following promise: 'I have made a covenant with the day and with the night that they will always come at their proper times. Only if you people could break that covenant

²¹could my covenant with my servant David and my covenant with the Levites ever be broken. So David will by all means always have a descendant to occupy his throne as king and the Levites will by all means always have priests who will minister before me.

²²I will make the children who follow one another in the line of my servant David very numerous. I will also make the Levites who minister before me very numerous. I will make them all as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sands which are on the seashore.'" "

²³The Lord spoke still further to Jeremiah.

²⁴"You have surely noticed what these people are saying, haven't you? They are saying, 'The Lord has rejected the two families of Israel and Judah that he

chose.’ So they have little regard that my people will ever again be a nation.

²⁵ But I, the Lord, make the following promise: I have made a covenant governing the coming of day and night. I have established the fixed laws governing heaven and earth.

²⁶ Just as surely as I have done this, so surely will I never reject the descendants of Jacob. Nor will I ever refuse to choose one of my servant David’s descendants to rule over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Indeed, I will restore them and show mercy to them.”

34¹ The Lord spoke to Jeremiah while King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon was attacking Jerusalem and the towns around it with a large army. This army consisted of troops from his own army and from the kingdoms and peoples of the lands under his dominion.

² The Lord God of Israel told Jeremiah to go and give King Zedekiah of Judah a message. He told Jeremiah to tell him, “The Lord says, ‘I am going to hand this city over to the king of Babylon and he will burn it down.

³You yourself will not escape his clutches, but will certainly be captured and handed over to him. You must confront the king of Babylon face to face and answer to him personally. Then you must go to Babylon.

⁴However, listen to what I, the Lord, promise you, King Zedekiah of Judah. I, the Lord, promise that you will not die in battle or be executed.

⁵You will die a peaceful death. They will burn incense at your burial just as they did at the burial of your ancestors, the former kings who preceded you. They will mourn for you, saying, "Poor, poor master!" Indeed, you have my own word on this. I, the Lord, affirm it!"

⁶The prophet Jeremiah told all this to King Zedekiah of Judah in Jerusalem.

⁷He did this while the army of the king of Babylon was attacking Jerusalem and the cities of Lachish and Azekah. He was attacking these cities because they were the only fortified cities of Judah which were still holding out.

⁸The Lord spoke to Jeremiah after King Zedekiah had made a covenant with all

the people in Jerusalem to grant their slaves their freedom.

⁹Everyone was supposed to free their male and female Hebrew slaves. No one was supposed to keep a fellow Judean enslaved.

¹⁰All the people and their leaders had agreed to this. They had agreed to free their male and female slaves and not keep them enslaved any longer. They originally complied with the covenant and freed them.

¹¹But later they had changed their minds. They had taken back their male and female slaves that they had freed and forced them to be slaves again.

¹²That was when the Lord spoke to Jeremiah,

¹³"The Lord God of Israel has a message for you. 'I made a covenant with your ancestors when I brought them out of Egypt where they had been slaves. It stipulated,

¹⁴"Every seven years each of you must free any fellow Hebrews who have sold themselves to you. After they have served you for six years, you shall set

them free." But your ancestors did not obey me or pay any attention to me.

¹⁵Recently, however, you yourselves showed a change of heart and did what is pleasing to me. You granted your fellow countrymen their freedom and you made a covenant to that effect in my presence in the house that I have claimed for my own.

¹⁶But then you turned right around and showed that you did not honor me. Each of you took back your male and female slaves whom you had freed as they desired, and you forced them to be your slaves again.

¹⁷So I, the Lord, say: "You have not really obeyed me and granted freedom to your neighbor and fellow countryman. Therefore, I will grant you freedom, the freedom to die in war, or by starvation or disease. I, the Lord, affirm it! I will make all the kingdoms of the earth horrified at what happens to you.

¹⁸I will punish those people who have violated their covenant with me. I will make them like the calf they cut in two and passed between its pieces. I will do so because they did not keep the

terms of the covenant they made in my presence.

¹⁹I will punish the leaders of Judah and Jerusalem, the court officials, the priests, and all the other people of the land who passed between the pieces of the calf.

²⁰I will hand them over to their enemies who want to kill them. Their dead bodies will become food for the birds and the wild animals.

²¹I will also hand King Zedekiah of Judah and his officials over to their enemies who want to kill them. I will hand them over to the army of the king of Babylon, even though they have temporarily withdrawn from attacking you.

²²For I, the Lord, affirm that I will soon give the order and bring them back to this city. They will fight against it and capture it and burn it down. I will also make the towns of Judah desolate so that there will be no one living in them."'''

35¹The Lord spoke to Jeremiah when Jehoiakim son of Josiah was ruling over Judah.

² "Go to the Rechabite community. Invite them to come into one of the side rooms of the Lord's temple and offer them some wine to drink."

³ So I went and got Jaazaniah son of Jeremiah the grandson of Habazziniah, his brothers, all his sons, and all the rest of the Rechabite community.

⁴ I took them to the Lord's temple. I took them into the room where the disciples of the prophet Hanan son of Igdaliah stayed. That room was next to the one where the temple officers stayed and above the room where Maaseiah son of Shallum, one of the doorkeepers of the temple, stayed.

⁵ Then I set cups and pitchers full of wine in front of the members of the Rechabite community and said to them, "Have some wine."

⁶ But they answered, "We do not drink wine because our ancestor Jonadab son of Rechab commanded us not to. He told us, 'You and your children must never drink wine.'

⁷ Do not build houses. Do not plant crops. Do not plant a vineyard or own one. Live in tents all your lives. If you do

these things you will live a long time in the land that you wander about on.'

⁸We and our wives and our sons and daughters have obeyed everything our ancestor Jonadab commanded us. We have never drunk wine.

⁹We have not built any houses to live in. We do not own any vineyards, fields, or crops.

¹⁰We have lived in tents. We have obeyed our ancestor Jonadab and done exactly as he commanded us.

¹¹But when King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon invaded the land we said, 'Let's get up and go to Jerusalem to get away from the Babylonian and Aramean armies.' That is why we are staying here in Jerusalem."

¹²Then the Lord spoke to Jeremiah.

¹³The Lord God of Israel who rules over all told him, "Go and speak to the people of Judah and the citizens of Jerusalem. Tell them, 'I, the Lord, say: "You must learn a lesson from this about obeying what I say!

¹⁴Jonadab son of Rechab ordered his descendants not to drink wine. His orders have been carried out. To this

day his descendants have drunk no wine because they have obeyed what their ancestor commanded them. But I have spoken to you over and over again, but you have not obeyed me!

¹⁵I sent all my servants the prophets to warn you over and over again. They said, "Every one of you, stop doing the evil things you have been doing and do what is right. Do not pay allegiance to other gods and worship them. Then you can continue to live in this land that I gave to you and your ancestors." But you did not pay any attention or listen to me.

¹⁶Yes, the descendants of Jonadab son of Rechab have carried out the orders that their ancestor gave them. But you people have not obeyed me!

¹⁷So I, the Lord, the God who rules over all, the God of Israel, say: "I will soon bring on Judah and all the citizens of Jerusalem all the disaster that I threatened to bring on them. I will do this because I spoke to them but they did not listen. I called out to them but they did not answer.""

¹⁸Then Jeremiah spoke to the Rechabite community, "The Lord God of Israel who

rules over all says, 'You have obeyed the orders of your ancestor Jonadab. You have followed all his instructions. You have done exactly as he commanded you.'

¹⁹So the Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, 'Jonadab son of Rechab will never lack a male descendant to serve me.'"

36¹ The Lord spoke to Jeremiah in the fourth year that Jehoiakim son of Josiah was ruling over Judah.

²"Get a scroll. Write on it everything I have told you to say about Israel, Judah, and all the other nations since I began to speak to you in the reign of Josiah until now.

³Perhaps when the people of Judah hear about all the disaster I intend to bring on them, they will all stop doing the evil things they have been doing. If they do, I will forgive their sins and the wicked things they have done."

⁴So Jeremiah summoned Baruch son of Neriah. Then Jeremiah dictated to Baruch everything the Lord had told him to say and Baruch wrote it all down in a scroll.

⁵Then Jeremiah told Baruch, "I am no longer allowed to go into the Lord's temple.

⁶So you go there the next time all the people of Judah come in from their towns to fast in the Lord's temple. Read out loud where all of them can hear you what I told you the Lord said, which you wrote in the scroll.

⁷Perhaps then they will ask the Lord for mercy and will all stop doing the evil things they have been doing. For the Lord has threatened to bring great anger and wrath against these people."

⁸So Baruch son of Neriah did exactly what the prophet Jeremiah had told him to do. He read what the Lord had said from the scroll in the temple of the Lord.

⁹All the people living in Jerusalem and all the people who came into Jerusalem from the towns of Judah came to observe a fast before the Lord. The fast took place in the ninth month of the fifth year that Jehoiakim son of Josiah was ruling over Judah.

¹⁰At that time Baruch went into the temple of the Lord. He stood in the entrance of the room of Gemariah the

son of Shaphan who had been the royal secretary. That room was in the upper court near the entrance of the New Gate. There, where all the people could hear him, he read from the scroll what Jeremiah had said.

¹¹ Micaiah, who was the son of Gemariah and the grandson of Shaphan, heard Baruch read from the scroll everything the Lord had said.

¹² He went down to the chamber of the royal secretary in the king's palace and found all the court officials in session there. Elishama the royal secretary, Delaiah son of Shemaiah, Elnathan son of Achbor, Gemariah son of Shaphan, Zedekiah son of Hananiah, and all the other officials were seated there.

¹³ Micaiah told them everything he had heard Baruch read from the scroll in the hearing of the people.

¹⁴ All the officials sent Jehudi, who was the son of Nethaniah and the grandson of Cushi, to Baruch. They ordered him to tell Baruch, "Come here and bring with you the scroll you read in the hearing of the people." So Baruch son of Neriah

went to them, carrying the scroll in his hand.

¹⁵They said to him, "Please sit down and read it to us." So Baruch sat down and read it to them.

¹⁶When they had heard it all, they expressed their alarm to one another. Then they said to Baruch, "We must certainly give the king a report about everything you have read!"

¹⁷Then they asked Baruch, "How did you come to write all these words? Do they actually come from Jeremiah's mouth?"

¹⁸Baruch answered, "Yes, they came from his own mouth. He dictated all these words to me and I wrote them down in ink on this scroll."

¹⁹Then the officials said to Baruch, "You and Jeremiah must go and hide. You must not let anyone know where you are."

²⁰The officials put the scroll in the room of Elishama, the royal secretary, for safekeeping. Then they went to the court and reported everything to the king.

²¹The king sent Jehudi to get the scroll. He went and got it from the room of

Elishama, the royal secretary. Then he himself read it to the king and all the officials who were standing around him.

²²Since it was the ninth month of the year, the king was sitting in his winter quarters. A fire was burning in the firepot in front of him.

²³As soon as Jehudi had read three or four columns of the scroll, the king would cut them off with a penknife and throw them on the fire in the firepot. He kept doing so until the whole scroll was burned up in the fire.

²⁴Neither he nor any of his attendants showed any alarm when they heard all that had been read. Nor did they tear their clothes to show any grief or sorrow.

²⁵The king did not even listen to Elnathan, Delaiah, and Gemariah, who had urged him not to burn the scroll.

²⁶He also ordered Jerahmeel, who was one of the royal princes, Seraiah son of Azriel, and Shelemiah son of Abdeel to arrest the scribe Baruch and the prophet Jeremiah. However, the Lord hid them.

²⁷The Lord spoke to Jeremiah after Jehoiakim had burned the scroll

containing what Jeremiah had spoken and Baruch had written down.

²⁸ "Get another scroll and write on it everything that was written on the original scroll that King Jehoiakim of Judah burned.

²⁹ Tell King Jehoiakim of Judah, 'The Lord says, "You burned the scroll. You asked Jeremiah, 'How dare you write in this scroll that the king of Babylon will certainly come and destroy this land and wipe out all the people and animals on it?'"

³⁰ So the Lord says concerning King Jehoiakim of Judah, "None of his line will occupy the throne of David. His dead body will be thrown out to be exposed to scorching heat by day and frost by night.

³¹ I will punish him and his descendants and the officials who serve him for the wicked things they have done. I will bring on them, the citizens of Jerusalem, and the people of Judah all the disaster that I threatened to do to them. I will punish them because I threatened them but they still paid no heed."'"

³² Then Jeremiah got another scroll and gave it to the scribe Baruch son of

Neriah. As Jeremiah dictated, Baruch wrote on this scroll everything that had been on the scroll that King Jehoiakim of Judah burned in the fire. They also added on this scroll several other messages of the same kind.

37 ¹ Zedekiah son of Josiah succeeded Jeconiah son of Jehoiakim as king. He was elevated to the throne of the land of Judah by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon.

² Neither he nor the officials who served him nor the people of Judah paid any attention to what the Lord said through the prophet Jeremiah.

³ King Zedekiah sent Jehucal son of Shelemiah and the priest Zephaniah son of Maaseiah to the prophet Jeremiah. He told them to say, "Please pray to the Lord our God on our behalf."

⁴ (Now Jeremiah had not yet been put in prison. So he was still free to come and go among the people as he pleased.

⁵ At that time the Babylonian forces had temporarily given up their siege against Jerusalem. They had had it under siege, but withdrew when they heard that

the army of Pharaoh had set out from Egypt.)

⁶The Lord gave the prophet Jeremiah a message for them. He told him to tell them,

⁷"The Lord God of Israel says, 'Give a message to the king of Judah who sent you to ask me to help him. Tell him, "The army of Pharaoh that was on its way to help you will go back home to Egypt.

⁸Then the Babylonian forces will return. They will attack the city and will capture it and burn it down.

⁹Moreover, I, the Lord, warn you not to deceive yourselves into thinking that the Babylonian forces will go away and leave you alone. For they will not go away.

¹⁰For even if you were to defeat all the Babylonian forces fighting against you so badly that only wounded men were left lying in their tents, they would get up and burn this city down."'"

¹¹The following events also occurred while the Babylonian forces had temporarily withdrawn from Jerusalem because the army of Pharaoh was coming.

¹²Jeremiah started to leave Jerusalem to go to the territory of Benjamin. He wanted to make sure he got his share of the property that was being divided up among his family there.

¹³But he only got as far as the Benjamin Gate. There an officer in charge of the guards named Irijah, who was the son of Shelemiah and the grandson of Hananiah, stopped him. He seized Jeremiah and said, "You are deserting to the Babylonians!"

¹⁴Jeremiah answered, "That's a lie! I am not deserting to the Babylonians." But Irijah would not listen to him. Irijah put Jeremiah under arrest and took him to the officials.

¹⁵The officials were very angry at Jeremiah. They had him flogged and put in prison in the house of Jonathan, the royal secretary, which they had converted into a place for confining prisoners.

¹⁶So Jeremiah was put in prison in a cell in the dungeon in Jonathan's house. He was kept there for a long time.

¹⁷Then King Zedekiah had him brought to the palace. There he questioned

him privately and asked him, "Is there any message from the Lord?" Jeremiah answered, "Yes, there is." Then he announced, "You will be handed over to the king of Babylon."

¹⁸Then Jeremiah asked King Zedekiah, "What crime have I committed against you, or the officials who serve you, or the people of Judah? What have I done to make you people throw me into prison?"

¹⁹Where now are the prophets who prophesied to you that the king of Babylon would not attack you or this land?

²⁰But now please listen, your royal Majesty, and grant my plea for mercy. Do not send me back to the house of Jonathan, the royal secretary. If you do, I will die there."

²¹Then King Zedekiah ordered that Jeremiah be committed to the courtyard of the guardhouse. He also ordered that a loaf of bread be given to him every day from the baker's street until all the bread in the city was gone. So Jeremiah was kept in the courtyard of the guardhouse.

38¹ Now Shephatiah son of Mattan, Gedaliah son of Pashhur, Jehucal

son of Shelemiah, and Pashhur son of Malkijah had heard the things that Jeremiah had been telling the people. They had heard him say,

²"The Lord says, 'Those who stay in this city will die in battle or of starvation or disease. Those who leave the city and surrender to the Babylonians will live. They will escape with their lives.'"

³They had also heard him say, "The Lord says, 'This city will certainly be handed over to the army of the king of Babylon. They will capture it.'"

⁴So these officials said to the king, "This man must be put to death. For he is demoralizing the soldiers who are left in the city as well as all the other people there by these things he is saying. This man is not seeking to help these people but is trying to harm them."

⁵King Zedekiah said to them, "Very well, you can do what you want with him. For I cannot do anything to stop you."

⁶So the officials took Jeremiah and put him in the cistern of Malkijah, one of the royal princes, that was in the courtyard of the guardhouse. There was no water

in the cistern, only mud. So when they lowered Jeremiah into the cistern with ropes he sank in the mud.

⁷An Ethiopian, Ebed Melech, a court official in the royal palace, heard that Jeremiah had been put in the cistern. While the king was holding court at the Benjamin Gate,

⁸Ebed Melech departed the palace and went to speak to the king. He said to him,

⁹"Your royal Majesty, those men have been very wicked in all that they have done to the prophet Jeremiah. They have thrown him into a cistern and he is sure to die of starvation there because there is no food left in the city.

¹⁰Then the king gave Ebed Melech the Ethiopian the following order: "Take thirty men with you from here and go pull the prophet Jeremiah out of the cistern before he dies."

¹¹So Ebed Melech took the men with him and went to a room under the treasure room in the palace. He got some worn-out clothes and old rags from there and let them down by ropes to Jeremiah in the cistern.

¹²Ebed Melech called down to Jeremiah, "Put these rags and worn-out clothes under your armpits to pad the ropes. Jeremiah did as Ebed Melech instructed.

¹³So they pulled Jeremiah up from the cistern with ropes. Jeremiah, however, still remained confined to the courtyard of the guardhouse.

¹⁴Some time later Zedekiah sent and had Jeremiah brought to him at the third entrance of the Lord's temple. The king said to Jeremiah, "I would like to ask you a question. Do not hide anything from me when you answer."

¹⁵Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, "If I answer you, you will certainly kill me. If I give you advice, you will not listen to me."

¹⁶So King Zedekiah made a secret promise to Jeremiah and sealed it with an oath. He promised, "As surely as the Lord lives who has given us life and breath, I promise you this: I will not kill you or hand you over to those men who want to kill you."

¹⁷Then Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, "The Lord, the God who rules over all, the God of Israel, says, 'You must surrender to

the officers of the king of Babylon. If you do, your life will be spared and this city will not be burned down. Indeed, you and your whole family will be spared.

¹⁸But if you do not surrender to the officers of the king of Babylon, this city will be handed over to the Babylonians and they will burn it down. You yourself will not escape from them.'"

¹⁹Then King Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, "I am afraid of the Judeans who have deserted to the Babylonians. The Babylonians might hand me over to them and they will torture me."

²⁰Then Jeremiah answered, "You will not be handed over to them. Please obey the Lord by doing what I have been telling you. Then all will go well with you and your life will be spared.

²¹But if you refuse to surrender, the Lord has shown me a vision of what will happen. Here is what I saw:

²²All the women who are left in the royal palace of Judah will be led out to the officers of the king of Babylon. They will taunt you saying, 'Your trusted friends misled you; they have gotten the best of you. Now that your feet are stuck

in the mud, they have turned their backs on you.'

²³ "All your wives and your children will be turned over to the Babylonians. You yourself will not escape from them but will be captured by the king of Babylon. This city will be burned down."

²⁴ Then Zedekiah told Jeremiah, "Do not let anyone know about the conversation we have had. If you do, you will die.

²⁵ The officials may hear that I have talked with you. They may come to you and say, 'Tell us what you said to the king and what the king said to you. Do not hide anything from us. If you do, we will kill you.'

²⁶ If they do this, tell them, 'I was pleading with the king not to send me back to die in the dungeon of Jonathan's house.'"

²⁷ All the officials did indeed come and question Jeremiah. He told them exactly what the king had instructed him to say. They stopped questioning him any further because no one had actually heard their conversation.

²⁸ So Jeremiah remained confined in the courtyard of the guardhouse until the day

Jerusalem was captured. The following events occurred when Jerusalem was captured.

39¹ King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came against Jerusalem with his whole army and laid siege to it. The siege began in the tenth month of the ninth year that Zedekiah ruled over Judah.

² It lasted until the ninth day of the fourth month of Zedekiah's eleventh year. On that day they broke through the city walls.

³ Then Nergal-Sharezer of Samgar, Nebo-Sarsekim, who was a chief officer, Nergal-Sharezer, who was a high official, and all the other officers of the king of Babylon came and set up quarters in the Middle Gate.

⁴ When King Zedekiah of Judah and all his soldiers saw them, they tried to escape. They departed from the city during the night. They took a path through the king's garden and passed out through the gate between the two walls. Then they headed for the Jordan Valley.

⁵ But the Babylonian army chased after them. They caught up with Zedekiah in

the plains of Jericho and captured him. They took him to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon at Riblah in the territory of Hamath and Nebuchadnezzar passed sentence on him there.

⁶There at Riblah the king of Babylon had Zedekiah's sons put to death while Zedekiah was forced to watch. The king of Babylon also had all the nobles of Judah put to death.

⁷Then he had Zedekiah's eyes put out and had him bound in chains to be led off to Babylon.

⁸The Babylonians burned down the royal palace, the temple of the Lord, and the people's homes, and they tore down the wall of Jerusalem.

⁹Then Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal guard, took captive the rest of the people who were left in the city. He carried them off to Babylon along with the people who had deserted to him.

¹⁰But he left behind in the land of Judah some of the poor people who owned nothing. He gave them fields and vineyards at that time.

¹¹Now King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had issued orders concerning Jeremiah.

He had passed them on through Nebuzaradan, the captain of his royal guard,

¹²“Find Jeremiah and look out for him. Do not do anything to harm him, but do with him whatever he tells you.”

¹³So Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal guard, Nebushazban, who was a chief officer, Nergal-Sharezer, who was a high official, and all the other officers of the king of Babylon

¹⁴sent and had Jeremiah brought from the courtyard of the guardhouse. They turned him over to Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam and the grandson of Shaphan, to take him home with him. But Jeremiah stayed among the people.

¹⁵Now the Lord had spoken to Jeremiah while he was still confined in the courtyard of the guardhouse,

¹⁶“Go and tell Ebed-Melech the Ethiopian, ‘The Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, “I will carry out against this city what I promised. It will mean disaster and not good fortune for it. When that disaster happens, you will be there to see it.

¹⁷ But I will rescue you when it happens. I, the Lord, affirm it! You will not be handed over to those whom you fear.

¹⁸ I will certainly save you. You will not fall victim to violence. You will escape with your life because you trust in me. I, the Lord, affirm it! ""

40¹ The Lord spoke to Jeremiah after Nebuzaradan the captain of the royal guard had set him free at Ramah. He had taken him there in chains along with all the people from Jerusalem and Judah who were being carried off to exile to Babylon.

² The captain of the royal guard took Jeremiah aside and said to him, "The Lord your God threatened this place with this disaster.

³ Now he has brought it about. The Lord has done just as he threatened to do. This disaster has happened because you people sinned against the Lord and did not obey him.

⁴ But now, Jeremiah, today I will set you free from the chains on your wrists. If you would like to come to Babylon with me, come along and I will take care of you. But if you prefer not to come to

Babylon with me, you are not required to do so. You are free to go anywhere in the land you want to go. Go wherever you choose."

⁵Before Jeremiah could turn to leave, the captain of the guard added, "Go back to Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon appointed to govern the towns of Judah. Go back and live with him among the people. Or go wherever else you choose." Then the captain of the guard gave Jeremiah some food and a present and let him go.

⁶So Jeremiah went to Gedaliah son of Ahikam at Mizpah and lived there with him. He stayed there to live among the people who had been left in the land of Judah.

⁷Now some of the officers of the Judean army and their troops had been hiding in the countryside. They heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah son of Ahikam to govern the country. They also heard that he had been put in charge over the men, women, and children from the poorer classes of the

land who had not been carried off into exile in Babylon.

⁸So all these officers and their troops came to Gedaliah at Mizpah. The officers who came were Ishmael son of Nethaniah, Johanan and Jonathan the sons of Kareah, Seraiah son of Tanhumeth, the sons of Ephai the Netophathite, and Jezaniah son of the Maacathite.

⁹Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan, took an oath so as to give them and their troops some assurance of safety. "Do not be afraid to submit to the Babylonians. Settle down in the land and submit to the king of Babylon. Then things will go well for you.

¹⁰I for my part will stay at Mizpah to represent you before the Babylonians whenever they come to us. You for your part go ahead and harvest the wine, the dates, the figs, and the olive oil, and store them in jars. Go ahead and settle down in the towns that you have taken over."

¹¹Moreover, all the Judeans who were in Moab, Ammon, Edom, and all the other countries heard what had happened.

They heard that the king of Babylon had allowed some people to stay in Judah and that he had appointed Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan, to govern them.

¹²So all these Judeans returned to the land of Judah from the places where they had been scattered. They came to Gedaliah at Mizpah. Thus they harvested a large amount of wine and dates and figs.

¹³Johanan and all the officers of the troops that had been hiding in the open country came to Gedaliah at Mizpah.

¹⁴They said to him, "Are you at all aware that King Baalis of Ammon has sent Ishmael son of Nethaniah to kill you?" But Gedaliah son of Ahikam would not believe them.

¹⁵Then Johanan son of Kareah spoke privately to Gedaliah there at Mizpah, "Let me go and kill Ishmael the son of Nethaniah before anyone knows about it. Otherwise he will kill you and all the Judeans who have rallied around you will be scattered. Then what remains of Judah will disappear."

¹⁶But Gedaliah son of Ahikam said to Johanan son of Kareah, “Do not do that because what you are saying about Ishmael is not true.”

41 ¹But in the seventh month Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah and grandson of Elishama who was a member of the royal family and had been one of Zedekiah’s chief officers, came with ten of his men to Gedaliah son of Ahikam at Mizpah. While they were eating a meal together with him there at Mizpah,

²Ishmael son of Nethaniah and the ten men who were with him stood up, pulled out their swords, and killed Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan. Thus Ishmael killed the man that the king of Babylon had appointed to govern the country.

³Ishmael also killed all the Judeans who were with Gedaliah at Mizpah and the Babylonian soldiers who happened to be there.

⁴On the day after Gedaliah had been murdered, before anyone even knew about it,

⁵eighty men arrived from Shechem, Shiloh, and Samaria. They had shaved off their beards, torn their clothes, and cut themselves to show they were mourning. They were carrying grain offerings and incense to present at the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem.

⁶Ishmael son of Nethaniah went out from Mizpah to meet them. He was pretending to cry as he walked along. When he met them, he said to them, "Come with me to meet Gedaliah son of Ahikam."

⁷But as soon as they were inside the city, Ishmael son of Nethaniah and the men who were with him slaughtered them and threw their bodies in a cistern.

⁸But there were ten men among them who said to Ishmael, "Do not kill us. For we will give you the stores of wheat, barley, olive oil, and honey we have hidden in a field. So he spared their lives and did not kill them along with the rest.

⁹Now the cistern where Ishmael threw all the dead bodies of those he had killed was a large one that King Asa had constructed as part of his defenses against King Baasha of Israel. Ishmael

son of Nethaniah filled it with dead bodies.

¹⁰Then Ishmael took captive all the people who were still left alive in Mizpah. This included the royal princesses and all the rest of the people in Mizpah that Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal guard, had put under the authority of Gedaliah son of Ahikam. Ishmael son of Nethaniah took all these people captive and set out to cross over to the Ammonites.

¹¹Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers who were with him heard about all the atrocities that Ishmael son of Nethaniah had committed.

¹²So they took all their troops and went to fight against Ishmael son of Nethaniah. They caught up with him near the large pool at Gibeon.

¹³When all the people that Ishmael had taken captive saw Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers with him, they were glad.

¹⁴All those people that Ishmael had taken captive from Mizpah turned and went over to Johanan son of Kareah.

¹⁵But Ishmael son of Nethaniah managed to escape from Johanan along with eight of his men, and he went on over to Ammon.

¹⁶Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers who were with him led off all the people who had been left alive at Mizpah. They had rescued them from Ishmael son of Nethaniah after he killed Gedaliah son of Ahikam. They led off the men, women, children, soldiers, and court officials whom they had brought away from Gibeon.

¹⁷They set out to go to Egypt to get away from the Babylonians, but stopped at Geruth Kimham near Bethlehem.

¹⁸They were afraid of what the Babylonians might do because Ishmael son of Nethaniah had killed Gedaliah son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon had appointed to govern the country.

42¹Then all the army officers, including Johanan son of Kareah and Jezaniah son of Hoshai and all the people of every class, went to the prophet Jeremiah.

²They said to him, "Please grant our request and pray to the Lord your God

for all those of us who are still left alive here. For, as you yourself can see, there are only a few of us left out of the many there were before.

³Pray that the Lord your God will tell us where we should go and what we should do."

⁴The prophet Jeremiah answered them, "Agreed! I will indeed pray to the Lord your God as you have asked. I will tell you everything the Lord replies in response to you. I will not keep anything back from you."

⁵They answered Jeremiah, "May the Lord be a true and faithful witness against us if we do not do just as the Lord sends you to tell us to do.

⁶We will obey what the Lord our God to whom we are sending you tells us to do. It does not matter whether we like what he tells us or not. We will obey what he tells us to do so that things will go well for us."

⁷Ten days later the Lord spoke to Jeremiah.

⁸So Jeremiah summoned Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers who

were with him and all the people of every class.

⁹Then Jeremiah said to them, "You sent me to the Lord God of Israel to make your request known to him. Here is what he says to you:

¹⁰'If you will just stay in this land, I will build you up. I will not tear you down. I will firmly plant you. I will not uproot you. For I am filled with sorrow because of the disaster that I have brought on you.

¹¹Do not be afraid of the king of Babylon whom you now fear. Do not be afraid of him because I will be with you to save you and to rescue you from his power. I, the Lord, affirm it!

¹²I will have compassion on you so that he in turn will have mercy on you and allow you to return to your land.'

¹³"You must not disobey the Lord your God by saying, 'We will not stay in this land.'

¹⁴You must not say, 'No, we will not stay. Instead we will go and live in the land of Egypt where we will not face war, or hear the enemy's trumpet calls, or starve for lack of food.'

¹⁵If you people who remain in Judah do that, then listen to what the Lord says. The Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, 'If you are so determined to go to Egypt that you go and settle there,

¹⁶the wars you fear will catch up with you there in the land of Egypt. The starvation you are worried about will follow you there to Egypt. You will die there.

¹⁷All the people who are determined to go and settle in Egypt will die from war, starvation, or disease. No one will survive or escape the disaster I will bring on them.'

¹⁸For the Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, 'If you go to Egypt, I will pour out my wrath on you just as I poured out my anger and wrath on the citizens of Jerusalem. You will become an object of horror and ridicule, an example of those who have been cursed and that people use in pronouncing a curse. You will never see this place again.'

¹⁹"The Lord has told you people who remain in Judah, 'Do not go to Egypt.' Be very sure of this: I warn you here and now.

²⁰You are making a fatal mistake. For you sent me to the Lord your God and asked me, 'Pray to the Lord our God for us. Tell us what the Lord our God says and we will do it.'

²¹This day I have told you what he said. But you do not want to obey the Lord by doing what he sent me to tell you.

²²So now be very sure of this: You will die from war, starvation, or disease in the place where you want to go and live."

43¹ Jeremiah finished telling all the people all these things the Lord their God had sent him to tell them.

²Then Azariah son of Hoshaiah, Johanan son of Kareah, and other arrogant men said to Jeremiah, "You are telling a lie! The Lord our God did not send you to tell us, 'You must not go to Egypt and settle there.'

³But Baruch son of Neriah is stirring you up against us. He wants to hand us over to the Babylonians so that they will kill us or carry us off into exile in Babylon."

⁴So Johanan son of Kareah, all the army officers, and all the rest of the

people did not obey the Lord's command to stay in the land.

⁵ Instead Johanan son of Kareah and all the army officers led off all the Judean remnant who had come back to live in the land of Judah from all the nations where they had been scattered.

⁶ They also led off all the men, women, children, and royal princesses that Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal guard, had left with Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan. This included the prophet Jeremiah and Baruch son of Neriah.

⁷ They went on to Egypt because they refused to obey the Lord, and came to Tahpanhes.

⁸ At Tahpanhes the Lord spoke to Jeremiah.

⁹ "Take some large stones and bury them in the mortar of the clay pavement at the entrance of Pharaoh's residence here in Tahpanhes. Do it while the people of Judah present there are watching.

¹⁰ Then tell them, 'The Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, "I will bring my servant King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. I will set his throne over

these stones which I have buried. He will pitch his royal tent over them.

¹¹ He will come and attack Egypt. Those who are destined to die of disease will die of disease. Those who are destined to be carried off into exile will be carried off into exile. Those who are destined to die in war will die in war.

¹² He will set fire to the temples of the gods of Egypt. He will burn their gods or carry them off as captives. He will pick Egypt clean like a shepherd picks the lice from his clothing. He will leave there unharmed.

¹³ He will demolish the sacred pillars in the temple of the sun in Egypt and will burn down the temples of the gods of Egypt."''

44¹ The Lord spoke to Jeremiah concerning all the Judeans who were living in the land of Egypt, those in Migdol, Tahpanhes, Memphis, and in the region of southern Egypt.

² "The Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, 'You have seen all the disaster I brought on Jerusalem and all the towns of Judah. Indeed, they now lie in ruins and are deserted.

³This happened because of the wickedness the people living there did. They made me angry by worshiping and offering sacrifice to other gods whom neither they nor you nor your ancestors previously knew.

⁴I sent my servants the prophets to you people over and over again warning you not to do this disgusting thing I hate.

⁵But the people of Jerusalem and Judah would not listen or pay any attention. They would not stop the wickedness they were doing nor quit sacrificing to other gods.

⁶So my anger and my wrath were poured out and burned like a fire through the towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem. That is why they have become the desolate ruins that they are today.'

⁷"So now the Lord, the God who rules over all, the God of Israel, asks, 'Why will you do such great harm to yourselves? Why should every man, woman, child, and baby of yours be destroyed from the midst of Judah? Why should you leave yourselves without a remnant?'

⁸That is what will result from your making me angry by what you are doing. You are making me angry by sacrificing to other gods here in the land of Egypt where you live. You will be destroyed for doing that! You will become an example used in curses and an object of ridicule among all the nations of the earth.

⁹Have you forgotten all the wicked things that have been done in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem by your ancestors, by the kings of Judah and their wives, by you and your wives?

¹⁰To this day your people have shown no contrition! They have not revered me nor followed the laws and statutes I commanded you and your ancestors.'

¹¹"Because of this, the Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, 'I am determined to bring disaster on you, even to the point of destroying all the Judeans here.

¹²I will see to it that all the Judean remnant that was determined to go and live in the land of Egypt will be destroyed. Here in the land of Egypt they will fall in battle or perish from starvation. People of every class will die in war or from

starvation. They will become an object of horror and ridicule, an example of those who have been cursed and that people use in pronouncing a curse.

¹³I will punish those who live in the land of Egypt with war, starvation, and disease just as I punished Jerusalem.

¹⁴None of the Judean remnant who have come to live in the land of Egypt will escape or survive to return to the land of Judah. Though they long to return and live there, none of them shall return except a few fugitives.'"

¹⁵Then all the men who were aware that their wives were sacrificing to other gods, as well as all their wives, answered Jeremiah. There was a great crowd of them representing all the people who lived in northern and southern Egypt. They answered,

¹⁶"We will not listen to what you claim the Lord has spoken to us!

¹⁷Instead we will do everything we vowed we would do. We will sacrifice and pour out drink offerings to the goddess called the Queen of Heaven just as we and our ancestors, our kings, and our leaders previously did in the towns of

Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. For then we had plenty of food, were well-off, and had no troubles.

¹⁸But ever since we stopped sacrificing and pouring out drink offerings to the Queen of Heaven, we have been in great need. Our people have died in wars or of starvation."

¹⁹The women added, "We did indeed sacrifice and pour out drink offerings to the Queen of Heaven. But it was with the full knowledge and approval of our husbands that we made cakes in her image and poured out drink offerings to her."

²⁰Then Jeremiah replied to all the people, both men and women, who responded to him in this way.

²¹"The Lord did indeed remember and call to mind what you did! He remembered the sacrifices you and your ancestors, your kings, your leaders, and all the rest of the people of the land offered to other gods in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem.

²²Finally the Lord could no longer endure your wicked deeds and the disgusting things you did. That is why

your land has become the desolate, uninhabited ruin that it is today. That is why it has become a proverbial example used in curses.

²³You have sacrificed to other gods! You have sinned against the Lord! You have not obeyed the Lord! You have not followed his laws, his statutes, and his decrees! That is why this disaster that is evident to this day has happened to you."

²⁴Then Jeremiah spoke to all the people, particularly to all the women. "Listen to what the Lord has to say all you people of Judah who are in Egypt.

²⁵The Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, 'You women have confirmed by your actions what you vowed with your lips! You said, "We will certainly carry out our vows to sacrifice and pour out drink offerings to the Queen of Heaven." Well, then fulfill your vows! Carry them out!'

²⁶But listen to what the Lord has to say, all you people of Judah who are living in the land of Egypt. The Lord says, 'I hereby swear by my own great name that none of the people of Judah who are living anywhere in Egypt will ever

again invoke my name in their oaths! Never again will any of them use it in an oath saying, "As surely as the Lord God lives...."

²⁷ I will indeed see to it that disaster, not prosperity, happens to them. All the people of Judah who are in the land of Egypt will die in war or from starvation until not one of them is left.

²⁸ Some who survive in battle will return to the land of Judah from the land of Egypt. But they will be very few indeed! Then the Judean remnant who have come to live in the land of Egypt will know whose word proves true, mine or theirs.'

²⁹ Moreover the Lord says, 'I will make something happen to prove that I will punish you in this place. I will do it so that you will know that my threats to bring disaster on you will prove true.

³⁰ I, the Lord, promise that I will hand Pharaoh Hophra king of Egypt over to his enemies who are seeking to kill him. I will do that just as surely as I handed King Zedekiah of Judah over to King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, his enemy who was seeking to kill him.'"

45¹ The prophet Jeremiah spoke to Baruch son of Neriah while he was writing down in a scroll the words that Jeremiah spoke to him. This happened in the fourth year that Jehoiakim son of Josiah was ruling over Judah.

² “The Lord God of Israel has a message for you, Baruch.

³ “You have said, “I feel so hopeless! For the Lord has added sorrow to my suffering. I am worn out from groaning. I can’t find any rest.””

⁴ The Lord told Jeremiah, “Tell Baruch, ‘The Lord says, “I am about to tear down what I have built and to uproot what I have planted. I will do this throughout the whole earth.

⁵ Are you looking for great things for yourself? Do not look for such things. For I, the Lord, affirm that I am about to bring disaster on all humanity. But I will allow you to escape with your life wherever you go.””

46¹ The Lord spoke to Jeremiah about the nations.

² He spoke about Egypt and the army of Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt which was encamped along the Euphrates

River at Carchemish. Now this was the army that King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon defeated in the fourth year that Jehoiakim son of Josiah was ruling over Judah.

³ "Fall into ranks with your shields ready! Prepare to march into battle!

⁴ Harness the horses to the chariots! Mount your horses! Put on your helmets and take your positions! Sharpen your spears! Put on your armor!

⁵ "What do I see?" says the Lord. "The soldiers are terrified. They are retreating. They have been defeated. They are overcome with terror; they desert quickly without looking back.

⁶ But even the swiftest cannot get away. Even the strongest cannot escape. There in the north by the Euphrates River they stumble and fall in defeat.

⁷ "Who is this that rises like the Nile, like its streams turbulent at flood stage?

⁸ Egypt rises like the Nile, like its streams turbulent at flood stage. Egypt says, 'I will arise and cover the earth. I will destroy cities and the people who inhabit them.'

⁹Go ahead and charge into battle, you horsemen! Drive furiously, you charioteers! Let the soldiers march out into battle, those from Ethiopia and Libya who carry shields, and those from Lydia who are armed with the bow.

¹⁰But that day belongs to the Lord God who rules over all. It is the day when he will pay back his enemies. His sword will devour them until its appetite is satisfied! It will drink their blood until it is full! For the Lord God who rules over all will offer them up as a sacrifice in the land of the north by the Euphrates River.

¹¹Go up to Gilead and get medicinal ointment, you dear poor people of Egypt. But it will prove useless no matter how much medicine you use; there will be no healing for you.

¹²The nations will hear of your devastating defeat. your cries of distress will echo throughout the earth. In the panic of their flight one soldier will trip over another and both of them will fall down defeated."

¹³The Lord spoke to the prophet Jeremiah about Nebuchadnezzar coming to attack the land of Egypt.

¹⁴“Make an announcement throughout Egypt. Proclaim it in Migdol, Memphis, and Tahpanhes. ‘Take your positions and prepare to do battle. For the enemy army is destroying all the nations around you.’

¹⁵Why will your soldiers be defeated? They will not stand because I, the Lord, will thrust them down.

¹⁶I will make many stumble. They will fall over one another in their hurry to flee. They will say, ‘Get up! Let’s go back to our own people. Let’s go back to our homelands because the enemy is coming to destroy us.’

¹⁷There at home they will say, ‘Pharaoh king of Egypt is just a big noise! He has let the most opportune moment pass by.’

¹⁸I the King, whose name is the Lord who rules over all, swear this: I swear as surely as I live that a conqueror is coming. He will be as imposing as Mount Tabor is among the mountains, as Mount Carmel is against the backdrop of the sea.

¹⁹Pack your bags for exile, you inhabitants of poor dear Egypt. For

Memphis will be laid waste. It will lie in ruins and be uninhabited.

²⁰Egypt is like a beautiful young cow. But northern armies will attack her like swarms of stinging flies.

²¹Even her mercenaries will prove to be like pampered, well-fed calves. For they too will turn and run away. They will not stand their ground when the time for them to be destroyed comes, the time for them to be punished.

²²Egypt will run away, hissing like a snake, as the enemy comes marching up in force. They will come against her with axes as if they were woodsmen chopping down trees.

²³The population of Egypt is like a vast, impenetrable forest. But I, the Lord, affirm that the enemy will cut them down. For those who chop them down will be more numerous than locusts. They will be too numerous to count.

²⁴Poor dear Egypt will be put to shame. She will be handed over to the people from the north."

²⁵The Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, "I will punish Amon, the god of Thebes. I will punish Egypt, its gods,

and its kings. I will punish Pharaoh and all who trust in him.

²⁶I will hand them over to Nebuchadnezzar and his troops, who want to kill them. But later on, people will live in Egypt again as they did in former times. I, the Lord, affirm it!"

²⁷"You descendants of Jacob, my servants, do not be afraid; do not be terrified, people of Israel. For I will rescue you and your descendants from the faraway lands where you are captives. The descendants of Jacob will return to their land and enjoy peace. They will be secure and no one will terrify them.

²⁸I, the Lord, tell you not to be afraid, you descendants of Jacob, my servant, for I am with you. Though I completely destroy all the nations where I scatter you, I will not completely destroy you. I will indeed discipline you but only in due measure. I will not allow you to go entirely unpunished."

47 ¹The Lord spoke to the prophet Jeremiah about the Philistines before Pharaoh attacked Gaza.

² "Look! Enemies are gathering in the north like water rising in a river. They will be like an overflowing stream. They will overwhelm the whole country and everything in it like a flood. They will overwhelm the cities and their inhabitants. People will cry out in alarm. Everyone living in the country will cry out in pain.

³ Fathers will hear the hoofbeats of the enemies' horses, the clatter of their chariots and the rumbling of their wheels. They will not turn back to save their children because they will be paralyzed with fear.

⁴ For the time has come to destroy all the Philistines. The time has come to destroy all the help that remains for Tyre and Sidon. For I, the Lord, will destroy the Philistines, that remnant that came from the island of Crete.

⁵ The people of Gaza will shave their heads in mourning. The people of Ashkelon will be struck dumb. How long will you gash yourselves to show your sorrow, you who remain of Philistia's power?

⁶How long will you cry out, 'Oh, sword of the Lord, how long will it be before you stop killing? Go back into your sheath! Stay there and rest!'

⁷But how can it rest when I, the Lord, have given it orders? I have ordered it to attack the people of Ashkelon and the seacoast.

48¹The Lord God of Israel who rules over all spoke about Moab. "Sure to be judged is Nebo! Indeed, it will be destroyed! Kiriathaim will suffer disgrace. It will be captured! Its fortress will suffer disgrace. It will be torn down!

²People will not praise Moab any more. The enemy will capture Heshbon and plot how to destroy Moab, saying, 'Come, let's put an end to that nation!' City of Madmen, you will also be destroyed. A destructive army will march against you.

³Cries of anguish will arise in Horonaim, 'Oh, the ruin and great destruction!'

⁴"Moab will be crushed. Her children will cry out in distress.

⁵Indeed they will climb the slopes of Luhith, weeping continually as they go. For on the road down to Horonaim they

will hear the cries of distress over the destruction.

⁶They will hear, 'Run! Save yourselves! Even if you must be like a lonely shrub in the desert!'

⁷"Moab, you trust in the things you do and in your riches. So you too will be conquered. Your god Chemosh will go into exile along with his priests and his officials.

⁸The destroyer will come against every town. Not one town will escape. The towns in the valley will be destroyed. The cities on the high plain will be laid waste. I, the Lord, have spoken!

⁹Set up a gravestone for Moab, for it will certainly be laid in ruins! Its cities will be laid waste and become uninhabited."

¹⁰A curse on anyone who is lax in doing the Lord's work! A curse on anyone who keeps from carrying out his destruction!

¹¹"From its earliest days Moab has lived undisturbed. It has never been taken into exile. Its people are like wine allowed to settle undisturbed on its dregs, never poured out from one jar to another. They are like wine which

tastes like it always did, whose aroma has remained unchanged.

¹²But the time is coming when I will send men against Moab who will empty it out. They will empty the towns of their people, then will lay those towns in ruins. I, the Lord, affirm it!

¹³The people of Moab will be disappointed by their god Chemosh. They will be as disappointed as the people of Israel were when they put their trust in the calf god at Bethel.

¹⁴How can you men of Moab say, 'We are heroes, men who are mighty in battle?'

¹⁵Moab will be destroyed. Its towns will be invaded. Its finest young men will be slaughtered. I, the King, the Lord who rules over all, affirm it!

¹⁶Moab's destruction is at hand. Disaster will come on it quickly.

¹⁷Mourn for that nation, all you nations living around it, all of you nations that know of its fame. Mourn and say, 'Alas, its powerful influence has been broken! Its glory and power have been done away!'

¹⁸ Come down from your place of honor; sit on the dry ground, you who live in Dibon. For the one who will destroy Moab will attack you; he will destroy your fortifications.

¹⁹ You who live in Aroer, stand by the road and watch. Question the man who is fleeing and the woman who is escaping. Ask them, 'What has happened?'

²⁰ They will answer, 'Moab is disgraced, for it has fallen! Wail and cry out in mourning! Announce along the Arnon River that Moab has been destroyed.'

²¹ "Judgment will come on the cities on the high plain: on Holon, Jahzah, and Mephaath,

²² on Dibon, Nebo, and Beth Diblathaim,

²³ on Kiriathaim, Beth Gamul, and Beth Meon,

²⁴ on Kerioth and Bozrah. It will come on all the towns of Moab, both far and near.

²⁵ Moab's might will be crushed. Its power will be broken. I, the Lord, affirm it!

²⁶ "Moab has vaunted itself against me. So make him drunk with the wine of my wrath until he splashes around in his

own vomit, until others treat him as a laughingstock.

²⁷ For did not you people of Moab laugh at the people of Israel? Did you think that they were nothing but thieves, that you shook your head in contempt every time you talked about them?

²⁸ Leave your towns, you inhabitants of Moab. Go and live in the cliffs. Be like a dove that makes its nest high on the sides of a ravine.

²⁹ I have heard how proud the people of Moab are, I know how haughty they are. I have heard how arrogant, proud, and haughty they are, what a high opinion they have of themselves.

³⁰ I, the Lord, affirm that I know how arrogant they are. But their pride is ill-founded. Their boastings will prove to be false.

³¹ So I will weep with sorrow for Moab. I will cry out in sadness for all of Moab. I will moan for the people of Kir Heres.

³² I will weep for the grapevines of Sibmah just like the town of Jazer weeps over them. Their branches once spread as far as the Dead Sea. They reached as far as the town of Jazer. The destroyer

will ravage her fig, date, and grape crops.

³³ Joy and gladness will disappear from the fruitful land of Moab. I will stop the flow of wine from the winepresses. No one will stomp on the grapes there and shout for joy. The shouts there will be shouts of soldiers, not the shouts of those making wine.

³⁴ Cries of anguish raised from Heshbon and Elealeh will be sounded as far as Jahaz. They will be sounded from Zoar as far as Horonaim and Eglath Shelishiyah. For even the waters of Nimrim will be dried up.

³⁵ I will put an end in Moab to those who make offerings at her places of worship. I will put an end to those who sacrifice to other gods. I, the Lord, affirm it!

³⁶ So my heart moans for Moab like a flute playing a funeral song. Yes, like a flute playing a funeral song, my heart moans for the people of Kir Heres. For the wealth they have gained will perish.

³⁷ For all of them will shave their heads in mourning. They will all cut off their beards to show their sorrow. They will all

make gashes in their hands. They will all put on sackcloth.

³⁸On all the housetops in Moab and in all its public squares there will be nothing but mourning. For I will break Moab like an unwanted jar. I, the Lord, affirm it!

³⁹Oh, how shattered Moab will be! Oh, how her people will wail! Oh, how she will turn away in shame! Moab will become an object of ridicule, a terrifying sight to all the nations that surround her."

⁴⁰For the Lord says, "Look! Like an eagle with outspread wings a nation will swoop down on Moab.

⁴¹Her towns will be captured. Her fortresses will be taken. At that time the soldiers of Moab will be frightened like a woman in labor.

⁴²Moab will be destroyed and no longer be a nation, because she has vaunted herself against the Lord.

⁴³Terror, pits, and traps are in store for the people who live in Moab. I, the Lord, affirm it!

⁴⁴Anyone who flees at the sound of terror will fall into a pit. Anyone who climbs out of the pit will be caught in a

trap. For the time is coming when I will punish the people of Moab. I, the Lord, affirm it!

⁴⁵In the shadows of the walls of Heshbon those trying to escape will stand helpless. For a fire will burst forth from Heshbon. Flames will shoot out from the former territory of Sihon. They will burn the foreheads of the people of Moab, the skulls of those war-loving people.

⁴⁶Moab, you are doomed! You people who worship Chemosh will be destroyed. Your sons will be taken away captive. Your daughters will be carried away into exile.

⁴⁷Yet in days to come I will reverse Moab's ill fortune." says the Lord. The judgment against Moab ends here.

49¹The Lord spoke about the Ammonites. "Do you think there are not any people of the nation of Israel remaining? Do you think there are not any of them remaining to reinherit their land? Is that why you people who worship the god Milcom have taken possession of the territory of Gad and live in his cities?"

² Because you did that, I, the Lord, affirm that a time is coming when I will make Rabbah, the capital city of Ammon, hear the sound of the battle cry. It will become a mound covered with ruins. Its villages will be burned to the ground. Then Israel will take back its land from those who took their land from them. I, the Lord, affirm it!

³ Wail, you people in Heshbon, because Ai in Ammon is destroyed. Cry out in anguish, you people in the villages surrounding Rabbah. Put on sackcloth and cry out in mourning. Run about covered with gashes. For your god Milcom will go into exile along with his priests and officials.

⁴ Why do you brag about your great power? Your power is ebbing away, you rebellious people of Ammon, who trust in your riches and say, 'Who would dare to attack us?'

⁵ I will bring terror on you from every side," says the Lord God who rules over all. "You will be scattered in every direction. No one will gather the fugitives back together.

⁶Yet in days to come I will reverse Ammon's ill fortune." says the Lord.

⁷The Lord who rules over all spoke about Edom. "Is wisdom no longer to be found in Teman? Can Edom's counselors not give her any good advice? Has all of their wisdom turned bad?

⁸Turn and flee! Take up refuge in remote places, you people who live in Dedan. For I will bring disaster on the descendants of Esau. I have decided it is time for me to punish them.

⁹If grape pickers came to pick your grapes, would they not leave a few grapes behind? If robbers came at night, would they not pillage only what they needed?

¹⁰But I will strip everything away from Esau's descendants. I will uncover their hiding places so they cannot hide. Their children, relatives, and neighbors will all be destroyed. Not one of them will be left!

¹¹Leave your orphans behind and I will keep them alive. Your widows too can depend on me."

¹²For the Lord says, "If even those who did not deserve to drink from the cup

of my wrath must drink from it, do you think you will go unpunished? You will not go unpunished, but must certainly drink from the cup of my wrath.

¹³For I solemnly swear," says the Lord, "that Bozrah will become a pile of ruins. It will become an object of horror and ridicule, an example to be used in curses. All the towns around it will lie in ruins forever."

¹⁴I said, "I have heard a message from the Lord. A messenger has been sent among the nations to say, 'Gather your armies and march out against her! Prepare to do battle with her!'"

¹⁵The Lord says to Edom, "I will certainly make you small among nations. I will make you despised by all humankind.

¹⁶The terror you inspire in others and the arrogance of your heart have deceived you. You may make your home in the clefts of the rocks; you may occupy the highest places in the hills. But even if you made your home where the eagles nest, I would bring you down from there," says the Lord.

¹⁷ "Edom will become an object of horror. All who pass by it will be filled with horror; they will hiss out their scorn because of all the disasters that have happened to it.

¹⁸ Edom will be destroyed like Sodom and Gomorrah and the towns that were around them. No one will live there. No human being will settle in it," says the Lord.

¹⁹ "A lion coming up from the thick undergrowth along the Jordan scatters the sheep in the pastureland around it. So too I will chase the Edomites off their land. Then I will appoint over it whomever I choose. For there is no one like me, and there is no one who can call me to account. There is no ruler who can stand up against me.

²⁰ So listen to what I, the Lord, have planned against Edom, what I intend to do to the people who live in Teman. Their little ones will be dragged off. I will completely destroy their land because of what they have done.

²¹ The people of the earth will quake when they hear of their downfall. Their

cries of anguish will be heard all the way to the Gulf of Aqaba.

²²Look! Like an eagle with outspread wings, a nation will soar up and swoop down on Bozrah. At that time the soldiers of Edom will be as fearful as a woman in labor."

²³The Lord spoke about Damascus. "The people of Hamath and Arpad will be dismayed because they have heard bad news. Their courage will melt away because of worry. Their hearts will not be able to rest.

²⁴The people of Damascus will lose heart and turn to flee. Panic will grip them. Pain and anguish will seize them like a woman in labor.

²⁵How deserted will that once-famous city be, that city that was once filled with joy!

²⁶For her young men will fall in her city squares. All her soldiers will be destroyed at that time," says the Lord who rules over all.

²⁷"I will set fire to the walls of Damascus; it will burn up the palaces of Ben Hadad."

²⁸The Lord spoke about Kedar and the kingdoms of Hazor that King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon conquered. "Army of Babylon, go and attack Kedar. Lay waste those who live in the eastern desert.

²⁹Their tents and their flocks will be taken away. Their tent curtains, equipment, and camels will be carried off. People will shout to them, 'Terror is all around you!'"

³⁰The Lord says, "Flee quickly, you who live in Hazor. Take up refuge in remote places. For King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon has laid out plans to attack you. He has formed his strategy on how to defeat you."

³¹The Lord says, "Army of Babylon, go and attack a nation that lives in peace and security. They have no gates or walls to protect them. They live all alone.

³²Their camels will be taken as plunder. Their vast herds will be taken as spoil. I will scatter to the four winds those desert peoples who cut their hair short at the temples. I will bring disaster against them from every direction," says the Lord.

³³“Hazor will become a permanent wasteland, a place where only jackals live. No one will live there. No human being will settle in it.”

³⁴Early in the reign of King Zedekiah of Judah, the Lord spoke to the prophet Jeremiah about Elam.

³⁵The Lord who rules over all said, “I will kill all the archers of Elam, who are the chief source of her military might.

³⁶I will cause enemies to blow through Elam from every direction like the winds blowing in from the four quarters of heaven. I will scatter the people of Elam to the four winds. There will not be any nation where the refugees of Elam will not go.

³⁷I will make the people of Elam terrified of their enemies, who are seeking to kill them. I will vent my fierce anger and bring disaster upon them,” says the Lord. “I will send armies chasing after them until I have completely destroyed them.

³⁸I will establish my sovereignty over Elam. I will destroy their king and their leaders,” says the Lord.

³⁹“Yet in days to come I will reverse Elam’s ill fortune.” says the Lord.

50¹The Lord spoke concerning Babylon and the land of Babylonia through the prophet Jeremiah.

²“Announce the news among the nations! Proclaim it! Signal for people to pay attention! Declare the news! Do not hide it! Say: ‘Babylon will be captured. Bel will be put to shame. Marduk will be dismayed. Babylon’s idols will be put to shame. Her disgusting images will be dismayed.

³For a nation from the north will attack Babylon. It will lay her land waste. People and animals will flee out of it. No one will inhabit it.’

⁴“When that time comes,” says the Lord, “the people of Israel and Judah will return to the land together. They will come back with tears of repentance as they seek the Lord their God.

⁵They will ask the way to Zion; they will turn their faces toward it. They will come and bind themselves to the Lord in a lasting covenant that will never be forgotten.

⁶“My people have been lost sheep. Their shepherds have allowed them to go astray. They have wandered around in the mountains. They have roamed from one mountain and hill to another. They have forgotten their resting place.

⁷All who encountered them devoured them. Their enemies who did this said, ‘We are not liable for punishment! For those people have sinned against the Lord, their true pasture. They have sinned against the Lord in whom their ancestors trusted.’

⁸“People of Judah, get out of Babylon quickly! Leave the land of Babylonia! Be the first to depart! Be like the male goats that lead the herd.

⁹For I will rouse into action and bring against Babylon a host of mighty nations from the land of the north. They will set up their battle lines against her. They will come from the north and capture her. Their arrows will be like a skilled soldier who does not return from the battle empty-handed.

¹⁰Babylonia will be plundered. Those who plunder it will take all they want,” says the Lord.

¹¹ "People of Babylon, you plundered my people. That made you happy and glad. You frolic about like calves in a pasture. Your joyous sounds are like the neighs of a stallion.

¹² But Babylon will be put to great shame. The land where you were born will be disgraced. Indeed, Babylon will become the least important of all nations. It will become a dry and barren desert.

¹³ After I vent my wrath on it Babylon will be uninhabited. It will be totally desolate. All who pass by will be filled with horror and will hiss out their scorn because of all the disasters that have happened to it.

¹⁴ "Take up your battle positions all around Babylon, all you soldiers who are armed with bows. Shoot all your arrows at her! Do not hold any back! For she has sinned against the Lord.

¹⁵ Shout the battle cry from all around the city. She will throw up her hands in surrender. Her towers will fall. Her walls will be torn down. Because I, the Lord, am wreaking revenge, take out your

vengeance on her! Do to her as she has done!

¹⁶Kill all the farmers who sow the seed in the land of Babylon. Kill all those who wield the sickle at harvest time. Let all the foreigners return to their own people. Let them hurry back to their own lands to escape destruction by that enemy army.

¹⁷"The people of Israel are like scattered sheep which lions have chased away. First the king of Assyria devoured them. Now last of all King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon has gnawed their bones.

¹⁸So I, the Lord God of Israel who rules over all, say: 'I will punish the king of Babylon and his land just as I punished the king of Assyria.

¹⁹But I will restore the flock of Israel to their own pasture. They will graze on Mount Carmel and the land of Bashan. They will eat until they are full on the hills of Ephraim and the land of Gilead.

²⁰When that time comes, no guilt will be found in Israel. No sin will be found in Judah. For I will forgive those of them

I have allowed to survive. I, the Lord, affirm it!"

²¹ The Lord says, "Attack the land of Merathaim and the people who live in Pekod! Pursue, kill, and completely destroy them! Do just as I have commanded you!

²² The noise of battle can be heard in the land of Babylonia. There is the sound of great destruction.

²³ Babylon hammered the whole world to pieces. But see how that 'hammer' has been broken and shattered! See what an object of horror Babylon has become among the nations!

²⁴ I set a trap for you, Babylon; you were caught before you knew it. You fought against me. So you were found and captured.

²⁵ I have opened up the place where my weapons are stored. I have brought out the weapons for carrying out my wrath. For I, the Lord God who rules over all, have work to carry out in the land of Babylonia.

²⁶ Come from far away and attack Babylonia! Open up the places where she stores her grain! Pile her up in ruins!

Destroy her completely! Do not leave anyone alive!

²⁷ Kill all her soldiers! Let them be slaughtered! They are doomed, for their day of reckoning has come, the time for them to be punished."

²⁸ Listen! Fugitives and refugees are coming from the land of Babylon. They are coming to Zion to declare there how the Lord our God is getting revenge, getting revenge for what they have done to his temple.

²⁹ "Call for archers to come against Babylon! Summon against her all who draw the bow! Set up camp all around the city! Do not allow anyone to escape! Pay her back for what she has done. Do to her what she has done to others. For she has proudly defied me, the Holy One of Israel.

³⁰ So her young men will fall in her city squares. All her soldiers will be destroyed at that time," says the Lord.

³¹ "Listen! I am opposed to you, you proud city," says the Lord God who rules over all. "Indeed, your day of reckoning has come, the time when I will punish you.

³²You will stumble and fall, you proud city; no one will help you get up. I will set fire to your towns; it will burn up everything that surrounds you."

³³The Lord who rules over all says, "The people of Israel are oppressed. So too are the people of Judah. All those who took them captive are holding them prisoners. They refuse to set them free.

³⁴But the one who will rescue them is strong. He is known as the Lord who rules over all. He will strongly champion their cause. As a result he will bring peace and rest to the earth, but trouble and turmoil to the people who inhabit Babylonia.

³⁵"Destructive forces will come against the Babylonians," says the Lord. "They will come against the people who inhabit Babylonia, against her leaders and her men of wisdom.

³⁶Destructive forces will come against her false prophets; they will be shown to be fools! Destructive forces will come against her soldiers; they will be filled with terror!

³⁷Destructive forces will come against her horses and her chariots. Destructive

forces will come against all the foreign troops within her; they will be as frightened as women! Destructive forces will come against her treasures; they will be taken away as plunder!

³⁸A drought will come upon her land; her rivers and canals will be dried up. All of this will happen because her land is filled with idols. Her people act like madmen because of those idols they fear.

³⁹Therefore desert creatures and jackals will live there. Ostriches will dwell in it too. But no people will ever live there again. No one will dwell there for all time to come.

⁴⁰I will destroy Babylonia just like I did Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighboring towns. No one will live there. No human being will settle in it," says the Lord.

⁴¹"Look! An army is about to come from the north. A mighty nation and many kings are stirring into action in faraway parts of the earth.

⁴²Its soldiers are armed with bows and spears. They are cruel and show no mercy. They sound like the roaring

sea as they ride forth on their horses. Lined up in formation like men going into battle, they are coming against you, fair Babylon!

⁴³The king of Babylon will become paralyzed with fear when he hears news of their coming. Anguish will grip him, agony like that of a woman giving birth to a baby.

⁴⁴"A lion coming up from the thick undergrowth along the Jordan scatters the sheep in the pastureland around it. So too I will chase the Babylonians off of their land. Then I will appoint over it whomever I choose. For there is no one like me. There is no one who can call me to account. There is no ruler that can stand up against me.

⁴⁵So listen to what I, the Lord, have planned against Babylon, what I intend to do to the people who inhabit the land of Babylonia. Their little ones will be dragged off. I will completely destroy their land because of what they have done.

⁴⁶The people of the earth will quake when they hear Babylon has been

captured. Her cries of anguish will be heard by the other nations.”

51 ¹The Lord says, “I will cause a destructive wind to blow against Babylon and the people who inhabit Babylonia.

²I will send people to winnow Babylonia like a wind blowing away chaff. They will winnow her and strip her land bare. This will happen when they come against her from every direction, when it is time to destroy her.

³Do not give her archers time to string their bows or to put on their coats of armor. Do not spare any of her young men. Completely destroy her whole army.

⁴Let them fall slain in the land of Babylonia, mortally wounded in the streets of her cities.

⁵“For Israel and Judah will not be forsaken by their God, the Lord who rules over all. For the land of Babylonia is full of guilt against the Holy One of Israel.

⁶Get out of Babylonia quickly, you foreign people. Flee to save your lives. Do not let yourselves be killed because

of her sins. For it is time for the Lord to wreak his revenge. He will pay Babylonia back for what she has done.

⁷ Babylonia had been a gold cup in the Lord's hand. She had made the whole world drunk. The nations had drunk from the wine of her wrath. So they have all gone mad.

⁸ But suddenly Babylonia will fall and be destroyed. Cry out in mourning over it! Get medicine for her wounds! Perhaps she can be healed!

⁹ Foreigners living there will say, 'We tried to heal her, but she could not be healed. Let's leave Babylonia and each go back to his own country. For judgment on her will be vast in its proportions. It will be like it is piled up to heaven, stacked up into the clouds.'

¹⁰ The exiles from Judah will say, 'The Lord has brought about a great deliverance for us! Come on, let's go and proclaim in Zion what the Lord our God has done!'

¹¹ "Sharpen your arrows! Fill your quivers! The Lord will arouse a spirit of hostility in the kings of Media. For he intends to destroy Babylonia. For that

is how the Lord will get his revenge – how he will get his revenge for the Babylonians' destruction of his temple.

¹²Give the signal to attack Babylon's wall! Bring more guards! Post them all around the city! Put men in ambush! For the Lord will do what he has planned. He will do what he said he would do to the people of Babylon.

¹³"You who live along the rivers of Babylon, the time of your end has come. You who are rich in plundered treasure, it is time for your lives to be cut off.

¹⁴The Lord who rules over all has solemnly sworn, 'I will fill your land with enemy soldiers. They will swarm over it like locusts. They will raise up shouts of victory over it.'

¹⁵He is the one who by his power made the earth. He is the one who by his wisdom fixed the world in place, by his understanding he spread out the heavens.

¹⁶When his voice thunders, the waters in the heavens roar. He makes the clouds rise from the far-off horizons. He makes the lightning flash out in the midst of

the rain. He unleashes the wind from the places where he stores it.

¹⁷All idolaters will prove to be stupid and ignorant. Every goldsmith will be disgraced by the idol he made. For the image he forges is merely a sham. There is no breath in any of those idols.

¹⁸They are worthless, objects to be ridiculed. When the time comes to punish them, they will be destroyed.

¹⁹The Lord, who is the portion of the descendants of Jacob, is not like them. For he is the one who created everything, including the people of Israel whom he claims as his own. He is known as the Lord who rules over all.

²⁰"Babylon, you are my war club, my weapon for battle. I used you to smash nations. I used you to destroy kingdoms.

²¹I used you to smash horses and their riders. I used you to smash chariots and their drivers.

²²I used you to smash men and women. I used you to smash old men and young men. I used you to smash young men and young women.

²³I used you to smash shepherds and their flocks. I used you to smash farmers

and their teams of oxen. I used you to smash governors and leaders."

²⁴ "But I will repay Babylon and all who live in Babylonia for all the wicked things they did in Zion right before the eyes of you Judeans," says the Lord.

²⁵ The Lord says, "Beware! I am opposed to you, Babylon! You are like a destructive mountain that destroys all the earth. I will unleash my power against you; I will roll you off the cliffs and make you like a burned-out mountain.

²⁶ No one will use any of your stones as a cornerstone. No one will use any of them in the foundation of his house. For you will lie desolate forever," says the Lord.

²⁷ "Raise up battle flags throughout the lands. Sound the trumpets calling the nations to do battle. Prepare the nations to do battle against Babylonia. Call for these kingdoms to attack her: Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz. Appoint a commander to lead the attack. Send horses against her like a swarm of locusts.

²⁸ Prepare the nations to do battle against her. Prepare the kings of the Medes. Prepare their governors and all their leaders. Prepare all the countries they rule to do battle against her.

²⁹ The earth will tremble and writhe in agony. For the Lord will carry out his plan. He plans to make the land of Babylonia a wasteland where no one lives.

³⁰ The soldiers of Babylonia will stop fighting. They will remain in their fortified cities. They will lose their strength to do battle. They will be as frightened as women. The houses in her cities will be set on fire. The gates of her cities will be broken down.

³¹ One runner after another will come to the king of Babylon. One messenger after another will come bringing news. They will bring news to the king of Babylon that his whole city has been captured.

³² They will report that the fords have been captured, the reed marshes have been burned, the soldiers are terrified.

³³ For the Lord God of Israel who rules over all says, 'Fair Babylon will be like a

threshing floor which has been trampled flat for harvest. The time for her to be cut down and harvested will come very soon.'

³⁴ "King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon devoured me and drove my people out. Like a monster from the deep he swallowed me. He filled his belly with my riches. He made me an empty dish. He completely cleaned me out."

³⁵ The person who lives in Zion says, "May Babylon pay for the violence done to me and to my relatives." Jerusalem says, "May those living in Babylonia pay for the bloodshed of my people."

³⁶ Therefore the Lord says, "I will stand up for your cause. I will pay the Babylonians back for what they have done to you. I will dry up their sea. I will make their springs run dry.

³⁷ Babylon will become a heap of ruins. Jackals will make their home there. It will become an object of horror and of hissing scorn, a place where no one lives.

³⁸ The Babylonians are all like lions roaring for prey. They are like lion cubs growling for something to eat.

³⁹When their appetites are all stirred up, I will set out a banquet for them. I will make them drunk so that they will pass out, they will fall asleep forever, they will never wake up," says the Lord.

⁴⁰"I will lead them off to be slaughtered like lambs, rams, and male goats."

⁴¹"See how Babylon has been captured! See how the pride of the whole earth has been taken! See what an object of horror Babylon has become among the nations!

⁴²The sea has swept over Babylon. She has been covered by a multitude of its waves.

⁴³The towns of Babylonia have become heaps of ruins. She has become a dry and barren desert. No one lives in those towns any more. No one even passes through them.

⁴⁴I will punish the god Bel in Babylon. I will make him spit out what he has swallowed. The nations will not come streaming to him any longer. Indeed, the walls of Babylon will fall."

⁴⁵"Get out of Babylon, my people! Flee to save your lives from the fierce anger of the Lord!

⁴⁶Do not lose your courage or become afraid because of the reports that are heard in the land. For a report will come in one year. Another report will follow it in the next. There will be violence in the land with ruler fighting against ruler."

⁴⁷"So the time will certainly come when I will punish the idols of Babylon. Her whole land will be put to shame. All her mortally wounded will collapse in her midst.

⁴⁸Then heaven and earth and all that is in them will sing for joy over Babylon. For destroyers from the north will attack it," says the Lord.

⁴⁹"Babylon must fall because of the Israelites she has killed, just as the earth's mortally wounded fell because of Babylon.

⁵⁰You who have escaped the sword, go, do not delay. Remember the Lord in a faraway land. Think about Jerusalem.

⁵¹'We are ashamed because we have been insulted. Our faces show our disgrace. For foreigners have invaded the holy rooms in the Lord's temple.'

⁵²Yes, but the time will certainly come," says the Lord, "when I will punish her

idols. Throughout her land the mortally wounded will groan.

⁵³Even if Babylon climbs high into the sky and fortifies her elevated stronghold, I will send destroyers against her," says the Lord.

⁵⁴Cries of anguish will come from Babylon, the sound of great destruction from the land of the Babylonians.

⁵⁵For the Lord is ready to destroy Babylon, and put an end to her loud noise. Their waves will roar like turbulent waters. They will make a deafening noise.

⁵⁶For a destroyer is attacking Babylon. Her warriors will be captured; their bows will be broken. For the Lord is a God who punishes; he pays back in full.

⁵⁷"I will make her officials and wise men drunk, along with her governors, leaders, and warriors. They will fall asleep forever and never wake up," says the King whose name is the Lord who rules over all.

⁵⁸This is what the Lord who rules over all says, "Babylon's thick wall will be completely demolished. Her high gates will be set on fire. The peoples strive

for what does not satisfy. The nations grow weary trying to get what will be destroyed."

⁵⁹This is the order Jeremiah the prophet gave to Seraiah son of Neriah, son of Mahseiah, when he went to King Zedekiah of Judah in Babylon during the fourth year of his reign. (Seraiah was a quartermaster.)

⁶⁰Jeremiah recorded on one scroll all the judgments that would come upon Babylon - all these prophecies written about Babylon.

⁶¹Then Jeremiah said to Seraiah, "When you arrive in Babylon, make sure you read aloud all these prophecies.

⁶²Then say, 'O Lord, you have announced that you will destroy this place so that no people or animals live in it any longer. Certainly it will lie desolate forever!'

⁶³When you finish reading this scroll aloud, tie a stone to it and throw it into the middle of the Euphrates River.

⁶⁴Then say, 'In the same way Babylon will sink and never rise again because of the judgments I am ready to bring

upon her; they will grow faint.'" The prophecies of Jeremiah end here.

52¹ Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he became king, and he ruled in Jerusalem for eleven years. His mother's name was Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah, from Libnah.

² He did what displeased the Lord just as Jehoiakim had done.

³ What follows is a record of what happened to Jerusalem and Judah because of the Lord's anger when he drove them out of his sight. Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

⁴ King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon came against Jerusalem with his whole army and set up camp outside it. They built siege ramps all around it. He arrived on the tenth day of the tenth month in the ninth year that Zedekiah ruled over Judah.

⁵ The city remained under siege until Zedekiah's eleventh year.

⁶ By the ninth day of the fourth month the famine in the city was so severe the residents had no food.

⁷ They broke through the city walls, and all the soldiers tried to escape. They

left the city during the night. They went through the gate between the two walls that is near the king's garden. (The Babylonians had the city surrounded.) Then they headed for the Jordan Valley.

⁸But the Babylonian army chased after the king. They caught up with Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho, and his entire army deserted him.

⁹They captured him and brought him up to the king of Babylon at Riblah in the territory of Hamath and he passed sentence on him there.

¹⁰The king of Babylon had Zedekiah's sons put to death while Zedekiah was forced to watch. He also had all the nobles of Judah put to death there at Riblah.

¹¹He had Zedekiah's eyes put out and had him bound in chains. Then the king of Babylon had him led off to Babylon and he was imprisoned there until the day he died.

¹²On the tenth day of the fifth month, in the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal

guard who served the king of Babylon, arrived in Jerusalem.

¹³He burned down the Lord's temple, the royal palace, and all the houses in Jerusalem, including every large house.

¹⁴The whole Babylonian army that came with the captain of the royal guard tore down the walls that surrounded Jerusalem.

¹⁵Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal guard, took into exile some of the poor, the rest of the people who remained in the city, those who had deserted to him, and the rest of the craftsmen.

¹⁶But he left behind some of the poor and gave them fields and vineyards.

¹⁷The Babylonians broke the two bronze pillars in the temple of the Lord, as well as the movable stands and the large bronze basin called the "The Sea." They took all the bronze to Babylon.

¹⁸They also took the pots, shovels, trimming shears, basins, pans, and all the bronze utensils used by the priests.

¹⁹The captain of the royal guard took the gold and silver bowls, censers, basins, pots, lampstands, pans, and vessels.

²⁰The bronze of the items that King Solomon made for the Lord's temple (including the two pillars, the large bronze basin called "The Sea," the twelve bronze bulls under "The Sea," and the movable stands) was too heavy to be weighed.

²¹Each of the pillars was about 27 feet high, about 18 feet in circumference, three inches thick, and hollow.

²²The bronze top of one pillar was about seven and one-half feet high and had bronze latticework and pomegranate-shaped ornaments all around it. The second pillar with its pomegranate-shaped ornaments was like it.

²³There were ninety-six pomegranate-shaped ornaments on the sides; in all there were one hundred pomegranate-shaped ornaments over the latticework that went around it.

²⁴The captain of the royal guard took Seraiah the chief priest, Zephaniah the priest who was second in rank, and the three doorkeepers.

²⁵From the city he took an official who was in charge of the soldiers, seven of

the king's advisers who were discovered in the city, an official army secretary who drafted citizens for military service, and sixty citizens who were discovered in the middle of the city.

²⁶ Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal guard, took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah.

²⁷ The king of Babylon ordered them to be executed at Riblah in the territory of Hamath. So Judah was taken into exile away from its land.

²⁸ Here is the official record of the number of people Nebuchadnezzar carried into exile: In the seventh year, 3,023 Jews;

²⁹ in Nebuchadnezzar's eighteenth year, 832 people from Jerusalem;

³⁰ in Nebuchadnezzar's twenty-third year, Nebuzaradan, the captain of the royal guard, carried into exile 745 Judeans. In all 4,600 people went into exile.

³¹ In the thirty-seventh year of the exile of King Jehoiachin of Judah, on the twenty-fifth day of the twelfth month, Evil-Merodach, in the first year of his

reign, pardoned King Jehoiachin of Judah and released him from prison.

³²He spoke kindly to him and gave him a more prestigious position than the other kings who were with him in Babylon.

³³Jehoiachin took off his prison clothes and ate daily in the king's presence for the rest of his life.

³⁴He was given daily provisions by the king of Babylon for the rest of his life until the day he died.

Lamentations

1 ¹ (Alef) Alas! The city once full of people now sits all alone! The prominent lady among the nations has become a widow! The princess who once ruled the provinces has become a forced laborer!

² (Bet) She weeps bitterly at night; tears stream down her cheeks. She has no one to comfort her among all her lovers. All her friends have betrayed her; they have become her enemies.

³ (Gimel) Judah has departed into exile under affliction and harsh oppression. She lives among the nations; she has found no resting place. All who pursued her overtook her in narrow straits.

⁴ (Dalet) The roads to Zion mourn because no one travels to the festivals. All her city gates are deserted; her priests groan. Her virgins grieve; she is in bitter anguish!

⁵ (He) Her foes subjugated her; her enemies are at ease. For the Lord

afflicted her because of her many acts of rebellion. Her children went away captive before the enemy.

⁶ (Vav) All of Daughter Zion's splendor has departed. Her leaders became like deer; they found no pasture, so they were too exhausted to escape from the hunter.

⁷ (Zayin) Jerusalem remembers, when she became a poor homeless person, all her treasures that she owned in days of old. When her people fell into an enemy's grip, none of her allies came to her rescue. Her enemies gloated over her; they sneered at her downfall.

⁸ (Khet) Jerusalem committed terrible sin; therefore she became an object of scorn. All who admired her have despised her because they have seen her nakedness. She groans aloud and turns away in shame.

⁹ (Tet) Her menstrual flow has soiled her clothing; she did not consider the consequences of her sin. Her demise was astonishing, and there was no one to comfort her. She cried, "Look, O Lord, on my affliction because my enemy boasts!"

¹⁰ (Yod) An enemy grabbed all her valuables. Indeed she watched in horror as Gentiles invaded her holy temple – those whom you had commanded: “They must not enter your assembly place.”

¹¹ (Kaf) All her people groaned as they searched for a morsel of bread. They exchanged their valuables for just enough food to stay alive. “Look, O Lord! Consider that I have become worthless!”

¹² (Lamed) Is it nothing to you, all you who pass by on the road? Look and see! Is there any pain like mine? The Lord has afflicted me, he has inflicted it on me when he burned with anger.

¹³ (Mem) He sent down fire into my bones, and it overcame them. He spread out a trapper’s net for my feet; he made me turn back. He has made me desolate; I am faint all day long.

¹⁴ (Nun) My sins are bound around my neck like a yoke; they are fastened together by his hand. He has placed his yoke on my neck; he has sapped my strength. The Lord has handed me over to those whom I cannot resist.

¹⁵ (Samek) He rounded up all my mighty ones; The Lord did this in my

midst. He summoned an assembly against me to shatter my young men. The Lord has stomped like grapes the virgin daughter, Judah.

¹⁶ (Ayin) I weep because of these things; my eyes flow with tears. For there is no one in sight who can comfort me or encourage me. My children are desolated because an enemy has prevailed.

¹⁷ (Pe) Zion spread out her hands, but there is no one to comfort her. The Lord has issued a decree against Jacob; his neighbors have become his enemies. Jerusalem has become like filthy garbage in their midst.

¹⁸ (Tsade) The Lord is right to judge me! Yes, I rebelled against his commands. Please listen, all you nations, and look at my suffering! My young women and men have gone into exile.

¹⁹ (Qof) I called for my lovers, but they had deceived me. My priests and my elders perished in the city. Truly they had searched for food to keep themselves alive.

²⁰ (Resh) Look, O Lord! I am distressed; my stomach is in knots! My

heart is pounding inside me. Yes, I was terribly rebellious! Out in the street the sword bereaves a mother of her children; Inside the house death is present.

²¹ (Sin/Shin) They have heard that I groan, yet there is no one to comfort me. All my enemies have heard of my trouble; they are glad that you have brought it about. Bring about the day of judgment that you promised so that they may end up like me!

²² (Tav) Let all their wickedness come before you; afflict them just as you have afflicted me because of all my acts of rebellion. For my groans are many, and my heart is sick with sorrow.

2¹ (Alef) Alas! The Lord has covered Daughter Zion with his anger. He has thrown down the splendor of Israel from heaven to earth; he did not protect his temple when he displayed his anger.

² (Bet) The Lord destroyed mercilessly all the homes of Jacob's descendants. In his anger he tore down the fortified cities of Daughter Judah. He knocked to the ground and humiliated the kingdom and its rulers.

³ (Gimel) In fierce anger he destroyed the whole army of Israel. He withdrew his right hand as the enemy attacked. He was like a raging fire in the land of Jacob; it consumed everything around it.

⁴ (Dalet) He prepared his bow like an enemy; his right hand was ready to shoot. Like a foe he killed everyone, even our strong young men; he has poured out his anger like fire on the tent of Daughter Zion.

⁵ (He) The Lord, like an enemy, destroyed Israel. He destroyed all her palaces; he ruined her fortified cities. He made everyone in Daughter Judah mourn and lament.

⁶ (Vav) He destroyed his temple as if it were a vineyard; he destroyed his appointed meeting place. The Lord has made those in Zion forget both the festivals and the Sabbaths. In his fierce anger he has spurned both king and priest.

⁷ (Zayin) The Lord rejected his altar and abhorred his temple. He handed over to the enemy her palace walls; the enemy shouted in the Lord's temple as if it were a feast day.

⁸ (Khet) The Lord was determined to tear down Daughter Zion's wall. He prepared to knock it down; he did not withdraw his hand from destroying. He made the ramparts and fortified walls lament; together they mourned their ruin.

⁹ (Tet) Her city gates have fallen to the ground; he smashed to bits the bars that lock her gates. Her king and princes were taken into exile; there is no more guidance available. As for her prophets, they no longer receive a vision from the Lord.

¹⁰ (Yod) The elders of Daughter Zion sit on the ground in silence. They have thrown dirt on their heads; They have dressed in sackcloth. Jerusalem's young women stare down at the ground.

¹¹ (Kaf) My eyes are worn out from weeping; my stomach is in knots. My heart is poured out on the ground due to the destruction of my helpless people; children and infants faint in the town squares.

¹² (Lamed) Children say to their mothers, "Where are food and drink?" They faint like a wounded warrior in the

city squares. They die slowly in their mothers' arms.

¹³ (Mem) With what can I equate you? To what can I compare you, O Daughter Jerusalem? To what can I liken you so that I might comfort you, O Virgin Daughter Zion? Your wound is as deep as the sea. Who can heal you?

¹⁴ (Nun) Your prophets saw visions for you that were worthless lies. They failed to expose your sin so as to restore your fortunes. They saw oracles for you that were worthless lies.

¹⁵ (Samek) All who passed by on the road clapped their hands to mock you. They sneered and shook their heads at Daughter Jerusalem. "Ha! Is this the city they called 'The perfection of beauty, the source of joy of the whole earth!'"

¹⁶ (Pe) All your enemies gloated over you. They sneered and gnashed their teeth; they said, "We have destroyed her! Ha! We have waited a long time for this day. We have lived to see it!"

¹⁷ (Ayin) The Lord has done what he planned; he has fulfilled his promise that he threatened long ago: He has overthrown you without mercy and has

enabled the enemy to gloat over you; he has exalted your adversaries' power.

¹⁸ (Tsade) Cry out from your heart to the Lord, O wall of Daughter Zion! Make your tears flow like a river all day and all night long! Do not rest; do not let your tears stop!

¹⁹ (Qof) Get up! Cry out in the night when the night watches start! Pour out your heart like water before the face of the Lord! Lift up your hands to him for your children's lives; they are fainting at every street corner.

²⁰ (Resh) Look, O Lord! Consider! Whom have you ever afflicted like this? Should women eat their offspring, their healthy infants? Should priest and prophet be killed in the Lord's sanctuary?

²¹ (Sin/Shin) The young boys and old men lie dead on the ground in the streets. My young women and my young men have fallen by the sword. You killed them when you were angry; you slaughtered them without mercy.

²² (Tav) As if it were a feast day, you call enemies to terrify me on every side. On the day of the Lord's anger no one escaped or survived. My enemy has

finished off those healthy infants whom I bore and raised.

3¹ (Alef) I am the man who has experienced affliction from the rod of his wrath.

²He drove me into captivity and made me walk in darkness and not light.

³He repeatedly attacks me, he turns his hand against me all day long.

⁴(Bet) He has made my mortal skin waste away; he has broken my bones.

⁵He has besieged and surrounded me with bitter hardship.

⁶He has made me reside in deepest darkness like those who died long ago.

⁷(Gimel) He has walled me in so that I cannot get out; he has weighted me down with heavy prison chains.

⁸Also, when I cry out desperately for help, he has shut out my prayer.

⁹He has blocked every road I take with a wall of hewn stones; he has made every path impassable.

¹⁰(Dalet) To me he is like a bear lying in ambush, like a hidden lion stalking its prey.

¹¹He has obstructed my paths and torn me to pieces; he has made me desolate.

¹²He drew his bow and made me the target for his arrow.

¹³(He) He shot his arrows into my heart.

¹⁴I have become the laughingstock of all people, their mocking song all day long.

¹⁵He has given me my fill of bitter herbs and made me drunk with bitterness.

¹⁶(Vav) He ground my teeth in gravel; he trampled me in the dust.

¹⁷I am deprived of peace; I have forgotten what happiness is.

¹⁸So I said, "My endurance has expired; I have lost all hope of deliverance from the Lord."

¹⁹(Zayin) Remember my impoverished and homeless condition, which is a bitter poison.

²⁰I continually think about this, and I am depressed.

²¹But this I call to mind; therefore I have hope:

²²(Khet) The Lord's loyal kindness never ceases; his compassions never end.

²³They are fresh every morning; your faithfulness is abundant!

²⁴ "My portion is the Lord," I have said to myself, so I will put my hope in him.

²⁵ (Tet) The Lord is good to those who trust in him, to the one who seeks him.

²⁶ It is good to wait patiently for deliverance from the Lord.

²⁷ It is good for a man to bear the yoke while he is young.

²⁸ (Yod) Let a person sit alone in silence, when the Lord is disciplining him.

²⁹ Let him bury his face in the dust; perhaps there is hope.

³⁰ Let him offer his cheek to the one who hits him; let him have his fill of insults.

³¹ (Kaf) For the Lord will not reject us forever.

³² Though he causes us grief, he then has compassion on us according to the abundance of his loyal kindness.

³³ For he is not predisposed to afflict or to grieve people.

³⁴ (Lamed) To crush underfoot all the earth's prisoners,

³⁵ to deprive a person of his rights in the presence of the Most High,

³⁶ to defraud a person in a lawsuit – the Lord does not approve of such things!

³⁷ (Mem) Whose command was ever fulfilled unless the Lord decreed it?

³⁸ Is it not from the mouth of the Most High that everything comes – both calamity and blessing?

³⁹ Why should any living person complain when punished for his sins?

⁴⁰ (Nun) Let us carefully examine our ways, and let us return to the Lord.

⁴¹ Let us lift up our hearts and our hands to God in heaven:

⁴² “We have blatantly rebelled; you have not forgiven.”

⁴³ (Samek) You shrouded yourself with anger and then pursued us; you killed without mercy.

⁴⁴ You shrouded yourself with a cloud so that no prayer can get through.

⁴⁵ You make us like filthy scum in the estimation of the nations.

⁴⁶ (Pe) All our enemies have gloated over us;

⁴⁷ Panic and pitfall have come upon us, devastation and destruction.

⁴⁸ Streams of tears flow from my eyes because my people are destroyed.

⁴⁹ (Ayin) Tears flow from my eyes and will not stop; there will be no break
⁵⁰ until the Lord looks down from heaven and sees what has happened.

⁵¹ What my eyes see grieves me – all the suffering of the daughters in my city.

⁵² (Tsade) For no good reason my enemies hunted me down like a bird.

⁵³ They shut me up in a pit and threw stones at me.

⁵⁴ The waters closed over my head; I thought I was about to die.

⁵⁵ (Qof) I have called on your name, O Lord, from the deepest pit.

⁵⁶ You heard my plea: "Do not close your ears to my cry for relief!"

⁵⁷ You came near on the day I called to you; you said, "Do not fear!"

⁵⁸ (Resh) O Lord, you championed my cause, you redeemed my life.

⁵⁹ You have seen the wrong done to me, O Lord; pronounce judgment on my behalf!

⁶⁰ You have seen all their vengeance, all their plots against me.

⁶¹ (Sin/Shin) You have heard their taunts, O Lord, all their plots against me.

⁶² My assailants revile and conspire against me all day long.

⁶³ Watch them from morning to evening; I am the object of their mocking songs.

⁶⁴ (Tav) Pay them back what they deserve, O Lord, according to what they have done.

⁶⁵ Give them a distraught heart; may your curse be on them!

⁶⁶ Pursue them in anger and eradicate them from under the Lord's heaven.

4¹ (Alef) Alas! Gold has lost its luster; pure gold loses value. Jewels are scattered on every street corner.

² (Bet) The precious sons of Zion were worth their weight in gold – Alas! – but now they are treated like broken clay pots, made by a potter.

³ (Gimel) Even the jackals nurse their young at their breast, but my people are cruel, like ostriches in the desert.

⁴ (Dalet) The infant's tongue sticks to the roof of its mouth due to thirst; little children beg for bread, but no one gives them even a morsel.

⁵ (He) Those who once feasted on delicacies are now starving to death in the streets. Those who grew up wearing

expensive clothes are now dying amid garbage.

⁶ (Vav) The punishment of my people exceeded that of of Sodom, which was overthrown in a moment with no one to help her.

⁷ (Zayin) Her consecrated ones were brighter than snow, whiter than milk; their bodies more ruddy than corals, their hair like lapis lazuli.

⁸ (Khet) Now their appearance is darker than soot; they are not recognized in the streets. Their skin has shriveled on their bones; it is dried up, like tree bark.

⁹ (Tet) Those who died by the sword are better off than those who die of hunger, those who waste away, struck down from lack of food.

¹⁰ (Yod) The hands of tenderhearted women cooked their own children, who became their food, when my people were destroyed.

¹¹ (Kaf) The Lord fully vented his wrath; he poured out his fierce anger. He started a fire in Zion; it consumed her foundations.

¹² (Lamed) Neither the kings of the earth nor the people of the lands ever thought that enemy or foe would enter the gates of Jerusalem.

¹³ (Mem) But it happened due to the sins of her prophets and the iniquities of her priests, who poured out in her midst the blood of the righteous.

¹⁴ (Nun) They wander blindly through the streets, defiled by the blood they shed, while no one dares to touch their garments.

¹⁵ (Samek) People cry to them, "Turn away! You are unclean! Turn away! Turn away! Don't touch us!" So they have fled and wander about; but the nations say, "They may not stay here any longer."

¹⁶ (Pe) The Lord himself has scattered them; he no longer watches over them. They did not honor the priests; they did not show favor to the elders.

¹⁷ (Ayin) Our eyes continually failed us as we looked in vain for help. From our watchtowers we watched for a nation that could not rescue us.

¹⁸ (Tsade) Our enemies hunted us down at every step so that we could not walk about in our streets. Our end drew

near, our days were numbered, for our end had come!

¹⁹ (Qof) Those who pursued us were swifter than eagles in the sky. They chased us over the mountains; they ambushed us in the wilderness.

²⁰ (Resh) Our very life breath – the Lord’s anointed king – was caught in their traps, of whom we thought, “Under his protection we will survive among the nations.”

²¹ (Sin/Shin) Rejoice and be glad for now, O people of Edom, who reside in the land of Uz. But the cup of judgment will pass to you also; you will get drunk and take off your clothes.

²² (Tav) O people of Zion, your punishment will come to an end; he will not prolong your exile. But, O people of Edom, he will punish your sin and reveal your offenses!

5¹ O Lord, reflect on what has happened to us; consider and look at our disgrace.

² Our inheritance is turned over to strangers; foreigners now occupy our homes.

³We have become fatherless orphans; our mothers have become widows.

⁴We must pay money for our own water; we must buy our own wood at a steep price.

⁵We are pursued – they are breathing down our necks; we are weary and have no rest.

⁶We have submitted to Egypt and Assyria in order to buy food to eat.

⁷Our forefathers sinned and are dead, but we suffer their punishment.

⁸Slaves rule over us; there is no one to rescue us from their power.

⁹At the risk of our lives we get our food because robbers lurk in the countryside.

¹⁰Our skin is hot as an oven due to a fever from hunger.

¹¹They raped women in Zion, virgins in the towns of Judah.

¹²Princes were hung by their hands; elders were mistreated.

¹³The young men perform menial labor; boys stagger from their labor.

¹⁴The elders are gone from the city gate; the young men have stopped playing their music.

¹⁵Our hearts no longer have any joy;
our dancing is turned to mourning.

¹⁶The crown has fallen from our head;
woe to us, for we have sinned!

¹⁷Because of this, our hearts are sick;
because of these things, we can hardly
see through our tears.

¹⁸For wild animals are prowling over
Mount Zion, which lies desolate.

¹⁹But you, O Lord, reign forever; your
throne endures from generation to
generation.

²⁰Why do you keep on forgetting us?
Why do you forsake us so long?

²¹Bring us back to yourself, O Lord, so
that we may return to you; renew our
life as in days before,

²²unless you have utterly rejected us
and are angry with us beyond measure.

Ezekiel

1 ¹In the thirtieth year, on the fifth day of the fourth month, while I was among the exiles at the Kebar River, the heavens opened and I saw a divine vision.

²(On the fifth day of the month – it was the fifth year of King Jehoiachin’s exile – ³the word of the Lord came to the priest Ezekiel the son of Buzi, at the Kebar River in the land of the Babylonians. The hand of the Lord came on him there).

⁴As I watched, I noticed a windstorm coming from the north – an enormous cloud, with lightning flashing, such that bright light rimmed it and came from it like glowing amber from the middle of a fire.

⁵In the fire were what looked like four living beings. In their appearance they had human form,

⁶but each had four faces and four wings.

⁷ Their legs were straight, but the soles of their feet were like calves' feet. They gleamed like polished bronze.

⁸ They had human hands under their wings on their four sides. As for the faces and wings of the four of them,

⁹ their wings touched each other; they did not turn as they moved, but went straight ahead.

¹⁰ Their faces had this appearance: Each of the four had the face of a man, with the face of a lion on the right, the face of an ox on the left and also the face of an eagle.

¹¹ Their wings were spread out above them; each had two wings touching the wings of one of the other beings on either side and two wings covering their bodies.

¹² Each moved straight ahead – wherever the spirit would go, they would go, without turning as they went.

¹³ In the middle of the living beings was something like burning coals of fire or like torches. It moved back and forth among the living beings. It was bright, and lightning was flashing out of the fire.

¹⁴The living beings moved backward and forward as quickly as flashes of lightning.

¹⁵Then I looked, and I saw one wheel on the ground beside each of the four beings.

¹⁶The appearance of the wheels and their construction was like gleaming jasper, and all four wheels looked alike. Their structure was like a wheel within a wheel.

¹⁷When they moved they would go in any of the four directions they faced without turning as they moved.

¹⁸Their rims were high and awesome, and the rims of all four wheels were full of eyes all around.

¹⁹When the living beings moved, the wheels beside them moved; when the living beings rose up from the ground, the wheels rose up too.

²⁰Wherever the spirit would go, they would go, and the wheels would rise up beside them because the spirit of the living being was in the wheel.

²¹When the living beings moved, the wheels moved, and when they stopped moving, the wheels stopped. When they

rose up from the ground, the wheels rose up from the ground; the wheels rose up beside them because the spirit of the living being was in the wheel.

²²Over the heads of the living beings was something like a platform, glittering awesomely like ice, stretched out over their heads.

²³Under the platform their wings were stretched out, each toward the other. Each of the beings also had two wings covering its body.

²⁴When they moved, I heard the sound of their wings - it was like the sound of rushing waters, or the voice of the Almighty, or the tumult of an army. When they stood still, they lowered their wings.

²⁵Then there was a voice from above the platform over their heads when they stood still.

²⁶Above the platform over their heads was something like a sapphire shaped like a throne. High above on the throne was a form that appeared to be a man.

²⁷I saw an amber glow like a fire enclosed all around from his waist up. From his waist down I saw something

that looked like fire. There was a brilliant light around it,

²⁸like the appearance of a rainbow in the clouds after the rain. This was the appearance of the surrounding brilliant light; it looked like the glory of the Lord. When I saw it, I threw myself face down, and I heard a voice speaking.

2¹ He said to me, "Son of man, stand on your feet and I will speak with you."

²As he spoke to me, a wind came into me and stood me on my feet, and I heard the one speaking to me.

³He said to me, "Son of man, I am sending you to the house of Israel, to rebellious nations who have rebelled against me; both they and their fathers have revolted against me to this very day.

⁴The people to whom I am sending you are obstinate and hard-hearted, and you must say to them, 'This is what the sovereign Lord says.'

⁵And as for them, whether they listen or not – for they are a rebellious house – they will know that a prophet has been among them.

⁶But you, son of man, do not fear them, and do not fear their words – even though briars and thorns surround you and you live among scorpions – do not fear their words and do not be terrified of the looks they give you, for they are a rebellious house!

⁷You must speak my words to them whether they listen or not, for they are rebellious.

⁸As for you, son of man, listen to what I am saying to you: Do not rebel like that rebellious house! Open your mouth and eat what I am giving you.”

⁹Then I looked and realized a hand was stretched out to me, and in it was a written scroll.

¹⁰He unrolled it before me, and it had writing on the front and back; written on it were laments, mourning, and woe.

3¹He said to me, “Son of man, eat what you see in front of you – eat this scroll – and then go and speak to the house of Israel.”

²So I opened my mouth and he fed me the scroll.

³He said to me, “Son of man, feed your stomach and fill your belly with this

scroll I am giving to you." So I ate it, and it was sweet like honey in my mouth.

⁴He said to me, "Son of man, go to the house of Israel and speak my words to them.

⁵For you are not being sent to a people of unintelligible speech and difficult language, but to the house of Israel –

⁶not to many peoples of unintelligible speech and difficult language, whose words you cannot understand – surely if I had sent you to them, they would listen to you!

⁷But the house of Israel is unwilling to listen to you, because they are not willing to listen to me, for the whole house of Israel is hard-headed and hard-hearted.

⁸"I have made your face adamant to match their faces, and your forehead hard to match their foreheads.

⁹I have made your forehead harder than flint – like diamond! Do not fear them or be terrified of the looks they give you, for they are a rebellious house."

¹⁰And he said to me, "Son of man, take all my words that I speak to you to heart and listen carefully.

¹¹ Go to the exiles, to your fellow countrymen, and speak to them – say to them, ‘This is what the sovereign Lord says,’ whether they pay attention or not.”

¹² Then a wind lifted me up and I heard a great rumbling sound behind me as the glory of the Lord rose from its place,

¹³ and the sound of the living beings’ wings brushing against each other, and the sound of the wheels alongside them, a great rumbling sound.

¹⁴ A wind lifted me up and carried me away. I went bitterly, my spirit full of fury, and the hand of the Lord rested powerfully on me.

¹⁵ I came to the exiles at Tel Abib, who lived by the Kebar River. I sat dumbfounded among them there, where they were living, for seven days.

¹⁶ At the end of seven days the word of the Lord came to me:

¹⁷ “Son of man, I have appointed you a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you must give them a warning from me.

¹⁸When I say to the wicked, "You will certainly die," and you do not warn him – you do not speak out to warn the wicked to turn from his wicked deed and wicked lifestyle so that he may live – that wicked person will die for his iniquity, but I will hold you accountable for his death.

¹⁹But as for you, if you warn the wicked and he does not turn from his wicked deed and from his wicked lifestyle, he will die for his iniquity but you will have saved your own life.

²⁰"When a righteous person turns from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and I set an obstacle before him, he will die. If you have not warned him, he will die for his sin. The righteous deeds he performed will not be considered, but I will hold you accountable for his death.

²¹However, if you warn the righteous person not to sin, and he does not sin, he will certainly live because he was warned, and you will have saved your own life."

²²The hand of the Lord rested on me there, and he said to me, "Get up, go out to the valley, and I will speak with you there."

²³ So I got up and went out to the valley, and the glory of the Lord was standing there, just like the glory I had seen by the Kebar River, and I threw myself face down.

²⁴ Then a wind came into me and stood me on my feet. The Lord spoke to me and said, "Go shut yourself in your house.

²⁵ As for you, son of man, they will put ropes on you and tie you up with them, so you cannot go out among them.

²⁶ I will make your tongue stick to the roof of your mouth so that you will be silent and unable to reprove them, for they are a rebellious house.

²⁷ But when I speak with you, I will loosen your tongue and you must say to them, 'This is what the sovereign Lord says.' Those who listen will listen, but the indifferent will refuse, for they are a rebellious house.

4¹ "And you, son of man, take a brick and set it in front of you. Inscribe a city on it – Jerusalem.

² Lay siege to it! Build siege works against it. Erect a siege ramp against

it! Post soldiers outside it and station battering rams around it.

³Then for your part take an iron frying pan and set it up as an iron wall between you and the city. Set your face toward it. It is to be under siege; you are to besiege it. This is a sign for the house of Israel.

⁴“Also for your part lie on your left side and place the iniquity of the house of Israel on it. For the number of days you lie on your side you will bear their iniquity.

⁵I have determined that the number of the years of their iniquity are to be the number of days for you - 390 days. So bear the iniquity of the house of Israel.

⁶“When you have completed these days, then lie down a second time, but on your right side, and bear the iniquity of the house of Judah 40 days - I have assigned one day for each year.

⁷You must turn your face toward the siege of Jerusalem with your arm bared and prophesy against it.

⁸Look here, I will tie you up with ropes, so you cannot turn from one side to the

other until you complete the days of your siege.

⁹“As for you, take wheat, barley, beans, lentils, millet, and spelt, put them in a single container, and make food from them for yourself. For the same number of days that you lie on your side – 390 days – you will eat it.

¹⁰The food you eat will be eight ounces a day by weight; you must eat it at fixed times.

¹¹And you must drink water by measure, a pint and a half; you must drink it at fixed times.

¹²And you must eat the food like you would a barley cake. You must bake it in front of them over a fire made with dried human excrement.”

¹³And the Lord said, “This is how the people of Israel will eat their unclean food among the nations where I will banish them.”

¹⁴And I said, “Ah, sovereign Lord, I have never been ceremonially defiled before. I have never eaten a carcass or an animal torn by wild beasts; from my youth up, unclean meat has never entered my mouth.”

¹⁵So he said to me, "All right then, I will substitute cow's manure instead of human excrement. You will cook your food over it."

¹⁶Then he said to me, "Son of man, I am about to remove the bread supply in Jerusalem. They will eat their bread ration anxiously, and they will drink their water ration in terror

¹⁷because they will lack bread and water. Each one will be terrified, and they will rot for their iniquity.

5¹ "As for you, son of man, take a sharp sword and use it as a barber's razor. Shave off some of the hair from your head and your beard. Then take scales and divide up the hair you cut off.

²Burn a third of it in the fire inside the city when the days of your siege are completed. Take a third and slash it with a sword all around the city. Scatter a third to the wind, and I will unleash a sword behind them.

³But take a few strands of hair from those and tie them in the ends of your garment.

⁴Again, take more of them and throw them into the fire, and burn them up.

From there a fire will spread to all the house of Israel.

⁵“This is what the sovereign Lord says: This is Jerusalem; I placed her in the center of the nations with countries all around her.

⁶Then she defied my regulations and my statutes, becoming more wicked than the nations and the countries around her. Indeed, they have rejected my regulations, and they do not follow my statutes.

⁷“Therefore this is what the sovereign Lord says: Because you are more arrogant than the nations around you, you have not followed my statutes and have not carried out my regulations. You have not even carried out the regulations of the nations around you!

⁸“Therefore this is what the sovereign Lord says: I – even I – am against you, and I will execute judgment among you while the nations watch.

⁹I will do to you what I have never done before and will never do again because of all your abominable practices.

¹⁰Therefore fathers will eat their sons within you, Jerusalem, and sons will eat

their fathers. I will execute judgments on you, and I will scatter any survivors to the winds.

¹¹ “Therefore, as surely as I live, says the sovereign Lord, because you defiled my sanctuary with all your detestable idols and with all your abominable practices, I will withdraw; my eye will not pity you, nor will I spare you.

¹² A third of your people will die of plague or be overcome by the famine within you. A third of your people will fall by the sword surrounding you, and a third I will scatter to the winds. I will unleash a sword behind them.

¹³ Then my anger will be fully vented; I will exhaust my rage on them, and I will be appeased. Then they will know that I, the Lord, have spoken in my jealousy when I have fully vented my rage against them.

¹⁴ “I will make you desolate and an object of scorn among the nations around you, in the sight of everyone who passes by.

¹⁵ You will be an object of scorn and taunting, a prime example of destruction among the nations around you when

I execute judgments against you in anger and raging fury. I, the Lord, have spoken!

¹⁶I will shoot against them deadly, destructive arrows of famine, which I will shoot to destroy you. I will prolong a famine on you and will remove the bread supply.

¹⁷I will send famine and wild beasts against you and they will take your children from you. Plague and bloodshed will overwhelm you, and I will bring a sword against you. I, the Lord, have spoken!"

6¹ The word of the Lord came to me:
²"Son of man, turn toward the mountains of Israel and prophesy against them:

³Say, 'Mountains of Israel, Hear the word of the sovereign Lord! This is what the sovereign Lord says to the mountains and the hills, to the ravines and the valleys: I am bringing a sword against you, and I will destroy your high places.

⁴Your altars will be ruined and your incense altars will be broken. I will throw down your slain in front of your idols.

⁵ I will place the corpses of the people of Israel in front of their idols, and I will scatter your bones around your altars.

⁶ In all your dwellings, the cities will be laid waste and the high places ruined so that your altars will be laid waste and ruined, your idols will be shattered and demolished, your incense altars will be broken down, and your works wiped out.

⁷ The slain will fall among you and then you will know that I am the Lord.

⁸ "But I will spare some of you. Some will escape the sword when you are scattered in foreign lands.

⁹ Then your survivors will remember me among the nations where they are exiled. They will realize how I was crushed by their unfaithful heart which turned from me and by their eyes which lusted after their idols. They will loathe themselves because of the evil they have done and because of all their abominable practices.

¹⁰ They will know that I am the Lord; my threats to bring this catastrophe on them were not empty.'

¹¹ "This is what the sovereign Lord says: Clap your hands, stamp your feet,

and say, "Ah!" because of all the evil, abominable practices of the house of Israel, for they will fall by the sword, famine, and pestilence.

¹²The one far away will die by pestilence, the one close by will fall by the sword, and whoever is left and has escaped these will die by famine. I will fully vent my rage against them.

¹³Then you will know that I am the Lord – when their dead lie among their idols around their altars, on every high hill and all the mountaintops, under every green tree and every leafy oak, the places where they have offered fragrant incense to all their idols.

¹⁴I will stretch out my hand against them and make the land a desolate waste from the wilderness to Riblah, in all the places where they live. Then they will know that I am the Lord!"

7 ¹The word of the Lord came to me:
²"You, son of man – this is what the sovereign Lord says to the land of Israel: An end! The end is coming on the four corners of the land!

³The end is now upon you, and I will release my anger against you; I will

judge you according to your behavior, I will hold you accountable for all your abominable practices.

⁴My eye will not pity you; I will not spare you. For I will hold you responsible for your behavior, and you will suffer the consequences of your abominable practices. Then you will know that I am the Lord!

⁵"This is what the sovereign Lord says: A disaster – a one-of-a-kind disaster – is coming!

⁶An end comes – the end comes! It has awakened against you – the end is upon you! Look, it is coming!

⁷Doom is coming upon you who live in the land! The time is coming, the day is near. There are sounds of tumult, not shouts of joy, on the mountains.

⁸Soon now I will pour out my rage on you; I will fully vent my anger against you. I will judge you according to your behavior. I will hold you accountable for all your abominable practices.

⁹My eye will not pity you; I will not spare you. For your behavior I will hold you accountable, and you will suffer the consequences of your abominable

practices. Then you will know that it is I, the Lord, who is striking you.

¹⁰“Look, the day! Look, it is coming! Doom has gone out! The staff has budded, pride has blossomed!

¹¹Violence has grown into a staff that supports wickedness. Not one of them will be left – not from their crowd, not from their wealth, not from their prominence.

¹²The time has come; the day has struck! The customer should not rejoice, nor the seller mourn; for divine wrath comes against their whole crowd.

¹³The customer will no longer pay the seller while both parties are alive, for the vision against their whole crowd will not be revoked. Each person, for his iniquity, will fail to preserve his life.

¹⁴“They have blown the trumpet and everyone is ready, but no one goes to battle, because my anger is against their whole crowd.

¹⁵The sword is outside; pestilence and famine are inside the house. Whoever is in the open field will die by the sword, and famine and pestilence will consume everyone in the city.

¹⁶Their survivors will escape to the mountains and become like doves of the valleys; all of them will moan – each one for his iniquity.

¹⁷All of their hands will hang limp; their knees will be wet with urine.

¹⁸They will wear sackcloth, terror will cover them; shame will be on all their faces, and all of their heads will be shaved bald.

¹⁹They will discard their silver in the streets, and their gold will be treated like filth. Their silver and gold will not be able to deliver them on the day of the Lord's fury. They will not satisfy their hunger or fill their stomachs because their wealth was the obstacle leading to their iniquity.

²⁰They rendered the beauty of his ornaments into pride, and with it they made their abominable images – their detestable idols. Therefore I will render it filthy to them.

²¹I will give it to foreigners as loot, to the world's wicked ones as plunder, and they will desecrate it.

²²I will turn my face away from them and they will desecrate my treasured

place. Vandals will enter it and desecrate it.

²³ (Make the chain, because the land is full of murder and the city is full of violence.)

²⁴ I will bring the most wicked of the nations and they will take possession of their houses. I will put an end to the arrogance of the strong, and their sanctuaries will be desecrated.

²⁵ Terror is coming! They will seek peace, but find none.

²⁶ Disaster after disaster will come, and one rumor after another. They will seek a vision from a prophet; priestly instruction will disappear, along with counsel from the elders.

²⁷ The king will mourn and the prince will be clothed with shuddering; the hands of the people of the land will tremble. Based on their behavior I will deal with them, and by their standard of justice I will judge them. Then they will know that I am the Lord!"

8¹ In the sixth year, in the sixth month, on the fifth of the month, as I was sitting in my house with the elders of

Judah sitting in front of me, the hand of the sovereign Lord seized me.

²As I watched, I noticed a form that appeared to be a man. From his waist downward was something like fire, and from his waist upward something like a brightness, like an amber glow.

³He stretched out the form of a hand and grabbed me by a lock of hair on my head. Then a wind lifted me up between the earth and sky and brought me to Jerusalem by means of divine visions, to the door of the inner gate which faces north where the statue which provokes to jealousy was located.

⁴Then I perceived that the glory of the God of Israel was there, as in the vision I had seen earlier in the valley.

⁵He said to me, "Son of man, look up toward the north." So I looked up toward the north, and I noticed to the north of the altar gate was this statue of jealousy at the entrance.

⁶He said to me, "Son of man, do you see what they are doing – the great abominations that the people of Israel are practicing here, to drive me far from

my sanctuary? But you will see greater abominations than these!"

⁷ He brought me to the entrance of the court, and as I watched, I noticed a hole in the wall.

⁸ He said to me, "Son of man, dig into the wall." So I dug into the wall and discovered a doorway.

⁹ He said to me, "Go in and see the evil abominations they are practicing here."

¹⁰ So I went in and looked. I noticed every figure of creeping thing and beast – detestable images – and every idol of the house of Israel, engraved on the wall all around.

¹¹ Seventy men from the elders of the house of Israel (with Jaazaniah son of Shaphan standing among them) were standing in front of them, each with a censer in his hand, and fragrant vapors from a cloud of incense were swirling upward.

¹² He said to me, "Do you see, son of man, what the elders of the house of Israel are doing in the dark, each in the chamber of his idolatrous images? For they think, 'The Lord does not see us! The Lord has abandoned the land!'"

¹³He said to me, "You will see them practicing even greater abominations!"

¹⁴Then he brought me to the entrance of the north gate of the Lord's house. I noticed women sitting there weeping for Tammuz.

¹⁵He said to me, "Do you see this, son of man? You will see even greater abominations than these!"

¹⁶Then he brought me to the inner court of the Lord's house. Right there at the entrance to the Lord's temple, between the porch and the altar, were about twenty-five men with their backs to the Lord's temple, facing east - they were worshiping the sun toward the east!

¹⁷He said to me, "Do you see, son of man? Is it a trivial thing that the house of Judah commits these abominations they are practicing here? For they have filled the land with violence and provoked me to anger still further. Look, they are putting the branch to their nose!

¹⁸Therefore I will act with fury! My eye will not pity them nor will I spare them. When they have shouted in my ears, I will not listen to them."

9¹ Then he shouted in my ears,
“Approach, you who are to visit
destruction on the city, each with his
destructive weapon in his hand!”

² Next, I noticed six men coming from
the direction of the upper gate which
faces north, each with his war club in his
hand. Among them was a man dressed
in linen with a writing kit at his side.
They came and stood beside the bronze
altar.

³ Then the glory of the God of Israel
went up from the cherub where it had
rested to the threshold of the temple. He
called to the man dressed in linen who
had the writing kit at his side.

⁴ The Lord said to him, “Go through
the city of Jerusalem and put a mark on
the foreheads of the people who moan
and groan over all the abominations
practiced in it.”

⁵ While I listened, he said to the others,
“Go through the city after him and strike
people down; do not let your eye pity nor
spare anyone!”

⁶ Old men, young men, young women,
little children, and women – wipe them
out! But do not touch anyone who has

the mark. Begin at my sanctuary!" So they began with the elders who were at the front of the temple.

⁷ He said to them, "Defile the temple and fill the courtyards with corpses. Go!" So they went out and struck people down throughout the city.

⁸ While they were striking them down, I was left alone, and I threw myself face down and cried out, "Ah, sovereign Lord! Will you destroy the entire remnant of Israel when you pour out your fury on Jerusalem?"

⁹ He said to me, "The sin of the house of Israel and Judah is extremely great; the land is full of murder, and the city is full of corruption, for they say, 'The Lord has abandoned the land, and the Lord does not see!'

¹⁰ But as for me, my eye will not pity them nor will I spare them; I hereby repay them for what they have done."

¹¹ Next I noticed the man dressed in linen with the writing kit at his side bringing back word: "I have done just as you commanded me."

10¹ As I watched, I saw on the platform above the top of the

cherubim something like a sapphire, resembling the shape of a throne, appearing above them.

²The Lord said to the man dressed in linen, "Go between the wheelwork underneath the cherubim. Fill your hands with burning coals from among the cherubim and scatter them over the city." He went as I watched.

³(The cherubim were standing on the south side of the temple when the man went in, and a cloud filled the inner court.)

⁴Then the glory of the Lord arose from the cherub and moved to the threshold of the temple. The temple was filled with the cloud while the court was filled with the brightness of the Lord's glory.

⁵The sound of the wings of the cherubim could be heard from the outer court, like the sound of the sovereign God when he speaks.

⁶When the Lord commanded the man dressed in linen, "Take fire from within the wheelwork, from among the cherubim," the man went in and stood by one of the wheels.

⁷ Then one of the cherubim stretched out his hand toward the fire which was among the cherubim. He took some and put it into the hands of the man dressed in linen, who took it and left.

⁸ (The cherubim appeared to have the form of human hands under their wings.)

⁹ As I watched, I noticed four wheels by the cherubim, one wheel beside each cherub; the wheels gleamed like jasper.

¹⁰ As for their appearance, all four of them looked the same, something like a wheel within a wheel.

¹¹ When they moved, they would go in any of the four directions they faced without turning as they moved; in the direction the head would turn they would follow without turning as they moved,

¹² along with their entire bodies, their backs, their hands, and their wings. The wheels of the four of them were full of eyes all around.

¹³ As for their wheels, they were called "the wheelwork" as I listened.

¹⁴ Each of the cherubim had four faces: The first was the face of a cherub, the second that of a man, the third that of a lion, and the fourth that of an eagle.

¹⁵The cherubim rose up; these were the living beings I saw at the Kebar River.

¹⁶When the cherubim moved, the wheels moved beside them; when the cherubim spread their wings to rise from the ground, the wheels did not move from their side.

¹⁷When the cherubim stood still, the wheels stood still, and when they rose up, the wheels rose up with them, for the spirit of the living beings was in the wheels.

¹⁸Then the glory of the Lord moved away from the threshold of the temple and stopped above the cherubim.

¹⁹The cherubim spread their wings, and they rose up from the earth while I watched (when they went the wheels went alongside them). They stopped at the entrance to the east gate of the Lord's temple as the glory of the God of Israel hovered above them.

²⁰These were the living creatures which I saw at the Kebar River underneath the God of Israel; I knew that they were cherubim.

²¹ Each had four faces; each had four wings and the form of human hands under the wings.

²² As for the form of their faces, they were the faces whose appearance I had seen at the Kebar River. Each one moved straight ahead.

11 ¹ A wind lifted me up and brought me to the east gate of the Lord's temple that faces the east. There, at the entrance of the gate, I noticed twenty-five men. Among them I saw Jaazaniah son of Azzur and Pelatiah son of Benaiah, officials of the people.

² The Lord said to me, "Son of man, these are the men who plot evil and give wicked advice in this city.

³ They say, 'The time is not near to build houses; the city is a cooking pot and we are the meat in it.'

⁴ Therefore, prophesy against them! Prophesy, son of man!"

⁵ Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon me and said to me, "Say: This is what the Lord says: 'This is what you are thinking, O house of Israel; I know what goes through your minds.

⁶You have killed many people in this city; you have filled its streets with corpses.'

⁷Therefore, this is what the sovereign Lord says: 'The corpses you have dumped in the midst of the city are the meat, and this city is the cooking pot, but I will take you out of it.

⁸You fear the sword, so the sword I will bring against you,' declares the sovereign Lord.

⁹'But I will take you out of the city. And I will hand you over to foreigners. I will execute judgments on you.

¹⁰You will die by the sword; I will judge you at the border of Israel. Then you will know that I am the Lord.

¹¹This city will not be a cooking pot for you, and you will not be meat within it; I will judge you at the border of Israel.

¹²Then you will know that I am the Lord, whose statutes you have not followed and whose regulations you have not carried out. Instead you have behaved according to the regulations of the nations around you!'"

¹³Now, while I was prophesying, Pelatiah son of Benaiah died. Then

I threw myself face down and cried out with a loud voice, "Alas, sovereign Lord! You are completely wiping out the remnant of Israel!"

¹⁴ Then the word of the Lord came to me:

¹⁵ "Son of man, your brothers, your relatives, and the whole house of Israel, all of them are those to whom the inhabitants of Jerusalem have said, 'They have gone far away from the Lord; to us this land has been given as a possession.'

¹⁶ "Therefore say: 'This is what the sovereign Lord says: Although I have removed them far away among the nations and have dispersed them among the countries, I have been a little sanctuary for them among the lands where they have gone.'

¹⁷ "Therefore say: 'This is what the sovereign Lord says: When I regather you from the peoples and assemble you from the lands where you have been dispersed, I will give you back the country of Israel.'

¹⁸“When they return to it, they will remove from it all its detestable things and all its abominations.

¹⁹I will give them one heart and I will put a new spirit within them; I will remove the hearts of stone from their bodies and I will give them tender hearts,

²⁰so that they may follow my statutes and observe my regulations and carry them out. Then they will be my people, and I will be their God.

²¹But those whose hearts are devoted to detestable things and abominations, I hereby repay them for what they have done, says the sovereign Lord.”

²²Then the cherubim spread their wings with their wheels alongside them while the glory of the God of Israel hovered above them.

²³The glory of the Lord rose up from within the city and stopped over the mountain east of it.

²⁴Then a wind lifted me up and carried me to the exiles in Babylonia, in the vision given to me by the Spirit of God. Then the vision I had seen went up from me.

²⁵ So I told the exiles everything the Lord had shown me.

12¹ The word of the Lord came to me:

² "Son of man, you are living in the midst of a rebellious house. They have eyes to see, but do not see, and ears to hear, but do not hear, because they are a rebellious house.

³ "Therefore, son of man, pack up your belongings as if for exile. During the day, while they are watching, pretend to go into exile. Go from where you live to another place. Perhaps they will understand, although they are a rebellious house.

⁴ Bring out your belongings packed for exile during the day while they are watching. And go out at evening, while they are watching, as if for exile.

⁵ While they are watching, dig a hole in the wall and carry your belongings out through it.

⁶ While they are watching, raise your baggage onto your shoulder and carry it out in the dark. You must cover your face so that you cannot see the ground

because I have made you an object lesson to the house of Israel."

⁷So I did just as I was commanded. I carried out my belongings packed for exile during the day, and at evening I dug myself a hole through the wall with my hands. I went out in the darkness, carrying my baggage on my shoulder while they watched.

⁸The word of the Lord came to me in the morning:

⁹"Son of man, has not the house of Israel, that rebellious house, said to you, 'What are you doing?'

¹⁰Say to them, 'This is what the sovereign Lord says: The prince will raise this burden in Jerusalem, and all the house of Israel within it.'

¹¹Say, 'I am an object lesson for you. Just as I have done, it will be done to them; they will go into exile and captivity.'

¹²"The prince who is among them will raise his belongings onto his shoulder in darkness, and will go out. He will dig a hole in the wall to leave through. He will cover his face so that he cannot see the land with his eyes.

¹³ But I will throw my net over him, and he will be caught in my snare. I will bring him to Babylon, the land of the Chaldeans (but he will not see it), and there he will die.

¹⁴ All his retinue – his attendants and his troops – I will scatter to every wind; I will unleash a sword behind them.

¹⁵ "Then they will know that I am the Lord when I disperse them among the nations and scatter them among foreign countries.

¹⁶ But I will let a small number of them survive the sword, famine, and pestilence, so that they can confess all their abominable practices to the nations where they go. Then they will know that I am the Lord."

¹⁷ The word of the Lord came to me:

¹⁸ "Son of man, eat your bread with trembling, and drink your water with anxious shaking.

¹⁹ Then say to the people of the land, 'This is what the sovereign Lord says about the inhabitants of Jerusalem and of the land of Israel: They will eat their bread with anxiety and drink their water in fright, for their land will be stripped

bare of all it contains because of the violence of all who live in it.

²⁰The inhabited towns will be left in ruins and the land will be devastated. Then you will know that I am the Lord.'"

²¹The word of the Lord came to me:

²²"Son of man, what is this proverb you have in the land of Israel, 'The days pass slowly, and every vision fails'?

²³Therefore tell them, 'This is what the sovereign Lord says: I hereby end this proverb; they will not recite it in Israel any longer.' But say to them, 'The days are at hand when every vision will be fulfilled.

²⁴For there will no longer be any false visions or flattering omens amidst the house of Israel.

²⁵For I, the Lord, will speak. Whatever word I speak will be accomplished. It will not be delayed any longer. Indeed in your days, O rebellious house, I will speak the word and accomplish it, declares the sovereign Lord.'"

²⁶The word of the Lord came to me:

²⁷"Take note, son of man, the house of Israel is saying, 'The vision that he sees

is for distant days; he is prophesying about the far future.'

²⁸Therefore say to them, 'This is what the sovereign Lord says: None of my words will be delayed any longer! The word I speak will come to pass, declares the sovereign Lord.'

13¹ Then the word of the Lord came to me:

²"Son of man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel who are now prophesying. Say to the prophets who prophesy from their imagination: 'Hear the word of the Lord!

³This is what the sovereign Lord says: Woe to the foolish prophets who follow their own spirit but have seen nothing!

⁴Your prophets have become like jackals among the ruins, O Israel.

⁵You have not gone up in the breaks in the wall, nor repaired a wall for the house of Israel that it would stand strong in the battle on the day of the Lord.

⁶They see delusion and their omens are a lie. They say, "the Lord declares," though the Lord has not sent them; yet they expect their word to be confirmed.

⁷ Have you not seen a false vision and announced a lying omen when you say, "the Lord declares," although I myself never spoke?

⁸ "Therefore, this is what the sovereign Lord says: Because you have spoken false words and forecast delusion, look, I am against you, declares the sovereign Lord.

⁹ My hand will be against the prophets who see delusion and announce lying omens. They will not be included in the council of my people, nor be written in the registry of the house of Israel, nor enter the land of Israel. Then you will know that I am the sovereign Lord.

¹⁰ "This is because they have led my people astray saying, "All is well," when things are not well. When anyone builds a wall without mortar, they coat it with whitewash.

¹¹ Tell the ones who coat it with whitewash that it will fall. When there is a deluge of rain, hailstones will fall and a violent wind will break out.

¹² When the wall has collapsed, people will ask you, "Where is the whitewash you coated it with?"

¹³ "Therefore this is what the sovereign Lord says: In my rage I will make a violent wind break out. In my anger there will be a deluge of rain and hailstones in destructive fury.

¹⁴ I will break down the wall you coated with whitewash and knock it to the ground so that its foundation is exposed. When it falls you will be destroyed beneath it, and you will know that I am the Lord.

¹⁵ I will vent my rage against the wall, and against those who coated it with whitewash. Then I will say to you, "The wall is no more and those who whitewashed it are no more -

¹⁶ those prophets of Israel who would prophesy about Jerusalem and would see visions of peace for it, when there was no peace," declares the sovereign Lord.'

¹⁷ "As for you, son of man, turn toward the daughters of your people who are prophesying from their imagination. Prophesy against them

¹⁸ and say 'This is what the sovereign Lord says: Woe to those who sew bands on all their wrists and make headbands

for heads of every size to entrap people's lives! Will you entrap my people's lives, yet preserve your own lives?

¹⁹You have profaned me among my people for handfuls of barley and scraps of bread. You have put to death people who should not die and kept alive those who should not live by your lies to my people, who listen to lies!

²⁰“Therefore, this is what the sovereign Lord says: Take note that I am against your wristbands with which you entrap people's lives like birds. I will tear them from your arms and will release the people's lives, which you hunt like birds.

²¹I will tear off your headbands and rescue my people from your power; they will no longer be prey in your hands. Then you will know that I am the Lord.

²²This is because you have disheartened the righteous person with lies (although I have not grieved him), and because you have encouraged the wicked person not to turn from his evil conduct and preserve his life.

²³Therefore you will no longer see false visions and practice divination. I will

rescue my people from your power, and you will know that I am the Lord.”

14¹ Then some men from Israel’s elders came to me and sat down in front of me.

² The word of the Lord came to me:

³ “Son of man, these men have erected their idols in their hearts and placed the obstacle leading to their iniquity right before their faces. Should I really allow them to seek me?

⁴ Therefore speak to them and say to them, ‘This is what the sovereign Lord says: When any one from the house of Israel erects his idols in his heart and sets the obstacle leading to his iniquity before his face, and then consults a prophet, I the Lord am determined to answer him personally according to the enormity of his idolatry.

⁵ I will do this in order to capture the hearts of the house of Israel, who have alienated themselves from me on account of all their idols.’

⁶ “Therefore say to the house of Israel, ‘This is what the sovereign Lord says: Return! Turn from your idols, and turn your faces away from your abominations.

⁷ For when anyone from the house of Israel, or the foreigner who lives in Israel, separates himself from me and erects his idols in his heart and sets the obstacle leading to his iniquity before his face, and then consults a prophet to seek something from me, I the Lord am determined to answer him personally.

⁸ I will set my face against that person and will make him an object lesson and a byword and will cut him off from among my people. Then you will know that I am the Lord.

⁹ "As for the prophet, if he is made a fool by being deceived into speaking a prophetic word - I, the Lord, have made a fool of that prophet, and I will stretch out my hand against him and destroy him from among my people Israel.

¹⁰ They will bear their punishment; the punishment of the one who sought an oracle will be the same as the punishment of the prophet who gave it

¹¹ so that the house of Israel will no longer go astray from me, nor continue to defile themselves by all their sins. They will be my people and I will be their God, declares the sovereign Lord."

¹²The word of the Lord came to me:

¹³"Son of man, suppose a country sins against me by being unfaithful, and I stretch out my hand against it, cut off its bread supply, cause famine to come on it, and kill both people and animals.

¹⁴Even if these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they would save only their own lives by their righteousness, declares the sovereign Lord.

¹⁵"Suppose I were to send wild animals through the land and kill its children, leaving it desolate, without travelers due to the wild animals.

¹⁶Even if these three men were in it, as surely as I live, declares the sovereign Lord, they could not save their own sons or daughters; they would save only their own lives, and the land would become desolate.

¹⁷"Or suppose I were to bring a sword against that land and say, 'Let a sword pass through the land,' and I were to kill both people and animals.

¹⁸Even if these three men were in it, as surely as I live, declares the sovereign Lord, they could not save their own sons

or daughters – they would save only their own lives.

¹⁹“Or suppose I were to send a plague into that land, and pour out my rage on it with bloodshed, killing both people and animals.

²⁰Even if Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, as surely as I live, declares the sovereign Lord, they could not save their own son or daughter; they would save only their own lives by their righteousness.

²¹“For this is what the sovereign Lord says: How much worse will it be when I send my four terrible judgments – sword, famine, wild animals, and plague – to Jerusalem to kill both people and animals!

²²Yet some survivors will be left in it, sons and daughters who will be brought out. They will come out to you, and when you see their behavior and their deeds, you will be consoled about the catastrophe I have brought on Jerusalem – for everything I brought on it.

²³They will console you when you see their behavior and their deeds, because you will know that it was not without

reason that I have done everything which I have done in it, declares the sovereign Lord.”

15¹ The word of the Lord came to me:

² “Son of man, of all the woody branches among the trees of the forest, what happens to the wood of the vine?

³ Can wood be taken from it to make anything useful? Or can anyone make a peg from it to hang things on?

⁴ No! It is thrown in the fire for fuel; when the fire has burned up both ends of it and it is charred in the middle, will it be useful for anything?

⁵ Indeed! If it was not made into anything useful when it was whole, how much less can it be made into anything when the fire has burned it up and it is charred?

⁶ “Therefore, this is what the sovereign Lord says: Like the wood of the vine is among the trees of the forest which I have provided as fuel for the fire – so I will provide the residents of Jerusalem as fuel.

⁷ I will set my face against them – although they have escaped from the

fire, the fire will still consume them! Then you will know that I am the Lord, when I set my face against them.

⁸I will make the land desolate because they have acted unfaithfully, declares the sovereign Lord."

16¹The word of the Lord came to me:

²"Son of man, confront Jerusalem with her abominable practices

³and say, 'This is what the sovereign Lord says to Jerusalem: Your origin and your birth were in the land of the Canaanites; your father was an Amorite and your mother a Hittite.

⁴As for your birth, on the day you were born your umbilical cord was not cut, nor were you washed in water; you were certainly not rubbed down with salt, nor wrapped with blankets.

⁵No eye took pity on you to do even one of these things for you to spare you; you were thrown out into the open field because you were detested on the day you were born.

⁶"I passed by you and saw you kicking around helplessly in your blood. I said to you as you lay there in your blood,

"Live!" I said to you as you lay there in your blood, "Live!"

⁷ I made you plentiful like sprouts in a field; you grew tall and came of age so that you could wear jewelry. Your breasts had formed and your hair had grown, but you were still naked and bare.

⁸ "Then I passed by you and watched you, noticing that you had reached the age for love. I spread my cloak over you and covered your nakedness. I swore a solemn oath to you and entered into a marriage covenant with you, declares the sovereign Lord, and you became mine.

⁹ "Then I bathed you in water, washed the blood off you, and anointed you with fragrant oil.

¹⁰ I dressed you in embroidered clothing and put fine leather sandals on your feet. I wrapped you with fine linen and covered you with silk.

¹¹ I adorned you with jewelry. I put bracelets on your hands and a necklace around your neck.

¹² I put a ring in your nose, earrings on your ears, and a beautiful crown on your head.

¹³You were adorned with gold and silver, while your clothing was of fine linen, silk, and embroidery. You ate the finest flour, honey, and olive oil. You became extremely beautiful and attained the position of royalty.

¹⁴Your fame spread among the nations because of your beauty; your beauty was perfect because of the splendor which I bestowed on you, declares the sovereign Lord.

¹⁵“But you trusted in your beauty and capitalized on your fame by becoming a prostitute. You offered your sexual favors to every man who passed by so that your beauty became his.

¹⁶You took some of your clothing and made for yourself decorated high places; you engaged in prostitution on them. You went to him to become his.

¹⁷You also took your beautiful jewelry, made of my gold and my silver I had given to you, and made for yourself male images and engaged in prostitution with them.

¹⁸You took your embroidered clothing and used it to cover them; you offered my olive oil and my incense to them.

¹⁹As for my food that I gave you – the fine flour, olive oil, and honey I fed you – you placed it before them as a soothing aroma. That is exactly what happened, declares the sovereign Lord.

²⁰“You took your sons and your daughters whom you bore to me and you sacrificed them as food for the idols to eat. As if your prostitution not enough,

²¹you slaughtered my children and sacrificed them to the idols.

²²And with all your abominable practices and prostitution you did not remember the days of your youth when you were naked and bare, kicking around in your blood.

²³“After all of your evil – “Woe! Woe to you!” declares the sovereign Lord –

²⁴you built yourself a chamber and put up a pavilion in every public square.

²⁵At the head of every street you erected your pavilion and you disgraced your beauty when you spread your legs to every passerby and multiplied your promiscuity.

²⁶You engaged in prostitution with the Egyptians, your sexually aroused

neighbors, multiplying your promiscuity and provoking me to anger.

²⁷ So see here, I have stretched out my hand against you and cut off your rations. I have delivered you into the power of those who hate you, the daughters of the Philistines, who were ashamed by your obscene conduct.

²⁸ You engaged in prostitution with the Assyrians because your sexual desires were insatiable; you prostituted yourself with them and yet you were still not satisfied.

²⁹ Then you multiplied your promiscuity to the land of merchants, Babylonia, but you were not satisfied there either.

³⁰ "How sick is your heart, declares the sovereign Lord, when you perform all of these acts, the deeds of a bold prostitute.

³¹ When you built your chamber at the head of every street and put up your pavilion in every public square, you were not like a prostitute, because you scoffed at payment.

³² "Adulterous wife, who prefers strangers instead of her own husband!

³³ All prostitutes receive payment, but instead you give gifts to every one of your lovers. You bribe them to come to you from all around for your sexual favors!

³⁴ You were different from other prostitutes because no one solicited you. When you gave payment and no payment was given to you, you became the opposite!

³⁵ “Therefore O prostitute, hear the word of the Lord:

³⁶ This is what the sovereign Lord says: Because your lust was poured out and your nakedness was uncovered in your prostitution with your lovers, and because of all your detestable idols, and because of the blood of your children you have given to them,

³⁷ therefore, take note: I am about to gather all your lovers whom you enjoyed, both all those you loved and all those you hated. I will gather them against you from all around, and I will expose your nakedness to them, and they will see all your nakedness.

³⁸I will punish you as an adulteress and murderer deserves. I will avenge your bloody deeds with furious rage.

³⁹I will give you into their hands and they will destroy your chambers and tear down your pavilions. They will strip you of your clothing and take your beautiful jewelry and leave you naked and bare.

⁴⁰They will summon a mob who will stone you and hack you in pieces with their swords.

⁴¹They will burn down your houses and execute judgments on you in front of many women. Thus I will put a stop to your prostitution, and you will no longer give gifts to your clients.

⁴²I will exhaust my rage on you, and then my fury will turn from you. I will calm down and no longer be angry.

⁴³“Because you did not remember the days of your youth and have enraged me with all these deeds, I hereby repay you for what you have done, declares the sovereign Lord. Have you not engaged in prostitution on top of all your other abominable practices?

⁴⁴ "Observe - everyone who quotes proverbs will quote this proverb about you: "Like mother, like daughter."

⁴⁵ You are the daughter of your mother, who detested her husband and her sons, and you are the sister of your sisters who detested their husbands and their sons. Your mother was a Hittite and your father an Amorite.

⁴⁶ Your older sister was Samaria, who lived north of you with her daughters, and your younger sister, who lived south of you, was Sodom with her daughters.

⁴⁷ Have you not copied their behavior and practiced their abominable deeds? In a short time you became even more depraved in all your conduct than they were!

⁴⁸ As surely as I live, declares the sovereign Lord, your sister Sodom and her daughters never behaved as wickedly as you and your daughters have behaved.

⁴⁹ "See here - this was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: She and her daughters had majesty, abundance of food, and enjoyed carefree ease, but they did not help the poor and needy.

⁵⁰They were haughty and practiced abominable deeds before me. Therefore when I saw it I removed them.

⁵¹Samaria has not committed half the sins you have; you have done more abominable deeds than they did. You have made your sisters appear righteous with all the abominable things you have done.

⁵²So now, bear your disgrace, because you have given your sisters reason to justify their behavior. Because the sins you have committed were more abominable than those of your sisters; they have become more righteous than you. So now, be ashamed and bear the disgrace of making your sisters appear righteous.

⁵³“I will restore their fortunes, the fortunes of Sodom and her daughters, and the fortunes of Samaria and her daughters (along with your fortunes among them),

⁵⁴so that you may bear your disgrace and be ashamed of all you have done in consoling them.

⁵⁵As for your sisters, Sodom and her daughters will be restored to their former

status, Samaria and her daughters will be restored to their former status, and you and your daughters will be restored to your former status.

⁵⁶In your days of majesty, was not Sodom your sister a byword in your mouth,

⁵⁷before your evil was exposed? Now you have become an object of scorn to the daughters of Aram and all those around her and to the daughters of the Philistines – those all around you who despise you.

⁵⁸You must bear your punishment for your obscene conduct and your abominable practices, declares the Lord.

⁵⁹“For this is what the sovereign Lord says: I will deal with you according to what you have done when you despised your oath by breaking your covenant.

⁶⁰Yet I will remember the covenant I made with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish a lasting covenant with you.

⁶¹Then you will remember your conduct, and be ashamed when you receive your older and younger sisters. I

will give them to you as daughters, but not on account of my covenant with you.

⁶²I will establish my covenant with you, and then you will know that I am the Lord.

⁶³Then you will remember, be ashamed, and remain silent when I make atonement for all you have done, declares the sovereign Lord.'"

17 ¹The word of the Lord came to me:

²"Son of man, offer a riddle, and tell a parable to the house of Israel.

³Say to them: 'This is what the sovereign Lord says: "'A great eagle with broad wings, long feathers, with full plumage which was multi-hued, came to Lebanon and took the top of the cedar.

⁴He plucked off its topmost shoot; he brought it to a land of merchants and planted it in a city of traders.

⁵He took one of the seedlings of the land, placed it in a cultivated plot; a shoot by abundant water, like a willow he planted it.

⁶It sprouted and became a vine, spreading low to the ground; its branches turning toward him, its roots

were under itself. So it became a vine; it produced shoots and sent out branches.

⁷ "There was another great eagle with broad wings and thick plumage. Now this vine twisted its roots toward him and sent its branches toward him to be watered from the soil where it was planted.

⁸ In a good field, by abundant waters, it was planted to grow branches, bear fruit, and become a beautiful vine.

⁹ "Say to them: This is what the sovereign Lord says: "Will it prosper? Will he not rip out its roots and cause its fruit to rot and wither? All its foliage will wither. No strong arm or large army will be needed to pull it out by its roots.

¹⁰ Consider! It is planted, but will it prosper? Will it not wither completely when the east wind blows on it? Will it not wither in the soil where it sprouted?"

¹¹ Then the word of the Lord came to me:

¹² "Say to the rebellious house of Israel: 'Don't you know what these things mean?' Say: 'See here, the king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and took

her king and her officials prisoner and brought them to himself in Babylon.

¹³He took one from the royal family, made a treaty with him, and put him under oath. He then took the leaders of the land

¹⁴so it would be a lowly kingdom which could not rise on its own but must keep its treaty with him in order to stand.

¹⁵But this one from Israel's royal family rebelled against the king of Babylon by sending his emissaries to Egypt to obtain horses and a large army. Will he prosper? Will the one doing these things escape? Can he break the covenant and escape?

¹⁶“As surely as I live, declares the sovereign Lord, surely in the city of the king who crowned him, whose oath he despised and whose covenant he broke – in the middle of Babylon he will die!

¹⁷Pharaoh with his great army and mighty horde will not help him in battle, when siege ramps are erected and siege-walls are built to kill many people.

¹⁸He despised the oath by breaking the covenant. Take note – he gave his

promise and did all these things - he will not escape!

¹⁹“Therefore this is what the sovereign Lord says: As surely as I live, I will certainly repay him for despising my oath and breaking my covenant!

²⁰I will throw my net over him and he will be caught in my snare; I will bring him to Babylon and judge him there because of the unfaithfulness he committed against me.

²¹All the choice men among his troops will die by the sword and the survivors will be scattered to every wind. Then you will know that I, the Lord, have spoken!

²²“This is what the sovereign Lord says: “I will take a sprig from the lofty top of the cedar and plant it. I will pluck from the top one of its tender twigs; I myself will plant it on a high and lofty mountain.

²³I will plant it on a high mountain of Israel, and it will raise branches and produce fruit and become a beautiful cedar. Every bird will live under it; Every winged creature will live in the shade of its branches.

²⁴All the trees of the field will know that I am the Lord. I make the high tree low; I raise up the low tree. I make the green tree wither, and I make the dry tree sprout. I, the Lord, have spoken, and I will do it!"

18¹The word of the Lord came to me:

²"What do you mean by quoting this proverb concerning the land of Israel, "'The fathers eat sour grapes And the children's teeth become numb?'"

³"As surely as I live, declares the sovereign Lord, you will not quote this proverb in Israel anymore!

⁴Indeed! All lives are mine – the life of the father as well as the life of the son is mine. The one who sins will die.

⁵"Suppose a man is righteous. He practices what is just and right,

⁶does not eat pagan sacrifices on the mountains or pray to the idols of the house of Israel, does not defile his neighbor's wife, does not have sexual relations with a woman during her period,

⁷does not oppress anyone, but gives the debtor back whatever was given in

pledge, does not commit robbery, but gives his bread to the hungry and clothes the naked,

⁸ does not engage in usury or charge interest, but refrains from wrongdoing, promotes true justice between men,

⁹ and follows my statutes and observes my regulations by carrying them out. That man is righteous; he will certainly live, declares the sovereign Lord.

¹⁰ "Suppose such a man has a violent son who sheds blood and does any of these things mentioned previously

¹¹ (though the father did not do any of them). He eats pagan sacrifices on the mountains, defiles his neighbor's wife,

¹² oppresses the poor and the needy, commits robbery, does not give back what was given in pledge, prays to idols, performs abominable acts,

¹³ engages in usury and charges interest. Will he live? He will not! Because he has done all these abominable deeds he will certainly die. He will bear the responsibility for his own death.

¹⁴ "But suppose he in turn has a son who notices all the sins his father

commits, considers them, and does not follow his father's example.

¹⁵He does not eat pagan sacrifices on the mountains, does not pray to the idols of the house of Israel, does not defile his neighbor's wife,

¹⁶does not oppress anyone or keep what has been given in pledge, does not commit robbery, gives his food to the hungry, and clothes the naked,

¹⁷refrains from wrongdoing, does not engage in usury or charge interest, carries out my regulations and follows my statutes. He will not die for his father's iniquity; he will surely live.

¹⁸As for his father, because he practices extortion, robs his brother, and does what is not good among his people, he will die for his iniquity.

¹⁹"Yet you say, 'Why should the son not suffer for his father's iniquity?' When the son does what is just and right, and observes all my statutes and carries them out, he will surely live.

²⁰The person who sins is the one who will die. A son will not suffer for his father's iniquity, and a father will not suffer for his son's iniquity; the righteous

person will be judged according to his righteousness, and the wicked person according to his wickedness.

²¹ “But if the wicked person turns from all the sin he has committed and observes all my statutes and does what is just and right, he will surely live; he will not die.

²² None of the sins he has committed will be held against him; because of the righteousness he has done, he will live.

²³ Do I actually delight in the death of the wicked, declares the sovereign Lord? Do I not prefer that he turn from his wicked conduct and live?

²⁴ “But if a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and practices wrongdoing according to all the abominable practices the wicked carry out, will he live? All his righteous acts will not be remembered; because of the unfaithful acts he has done and the sin he has committed, he will die.

²⁵ “Yet you say, ‘The Lord’s conduct is unjust!’ Hear, O house of Israel: Is my conduct unjust? Is it not your conduct that is unjust?

²⁶When a righteous person turns back from his righteousness and practices wrongdoing, he will die for it; because of the wrongdoing he has done, he will die.

²⁷When a wicked person turns from the wickedness he has committed and does what is just and right, he will preserve his life.

²⁸Because he considered and turned from all the sins he had done, he will surely live; he will not die.

²⁹Yet the house of Israel says, 'The Lord's conduct is unjust!' Is my conduct unjust, O house of Israel? Is it not your conduct that is unjust?

³⁰"Therefore I will judge each person according to his conduct, O house of Israel, declares the sovereign Lord. Repent and turn from all your wickedness; then it will not be an obstacle leading to iniquity.

³¹Throw away all your sins you have committed and fashion yourselves a new heart and a new spirit! Why should you die, O house of Israel?

³²For I take no delight in the death of anyone, declares the sovereign Lord. Repent and live!

19¹ "And you, sing a lament for the princes of Israel,

²and say: "'What a lioness was your mother among the lions! She lay among young lions; she reared her cubs.

³She reared one of her cubs; he became a young lion. He learned to tear prey; he devoured people.

⁴The nations heard about him; he was trapped in their pit. They brought him with hooks to the land of Egypt.

⁵"'When she realized that she waited in vain, her hope was lost. She took another of her cubs and made him a young lion.

⁶He walked about among the lions; he became a young lion. He learned to tear prey; he devoured people.

⁷He broke down their strongholds and devastated their cities. The land and everything in it was frightened at the sound of his roaring.

⁸The nations – the surrounding regions – attacked him. They threw their net over him; he was caught in their pit.

⁹They put him in a collar with hooks; they brought him to the king of Babylon; they brought him to prison so that his

voice would not be heard any longer on the mountains of Israel.

¹⁰“Your mother was like a vine in your vineyard, planted by water. It was fruitful and full of branches because it was well-watered.

¹¹Its boughs were strong, fit for rulers’ scepters; it reached up into the clouds. It stood out because of its height and its many branches.

¹²But it was plucked up in anger; it was thrown down to the ground. The east wind dried up its fruit; its strong branches broke off and withered – a fire consumed them.

¹³Now it is planted in the wilderness, in a dry and thirsty land.

¹⁴A fire has gone out from its branch; it has consumed its shoot and its fruit. No strong branch was left in it, nor a scepter to rule.’ This is a lament song, and has become a lament song.”

20¹In the seventh year, in the fifth month, on the tenth of the month, some of the elders of Israel came to seek the Lord, and they sat down in front of me.

²The word of the Lord came to me:

³“Son of man, speak to the elders of Israel, and tell them: ‘This is what the sovereign Lord says: Are you coming to seek me? As surely as I live, I will not allow you to seek me, declares the sovereign Lord.’

⁴“Are you willing to pronounce judgment? Are you willing to pronounce judgment, son of man? Then confront them with the abominable practices of their fathers,

⁵and say to them: “‘This is what the sovereign Lord says: On the day I chose Israel I swore to the descendants of the house of Jacob and made myself known to them in the land of Egypt. I swore to them, “I am the Lord your God.”

⁶On that day I swore to bring them out of the land of Egypt to a land which I had picked out for them, a land flowing with milk and honey, the most beautiful of all lands.

⁷I said to them, “Each of you must get rid of the detestable idols you keep before you, and do not defile yourselves with the idols of Egypt; I am the Lord your God.”

⁸But they rebelled against me, and refused to listen to me; no one got rid of their detestable idols, nor did they abandon the idols of Egypt. Then I decided to pour out my rage on them and fully vent my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt.

⁹I acted for the sake of my reputation, so that I would not be profaned before the nations among whom they lived, before whom I revealed myself by bringing them out of the land of Egypt.

¹⁰“So I brought them out of the land of Egypt and led them to the wilderness.

¹¹I gave them my statutes and revealed my regulations to them. The one who carries them out will live by them!

¹²I also gave them my Sabbaths as a reminder of our relationship, so that they would know that I, the Lord, sanctify them.

¹³But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness; they did not follow my statutes and they rejected my regulations (the one who obeys them will live by them), and they utterly desecrated my Sabbaths. So I decided

to pour out my rage on them in the wilderness and destroy them.

¹⁴I acted for the sake of my reputation, so that I would not be profaned before the nations in whose sight I had brought them out.

¹⁵I also swore to them in the wilderness that I would not bring them to the land I had given them – a land flowing with milk and honey, the most beautiful of all lands.

¹⁶I did this because they rejected my regulations, did not follow my statutes, and desecrated my Sabbaths; for their hearts followed their idols.

¹⁷Yet I had pity on them and did not destroy them, so I did not make an end of them in the wilderness.

¹⁸“But I said to their children in the wilderness, “Do not follow the practices of your fathers; do not observe their regulations, nor defile yourselves with their idols.

¹⁹I am the Lord your God; follow my statutes, observe my regulations, and carry them out.

²⁰Treat my Sabbaths as holy and they will be a reminder of our relationship,

and then you will know that I am the Lord your God."

²¹ "But the children rebelled against me, did not follow my statutes, did not observe my regulations by carrying them out (the one who obeys them will live by them), and desecrated my Sabbaths. I decided to pour out my rage on them and fully vent my anger against them in the wilderness.

²² But I refrained from doing so, and acted instead for the sake of my reputation, so that I would not be profaned before the nations in whose sight I had brought them out.

²³ I also swore to them in the wilderness that I would scatter them among the nations and disperse them throughout the lands.

²⁴ I did this because they did not observe my regulations, they rejected my statutes, they desecrated my Sabbaths, and their eyes were fixed on their fathers' idols.

²⁵ I also gave them decrees which were not good and regulations by which they could not live.

²⁶I declared them to be defiled because of their sacrifices – they caused all their first born to pass through the fire – so that I would devastate them, so that they will know that I am the Lord.’

²⁷“Therefore, speak to the house of Israel, son of man, and tell them, ‘This is what the sovereign Lord says: In this way too your fathers blasphemed me when they were unfaithful to me.

²⁸I brought them to the land which I swore to give them, but whenever they saw any high hill or leafy tree, they offered their sacrifices there and presented the offerings that provoke me to anger. They offered their soothing aroma there and poured out their drink offerings.

²⁹So I said to them, ‘What is this high place you go to?’” (So it is called “High Place” to this day.)

³⁰“Therefore say to the house of Israel, ‘This is what the sovereign Lord says: Will you defile yourselves like your fathers and engage in prostitution with detestable idols?’

³¹When you present your sacrifices – when you make your sons pass through

the fire – you defile yourselves with all your idols to this very day. Will I allow you to seek me, O house of Israel? As surely as I live, declares the sovereign Lord, I will not allow you to seek me!

³² “What you plan will never happen. You say, “We will be like the nations, like the clans of the lands, who serve gods of wood and stone.”

³³ As surely as I live, declares the sovereign Lord, with a powerful hand and an outstretched arm, and with an outpouring of rage, I will be king over you.

³⁴ I will bring you out from the nations, and will gather you from the lands where you are scattered, with a powerful hand and an outstretched arm and with an outpouring of rage!

³⁵ I will bring you into the wilderness of the nations, and there I will enter into judgment with you face to face.

³⁶ Just as I entered into judgment with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will enter into judgment with you, declares the sovereign Lord.

³⁷ I will make you pass under the shepherd's staff, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant.

³⁸ I will eliminate from among you the rebels and those who revolt against me. I will bring them out from the land where they have been residing, but they will not come to the land of Israel. Then you will know that I am the Lord.

³⁹ "As for you, O house of Israel, this is what the sovereign Lord says: Each of you go and serve your idols, if you will not listen to me. But my holy name will not be profaned again by your sacrifices and your idols.

⁴⁰ For there on my holy mountain, the high mountain of Israel, declares the sovereign Lord, all the house of Israel will serve me, all of them in the land. I will accept them there, and there I will seek your contributions and your choice gifts, with all your holy things.

⁴¹ When I bring you out from the nations and gather you from the lands where you are scattered, I will accept you along with your soothing aroma. I will display my holiness among you in the sight of the nations.

⁴² Then you will know that I am the Lord when I bring you to the land of Israel, to the land I swore to give to your fathers.

⁴³ And there you will remember your conduct and all your deeds by which you defiled yourselves. You will despise yourselves because of all the evil deeds you have done.

⁴⁴ Then you will know that I am the Lord, when I deal with you for the sake of my reputation and not according to your wicked conduct and corrupt deeds, O house of Israel, declares the sovereign Lord.'"

⁴⁵ The word of the Lord came to me:

⁴⁶ "Son of man, turn toward the south, and speak out against the south. Prophecy against the open scrub land of the Negev,

⁴⁷ and say to the scrub land of the Negev, 'Hear the word of the Lord: This is what the sovereign Lord says: Look here, I am about to start a fire in you, and it will devour every green tree and every dry tree in you. The flaming fire will not be extinguished, and the whole surface of the ground from the Negev to the north will be scorched by it.

⁴⁸And everyone will see that I, the Lord, have burned it; it will not be extinguished."

⁴⁹Then I said, "O sovereign Lord! They are saying of me, 'Does he not simply speak in eloquent figures of speech?'"

21 ¹The word of the Lord came to me:

²"Son of man, turn toward Jerusalem and speak out against the sanctuaries. Prophecy against the land of Israel

³and say to them, 'This is what the Lord says: Look, I am against you. I will draw my sword from its sheath and cut off from you both the righteous and the wicked.

⁴Because I will cut off from you both the righteous and the wicked, my sword will go out from its sheath against everyone from the south to the north.

⁵Then everyone will know that I am the Lord, who drew my sword from its sheath – it will not be sheathed again!'

⁶"And you, son of man, groan with an aching heart and bitterness; groan before their eyes.

⁷When they ask you, 'Why are you groaning?' you will reply, 'Because of the

report that has come. Every heart will melt with fear and every hand will be limp; everyone will faint and every knee will be wet with urine.' Pay attention – it is coming and it will happen, declares the sovereign Lord."

⁸The word of the Lord came to me:

⁹"Son of man, prophesy and say: 'This is what the Lord says: "'A sword, a sword is sharpened, and also polished.

¹⁰It is sharpened for slaughter, it is polished to flash like lightning! "'Should we rejoice in the scepter of my son? No! The sword despises every tree!

¹¹"'He gave it to be polished, to be grasped in the hand – the sword is sharpened, it is polished – giving it into the hand of the executioner.

¹²Cry out and moan, son of man, for it is wielded against my people; against all the princes of Israel. They are delivered up to the sword, along with my people. Therefore, strike your thigh.

¹³"'For testing will come, and what will happen when the scepter, which the sword despises, is no more? declares the sovereign Lord.'

¹⁴ "And you, son of man, prophesy, and clap your hands together. Let the sword strike twice, even three times! It is a sword for slaughter, a sword for the great slaughter surrounding them.

¹⁵ So hearts melt with fear and many stumble. At all their gates I have stationed the sword for slaughter. Ah! It is made to flash, it is drawn for slaughter!

¹⁶ Cut sharply on the right! Swing to the left, wherever your edge is appointed to strike.

¹⁷ I too will clap my hands together, I will exhaust my rage; I the Lord have spoken."

¹⁸ The word of the Lord came to me:

¹⁹ "You, son of man, mark out two routes for the king of Babylon's sword to take; both of them will originate in a single land. Make a signpost and put it at the beginning of the road leading to the city.

²⁰ Mark out the routes for the sword to take: "Rabbah of the Ammonites" and "Judah with Jerusalem in it."

²¹ For the king of Babylon stands at the fork in the road at the head of the two

routes. He looks for omens: He shakes arrows, he consults idols, he examines animal livers.

²² Into his right hand comes the portent for Jerusalem – to set up battering rams, to give the signal for slaughter, to shout out the battle cry, to set up battering rams against the gates, to erect a siege ramp, to build a siege wall.

²³ But those in Jerusalem will view it as a false omen. They have sworn solemn oaths, but the king of Babylon will accuse them of violations in order to seize them.

²⁴ "Therefore this is what the sovereign Lord says: 'Because you have brought up your own guilt by uncovering your transgressions and revealing your sins through all your actions, for this reason you will be taken by force.

²⁵ "'As for you, profane and wicked prince of Israel, whose day has come, the time of final punishment,

²⁶ this is what the sovereign Lord says: Tear off the turban, take off the crown! Things must change! Exalt the lowly, bring down the proud!

²⁷ A total ruin I will make it! It will come to an end when the one arrives to whom I have assigned judgment.'

²⁸ "As for you, son of man, prophesy and say, 'This is what the sovereign Lord says concerning the Ammonites and their coming humiliation; say: "'A sword, a sword drawn for slaughter, polished to consume, to flash like lightning -

²⁹ while seeing false visions for you and reading lying omens for you - to place that sword on the necks of the profane wicked, whose day has come, the time of final punishment.

³⁰ Return it to its sheath! In the place where you were created, in your native land, I will judge you.

³¹ I will pour out my anger on you; the fire of my fury I will blow on you. I will hand you over to brutal men, who are skilled in destruction.

³² You will become fuel for the fire - your blood will stain the middle of the land; you will no longer be remembered, for I, the Lord, have spoken.'"

22¹ The word of the Lord came to me:

² "As for you, son of man, are you willing to pronounce judgment, are you willing to pronounce judgment on the bloody city? Then confront her with all her abominable deeds!

³ Then say, 'This is what the sovereign Lord says: O city, who spills blood within herself (which brings on her doom), and who makes herself idols (which results in impurity),

⁴ you are guilty because of the blood you shed and defiled by the idols you made. You have hastened the day of your doom; the end of your years has come. Therefore I will make you an object of scorn to the nations, an object to be mocked by all lands.

⁵ Those both near and far from you will mock you, you with your bad reputation, full of turmoil.

⁶ "See how each of the princes of Israel living within you has used his authority to shed blood.

⁷ They have treated father and mother with contempt within you; they have oppressed the foreigner among you; they have wronged the orphan and the widow within you.

⁸You have despised my holy things and desecrated my Sabbaths!

⁹Slanderous men shed blood within you. Those who live within you eat pagan sacrifices on the mountains; they commit obscene acts among you.

¹⁰They have sex with their father's wife within you; they violate women during their menstrual period within you.

¹¹One commits an abominable act with his neighbor's wife; another obscenely defiles his daughter-in-law; another violates his sister – his father's daughter – within you.

¹²They take bribes within you to shed blood. You engage in usury and charge interest; you extort money from your neighbors. You have forgotten me, declares the sovereign Lord.

¹³“See, I strike my hands together at the dishonest profit you have made, and at the bloodshed they have done among you.

¹⁴Can your heart endure, or can your hands be strong when I deal with you? I, the Lord, have spoken, and I will do it!

¹⁵I will scatter you among the nations and disperse you among various

countries; I will remove your impurity from you.

¹⁶You will be profaned within yourself in the sight of the nations; then you will know that I am the Lord.'"

¹⁷The word of the Lord came to me:

¹⁸"Son of man, the house of Israel has become slag to me. All of them are like bronze, tin, iron, and lead in the furnace; they are the worthless slag of silver.

¹⁹Therefore this is what the sovereign Lord says: 'Because all of you have become slag, look out! – I am about to gather you in the middle of Jerusalem.

²⁰As silver, bronze, iron, lead, and tin are gathered in a furnace so that the fire can melt them, so I will gather you in my anger and in my rage. I will deposit you there and melt you.

²¹I will gather you and blow on you with the fire of my fury, and you will be melted in it.

²²As silver is melted in a furnace, so you will be melted in it, and you will know that I, the Lord, have poured out my anger on you.'"

²³The word of the Lord came to me:

²⁴ "Son of man, say to her: 'You are a land that receives no rain or showers in the day of my anger.'

²⁵ Her princes within her are like a roaring lion tearing its prey; they have devoured lives. They take away riches and valuable things; they have made many women widows within it.

²⁶ Her priests abuse my law and have desecrated my holy things. They do not distinguish between the holy and the profane, or recognize any distinction between the unclean and the clean. They ignore my Sabbaths and I am profaned in their midst.

²⁷ Her officials are like wolves in her midst rending their prey - shedding blood and destroying lives - so they can get dishonest profit.

²⁸ Her prophets coat their messages with whitewash. They see false visions and announce lying omens for them, saying, 'This is what the sovereign Lord says,' when the Lord has not spoken.

²⁹ The people of the land have practiced extortion and committed robbery. They have wronged the poor and needy; they

have oppressed the foreigner who lives among them and denied them justice.

³⁰ "I looked for a man from among them who would repair the wall and stand in the gap before me on behalf of the land, so that I would not destroy it, but I found no one.

³¹ So I have poured my anger on them, and destroyed them with the fire of my fury. I hereby repay them for what they have done, declares the sovereign Lord."

23¹ The word of the Lord came to me:

² "Son of man, there were two women who were daughters of the same mother.

³ They engaged in prostitution in Egypt; in their youth they engaged in prostitution. Their breasts were squeezed there; lovers fondled their virgin nipples there.

⁴ Oholah was the name of the older and Oholibah the name of her younger sister. They became mine, and gave birth to sons and daughters. Oholah is Samaria and Oholibah is Jerusalem.

⁵ "Oholah engaged in prostitution while she was mine. She lusted after her lovers, the Assyrians – warriors

⁶ clothed in blue, governors and officials, all of them desirable young men, horsemen riding on horses.

⁷ She bestowed her sexual favors on them; all of them were the choicest young men of Assyria. She defiled herself with all whom she desired – with all their idols.

⁸ She did not abandon the prostitution she had practiced in Egypt; for in her youth men had sex with her, fondled her virgin breasts, and ravished her.

⁹ Therefore I handed her over to her lovers, the Assyrians for whom she lusted.

¹⁰ They exposed her nakedness, seized her sons and daughters, and killed her with the sword. She became notorious among women, and they executed judgments against her.

¹¹ "Her sister Oholibah watched this, but she became more corrupt in her lust than her sister had been, and her acts of prostitution were more numerous than those of her sister.

¹² She lusted after the Assyrians – governors and officials, warriors in full

armor, horsemen riding on horses, all of them desirable young men.

¹³I saw that she was defiled; both of them followed the same path.

¹⁴But she increased her prostitution. She saw men carved on the wall, images of the Chaldeans carved in bright red,

¹⁵wearing belts on their waists and flowing turbans on their heads, all of them looking like officers, the image of Babylonians whose native land is Chaldea.

¹⁶When she saw them, she lusted after them and sent messengers to them in Chaldea.

¹⁷The Babylonians crawled into bed with her. They defiled her with their lust; after she was defiled by them, she became disgusted with them.

¹⁸When she lustfully exposed her nakedness, I was disgusted with her, just as I had been disgusted with her sister.

¹⁹Yet she increased her prostitution, remembering the days of her youth when she engaged in prostitution in the land of Egypt.

²⁰She lusted after their genitals – as large as those of donkeys, and their

seminal emission was as strong as that of stallions.

²¹ This is how you assessed the obscene conduct of your youth, when the Egyptians fondled your nipples and squeezed your young breasts.

²² "Therefore, Oholibah, this is what the sovereign Lord says: Look here, I am about to stir up against you the lovers with whom you were disgusted; I will bring them against you from every side:

²³ the Babylonians and all the Chaldeans, Pekod, Shoa, and Koa, and all the Assyrians with them, desirable young men, all of them governors and officials, officers and nobles, all of them riding on horses.

²⁴ They will attack you with weapons, chariots, wagons, and with a huge army; they will array themselves against you on every side with large shields, small shields, and helmets. I will assign them the task of judgment; they will punish you according to their laws.

²⁵ I will direct my jealous anger against you, and they will deal with you in rage. They will cut off your nose and your ears, and your survivors will die by the sword.

They will seize your sons and daughters, and your survivors will be consumed by fire.

²⁶They will strip your clothes off you and take away your beautiful jewelry.

²⁷So I will put an end to your obscene conduct and your prostitution which you have practiced in the land of Egypt. You will not seek their help or remember Egypt anymore.

²⁸"For this is what the sovereign Lord says: Look here, I am about to deliver you over to those whom you hate, to those with whom you were disgusted.

²⁹They will treat you with hatred, take away all you have labored for, and leave you naked and bare. Your nakedness will be exposed, just as when you engaged in prostitution and obscene conduct.

³⁰I will do these things to you because you engaged in prostitution with the nations, polluting yourself with their idols.

³¹You have followed the ways of your sister, so I will place her cup of judgment in your hand.

³²"This is what the sovereign Lord says: "You will drink your sister's deep

and wide cup; you will be scorned and derided, for it holds a great deal.

³³You will be overcome by drunkenness and sorrow. The cup of your sister Samaria is a cup of horror and desolation.

³⁴You will drain it dry, gnaw its pieces, and tear out your breasts, for I have spoken, declares the sovereign Lord.

³⁵"Therefore this is what the sovereign Lord says: Because you have forgotten me and completely disregarded me, you must bear now the punishment for your obscene conduct and prostitution."

³⁶The Lord said to me: "Son of man, are you willing to pronounce judgment on Oholah and Oholibah? Then declare to them their abominable deeds!

³⁷For they have committed adultery and blood is on their hands. They have committed adultery with their idols, and their sons, whom they bore to me, they have passed through the fire as food to their idols.

³⁸Moreover, they have done this to me: In the very same day they desecrated my sanctuary and profaned my Sabbaths.

³⁹ On the same day they slaughtered their sons for their idols, they came to my sanctuary to desecrate it. This is what they have done in the middle of my house.

⁴⁰ "They even sent for men from far away; when the messenger arrived, those men set out. For them you bathed, painted your eyes, and decorated yourself with jewelry.

⁴¹ You sat on a magnificent couch, with a table arranged in front of it where you placed my incense and my olive oil.

⁴² The sound of a carefree crowd accompanied her, including all kinds of men; even Sabeans were brought from the desert. The sisters put bracelets on their wrists and beautiful crowns on their heads.

⁴³ Then I said about the one worn out by adultery, 'Now they will commit immoral acts with her.'

⁴⁴ They had sex with her as one does with a prostitute. In this way they had sex with Oholah and Oholibah, promiscuous women.

⁴⁵ But upright men will punish them appropriately for their adultery

and bloodshed, because they are adulteresses and blood is on their hands.

⁴⁶ "For this is what the sovereign Lord says: Bring up an army against them and subject them to terror and plunder.

⁴⁷ That army will pelt them with stones and slash them with their swords; they will kill their sons and daughters and burn their houses.

⁴⁸ I will put an end to the obscene conduct in the land; all the women will learn a lesson from this and not engage in obscene conduct.

⁴⁹ They will repay you for your obscene conduct, and you will be punished for idol worship. Then you will know that I am the sovereign Lord."

24¹ The word of the Lord came to me in the ninth year, in the tenth month, on the tenth day of the month:

² "Son of man, write down the name of this day, this very day. The king of Babylon has laid siege to Jerusalem this very day.

³ Recite a proverb to this rebellious house and say to them, 'This is what the sovereign Lord says: "'Set on the pot, set it on, pour water in it too;

⁴ add the pieces of meat to it, every good piece, the thigh and the shoulder; fill it with choice bones.

⁵ Take the choice bone of the flock, heap up bones under it; boil rapidly, and boil its bones in it.

⁶ "Therefore this is what the sovereign Lord says: Woe to the city of bloodshed, the pot whose rot is in it, whose rot has not been removed from it! Empty it piece by piece. No lot has fallen on it.

⁷ For her blood was in it; she poured it on an exposed rock; she did not pour it on the ground to cover it up with dust.

⁸ To arouse anger, to take vengeance, I have placed her blood on an exposed rock so that it cannot be covered up.

⁹ "Therefore this is what the sovereign Lord says: Woe to the city of bloodshed! I will also make the pile high.

¹⁰ Pile up the bones, kindle the fire; cook the meat well, mix in the spices, let the bones be charred.

¹¹ Set the empty pot on the coals, until it becomes hot and its copper glows, until its uncleanness melts within it and its rot is consumed.

¹²It has tried my patience; yet its thick rot is not removed from it. Subject its rot to the fire!

¹³You mix uncleanness with obscene conduct. I tried to cleanse you, but you are not clean. You will not be cleansed from your uncleanness until I have exhausted my anger on you.

¹⁴"I the Lord have spoken; judgment is coming and I will act! I will not relent, or show pity, or be sorry! I will judge you according to your conduct and your deeds, declares the sovereign Lord."

¹⁵The word of Lord came to me:

¹⁶"Son of man, realize that I am about to take the delight of your eyes away from you with a jolt, but you must not mourn or weep or shed tears.

¹⁷Groan in silence for the dead, but do not perform mourning rites. Bind on your turban and put your sandals on your feet. Do not cover your lip and do not eat food brought by others."

¹⁸So I spoke to the people in the morning, and my wife died in the evening. In the morning I acted just as I was commanded.

¹⁹Then the people said to me, "Will you not tell us what these things you are doing mean for us?"

²⁰So I said to them: "The word of the Lord came to me:

²¹Say to the house of Israel, 'This is what the sovereign Lord says: Realize I am about to desecrate my sanctuary – the source of your confident pride, the object in which your eyes delight, and your life's passion. Your very own sons and daughters whom you have left behind will die by the sword.

²²Then you will do as I have done: You will not cover your lip or eat food brought by others.

²³Your turbans will be on your heads and your sandals on your feet; you will not mourn or weep, but you will rot for your iniquities and groan among yourselves.

²⁴Ezekiel will be an object lesson for you; you will do all that he has done. When it happens, then you will know that I am the sovereign Lord.'

²⁵"And you, son of man, this is what will happen on the day I take from them their stronghold – their beautiful

source of joy, the object in which their eyes delight, and the main concern of their lives, as well as their sons and daughters:

²⁶On that day a fugitive will come to you to report the news.

²⁷On that day you will be able to speak again; you will talk with the fugitive and be silent no longer. You will be an object lesson for them, and they will know that I am the Lord."

25 ¹The word of the Lord came to me:

²"Son of man, turn toward the Ammonites and prophesy against them.

³Say to the Ammonites, 'Hear the word of the sovereign Lord: This is what the sovereign Lord says: You said "Aha!" about my sanctuary when it was desecrated, about the land of Israel when it was made desolate, and about the house of Judah when they went into exile.

⁴So take note, I am about to make you slaves of the tribes of the east. They will make camps among you and pitch their tents among you. They will eat your fruit and drink your milk.

⁵I will make Rabbah a pasture for camels and Ammon a resting place for sheep. Then you will know that I am the Lord.

⁶For this is what the sovereign Lord says: Because you clapped your hands, stamped your feet, and rejoiced with intense scorn over the land of Israel,

⁷take note, I have stretched out my hand against you, and I will hand you over as plunder to the nations. I will cut you off from the peoples and make you perish from the lands. I will destroy you; then you will know that I am the Lord.”

⁸“This is what the sovereign Lord says: ‘Moab and Seir say, “Look, the house of Judah is like all the other nations.”

⁹So look, I am about to open up Moab’s flank, eliminating the cities, including its frontier cities, the beauty of the land – Beth Jeshimoth, Baal Meon, and Kiriathaim.

¹⁰I will hand it over, along with the Ammonites, to the tribes of the east, so that the Ammonites will no longer be remembered among the nations.

¹¹ I will execute judgments against Moab. Then they will know that I am the Lord.'"

¹² "This is what the sovereign Lord says: 'Edom has taken vengeance against the house of Judah; they have made themselves fully culpable by taking vengeance on them.

¹³ So this is what the sovereign Lord says: I will stretch out my hand against Edom, and I will kill the people and animals within her, and I will make her desolate; from Teman to Dedan they will die by the sword.

¹⁴ I will exact my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel. They will carry out in Edom my anger and rage; they will experience my vengeance, declares the sovereign Lord.'"

¹⁵ "This is what the sovereign Lord says: 'The Philistines have exacted merciless revenge, showing intense scorn in their effort to destroy Judah with unrelenting hostility.

¹⁶ So this is what the sovereign Lord says: Take note, I am about to stretch out my hand against the Philistines. I will

kill the Cherethites and destroy those who remain on the seacoast.

¹⁷ I will exact great vengeance upon them with angry rebukes. Then they will know that I am the Lord, when I exact my vengeance upon them.'"

26 ¹ In the eleventh year, on the first day of the month, the word of the Lord came to me:

² "Son of man, because Tyre has said about Jerusalem, 'Aha, the gateway of the peoples is broken; it has swung open to me. I will become rich, now that she has been destroyed,'

³ therefore this is what the sovereign Lord says: Look, I am against you, O Tyre! I will bring up many nations against you, as the sea brings up its waves.

⁴ They will destroy the walls of Tyre and break down her towers. I will scrape her soil from her and make her a bare rock.

⁵ She will be a place where fishing nets are spread, surrounded by the sea. For I have spoken, declares the sovereign Lord. She will become plunder for the nations,

⁶and her daughters who are in the field will be slaughtered by the sword. Then they will know that I am the Lord.

⁷"For this is what the sovereign Lord says: Take note that I am about to bring King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, king of kings, against Tyre from the north, with horses, chariots, and horsemen, an army and hordes of people.

⁸He will kill your daughters in the field with the sword. He will build a siege wall against you, erect a siege ramp against you, and raise a great shield against you.

⁹He will direct the blows of his battering rams against your walls and tear down your towers with his weapons.

¹⁰He will cover you with the dust kicked up by his many horses. Your walls will shake from the noise of the horsemen, wheels, and chariots when he enters your gates like those who invade through a city's broken walls.

¹¹With his horses' hoofs he will trample all your streets. He will kill your people with the sword, and your strong pillars will tumble down to the ground.

¹²They will steal your wealth and loot your merchandise. They will tear down

your walls and destroy your luxurious homes. Your stones, your trees, and your soil he will throw into the water.

¹³I will silence the noise of your songs; the sound of your harps will be heard no more.

¹⁴I will make you a bare rock; you will be a place where fishing nets are spread. You will never be built again, for I, the Lord, have spoken, declares the sovereign Lord.

¹⁵"This is what the sovereign Lord says to Tyre: Oh, how the coastlands will shake at the sound of your fall, when the wounded groan, at the massive slaughter in your midst!

¹⁶All the princes of the sea will vacate their thrones. They will remove their robes and strip off their embroidered clothes; they will clothe themselves with trembling. They will sit on the ground; they will tremble continually and be shocked at what has happened to you.

¹⁷They will sing this lament over you: "How you have perished – you have vanished from the seas, O renowned city, once mighty in the sea, she and her inhabitants, who spread their terror!

¹⁸ Now the coastlands will tremble on the day of your fall; the coastlands by the sea will be terrified by your passing.'

¹⁹ "For this is what the sovereign Lord says: When I make you desolate like the uninhabited cities, when I bring up the deep over you and the surging waters overwhelm you,

²⁰ then I will bring you down to bygone people, to be with those who descend to the pit. I will make you live in the lower parts of the earth, among the primeval ruins, with those who descend to the pit, so that you will not be inhabited or stand in the land of the living.

²¹ I will bring terrors on you, and you will be no more! Though you are sought after, you will never be found again, declares the sovereign Lord."

27 ¹ The word of the Lord came to me:

² "You, son of man, sing a lament for Tyre.

³ Say to Tyre, who sits at the entrance of the sea, merchant to the peoples on many coasts, 'This is what the sovereign Lord says: "'O Tyre, you have said, "I am perfectly beautiful."

⁴Your borders are in the heart of the seas; your builders have perfected your beauty.

⁵They crafted all your planks out of fir trees from Senir; they took a cedar from Lebanon to make your mast.

⁶They made your oars from oaks of Bashan; they made your deck with cypresses from the Kittean isles.

⁷Fine linen from Egypt, woven with patterns, was used for your sail to serve as your banner; blue and purple from the coastlands of Elishah was used for your deck's awning.

⁸The leaders of Sidon and Arvad were your rowers; your skilled men, O Tyre, were your captains.

⁹The elders of Gebal and her skilled men were within you, mending cracks; all the ships of the sea and their mariners were within you to trade for your merchandise.

¹⁰Men of Persia, Lud, and Put were in your army, men of war. They hung shield and helmet on you; they gave you your splendor.

¹¹The Arvadites joined your army on your walls all around, and the

Gammadites were in your towers. They hung their quivers on your walls all around; they perfected your beauty.

¹² Tarshish was your trade partner because of your abundant wealth; they exchanged silver, iron, tin, and lead for your products.

¹³ Javan, Tubal, and Meshech were your clients; they exchanged slaves and bronze items for your merchandise.

¹⁴ Beth Togarmah exchanged horses, chargers, and mules for your products.

¹⁵ The Dedanites were your clients. Many coastlands were your customers; they paid you with ivory tusks and ebony.

¹⁶ Edom was your trade partner because of the abundance of your goods; they exchanged turquoise, purple, embroidered work, fine linen, coral, and rubies for your products.

¹⁷ Judah and the land of Israel were your clients; they traded wheat from Minnith, millet, honey, olive oil, and balm for your merchandise.

¹⁸ Damascus was your trade partner because of the abundance of your goods

and of all your wealth: wine from Helbon,
white wool from Zahar,

¹⁹and casks of wine from Izal they
exchanged for your products. Wrought
iron, cassia, and sweet cane were among
your merchandise.

²⁰Dedan was your client in saddlecloths
for riding.

²¹Arabia and all the princes of Kedar
were your trade partners; for lambs,
rams, and goats they traded with you.

²²The merchants of Sheba and Raamah
engaged in trade with you; they traded
the best kinds of spices along with
precious stones and gold for your
products.

²³Haran, Kanneh, Eden, merchants
from Sheba, Asshur, and Kilmad were
your clients.

²⁴They traded with you choice
garments, purple clothes and
embroidered work, and multicolored
carpets, bound and reinforced with
cords; these were among your
merchandise.

²⁵The ships of Tarshish were the
transports for your merchandise. "So

you were filled and weighed down in the heart of the seas.

²⁶Your rowers have brought you into surging waters. The east wind has wrecked you in the heart of the seas.

²⁷Your wealth, products, and merchandise, your sailors and captains, your ship's carpenters, your merchants, and all your fighting men within you, along with all your crew who are in you, will fall into the heart of the seas on the day of your downfall.

²⁸At the sound of your captains' cry the waves will surge;

²⁹They will descend from their ships - all who handle the oar, the sailors and all the sea captains - they will stand on the land.

³⁰They will lament loudly over you and cry bitterly. They will throw dust on their heads and roll in the ashes;

³¹they will tear out their hair because of you and put on sackcloth, and they will weep bitterly over you with intense mourning.

³²As they wail they will lament over you, chanting: "Who was like Tyre, like a tower in the midst of the sea?"

³³When your products went out from the seas, you satisfied many peoples; with the abundance of your wealth and merchandise you enriched the kings of the earth.

³⁴Now you are wrecked by the seas, in the depths of the waters; your merchandise and all your company have sunk along with you.

³⁵All the inhabitants of the coastlands are shocked at you, and their kings are horribly afraid – their faces are troubled.

³⁶The traders among the peoples hiss at you; you have become a horror, and will be no more.”

28¹The word of the Lord came to me:

²“Son of man, say to the prince of Tyre, ‘This is what the sovereign Lord says: “Your heart is proud and you said, “I am a god; I sit in the seat of gods, in the heart of the seas” – yet you are a man and not a god, though you think you are godlike.

³Look, you are wiser than Daniel; no secret is hidden from you.

⁴By your wisdom and understanding you have gained wealth for yourself; you

have amassed gold and silver in your treasuries.

⁵By your great skill in trade you have increased your wealth, and your heart is proud because of your wealth.

⁶“Therefore this is what the sovereign Lord says: Because you think you are godlike,

⁷I am about to bring foreigners against you, the most terrifying of nations. They will draw their swords against the grandeur made by your wisdom, and they will defile your splendor.

⁸They will bring you down to the pit, and you will die violently in the heart of the seas.

⁹Will you still say, “I am a god,” before the one who kills you – though you are a man and not a god – when you are in the power of those who wound you?

¹⁰You will die the death of the uncircumcised by the hand of foreigners; for I have spoken, declares the sovereign Lord.”

¹¹The word of the Lord came to me:

¹²“Son of man, sing a lament for the king of Tyre, and say to him, ‘This is what the sovereign Lord says: “You were

the sealer of perfection, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty.

¹³You were in Eden, the garden of God. Every precious stone was your covering, the ruby, topaz, and emerald, the chrysolite, onyx, and jasper, the sapphire, turquoise, and beryl; your settings and mounts were made of gold. On the day you were created they were prepared.

¹⁴I placed you there with an anointed guardian cherub; you were on the holy mountain of God; you walked about amidst fiery stones.

¹⁵You were blameless in your behavior from the day you were created, until sin was discovered in you.

¹⁶In the abundance of your trade you were filled with violence, and you sinned; so I defiled you and banished you from the mountain of God – the guardian cherub expelled you from the midst of the stones of fire.

¹⁷Your heart was proud because of your beauty; you corrupted your wisdom on account of your splendor. I threw you down to the ground; I placed you before kings, that they might see you.

¹⁸By the multitude of your iniquities, through the sinfulness of your trade, you desecrated your sanctuaries. So I drew fire out from within you; it consumed you, and I turned you to ashes on the earth before the eyes of all who saw you.

¹⁹All who know you among the peoples are shocked at you; you have become terrified and will be no more.'"

²⁰The word of the Lord came to me:

²¹"Son of man, turn toward Sidon and prophesy against it.

²²Say, 'This is what the sovereign Lord says: "'Look, I am against you, Sidon, and I will magnify myself in your midst. Then they will know that I am the Lord when I execute judgments on her and reveal my sovereign power in her.

²³I will send a plague into the city and bloodshed into its streets; the slain will fall within it, by the sword that attacks it from every side. Then they will know that I am the Lord.

²⁴"'No longer will Israel suffer from the sharp briars or painful thorns of all who surround and scorn them. Then they will know that I am the sovereign Lord.

²⁵ “This is what the sovereign Lord says: When I regather the house of Israel from the peoples where they are dispersed, I will reveal my sovereign power over them in the sight of the nations, and they will live in their land that I gave to my servant Jacob.

²⁶ They will live securely in it; they will build houses and plant vineyards. They will live securely when I execute my judgments on all those who scorn them and surround them. Then they will know that I am the Lord their God.”

29¹ In the tenth year, in the tenth month, on the twelfth day of the month, the word of the Lord came to me:

² “Son of man, turn toward Pharaoh king of Egypt, and prophesy against him and against all Egypt.

³ Tell them, ‘This is what the sovereign Lord says: “Look, I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt, the great monster lying in the midst of its waterways, who has said, “My Nile is my own, I made it for myself.”

⁴ I will put hooks in your jaws and stick the fish of your waterways to your

scales. I will haul you up from the midst of your waterways, and all the fish of your waterways will stick to your scales.

⁵I will leave you in the wilderness, you and all the fish of your waterways; you will fall in the open field and will not be gathered up or collected. I have given you as food to the beasts of the earth and the birds of the skies.

⁶Then all those living in Egypt will know that I am the Lord because they were a reed staff for the house of Israel;

⁷when they grasped you with their hand, you broke and tore their shoulders, and when they leaned on you, you splintered and caused their legs to be unsteady.

⁸“Therefore, this is what the sovereign Lord says: Look, I am about to bring a sword against you, and I will kill every person and every animal.

⁹The land of Egypt will become a desolate ruin. Then they will know that I am the Lord. Because he said, “The Nile is mine and I made it,”

¹⁰I am against you and your waterways. I will turn the land of Egypt into an utter

desolate ruin from Migdol to Syene, as far as the border with Ethiopia.

¹¹ No human foot will pass through it, and no animal's foot will pass through it; it will be uninhabited for forty years.

¹² I will turn the land of Egypt into a desolation in the midst of desolate lands; for forty years her cities will lie desolate in the midst of ruined cities. I will scatter Egypt among the nations and disperse them among foreign countries.

¹³ "For this is what the sovereign Lord says: At the end of forty years I will gather Egypt from the peoples where they were scattered.

¹⁴ I will restore the fortunes of Egypt, and will bring them back to the land of Pathros, to the land of their origin; there they will be an insignificant kingdom.

¹⁵ It will be the most insignificant of the kingdoms; it will never again exalt itself over the nations. I will make them so small that they will not rule over the nations.

¹⁶ It will never again be Israel's source of confidence, but a reminder of how they sinned by turning to Egypt for

help. Then they will know that I am the sovereign Lord.”

¹⁷In the twenty-seventh year, in the first month, on the first day of the month, the word of the Lord came to me:

¹⁸“Son of man, King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon made his army labor hard against Tyre. Every head was rubbed bald and every shoulder rubbed bare; yet he and his army received no wages from Tyre for the work he carried out against it.

¹⁹Therefore this is what the sovereign Lord says: Look, I am about to give the land of Egypt to King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon. He will carry off her wealth, capture her loot, and seize her plunder; it will be his army’s wages.

²⁰I have given him the land of Egypt as his compensation for attacking Tyre, because they did it for me, declares the sovereign Lord.

²¹On that day I will make Israel powerful, and I will give you the right to be heard among them. Then they will know that I am the Lord.”

30¹ The word of the Lord came to me:

² "Son of man, prophesy and say, 'This is what the sovereign Lord says: "'Wail, "Alas, the day is here!"

³ For the day is near, the day of the Lord is near; it will be a day of storm clouds, it will be a time of judgment for the nations.

⁴ A sword will come against Egypt and panic will overtake Ethiopia when the slain fall in Egypt and they carry away her wealth and dismantle her foundations.

⁵ Ethiopia, Put, Lud, all the foreigners, Libya, and the people of the covenant land will die by the sword along with them.

⁶ "'This is what the Lord says: Egypt's supporters will fall; her confident pride will crumble. From Migdol to Syene they will die by the sword within her, declares the sovereign Lord.

⁷ They will be desolate among desolate lands, and their cities will be among ruined cities.

⁸They will know that I am the Lord when I ignite a fire in Egypt and all her allies are defeated.

⁹On that day messengers will go out from me in ships to frighten overly confident Ethiopia; panic will overtake them on the day of Egypt's doom; for beware – it is coming!

¹⁰“This is what the sovereign Lord says: I will put an end to the hordes of Egypt, by the hand of King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon.

¹¹He and his people with him, the most terrifying of the nations, will be brought there to destroy the land. They will draw their swords against Egypt, and fill the land with corpses.

¹²I will dry up the waterways and hand the land over to evil men. I will make the land and everything in it desolate by the hand of foreigners. I, the Lord, have spoken!

¹³“This is what the sovereign Lord says: I will destroy the idols, and put an end to the gods of Memphis. There will no longer be a prince from the land of Egypt; so I will make the land of Egypt fearful.

¹⁴I will desolate Pathros, I will ignite a fire in Zoan, and I will execute judgments on Thebes.

¹⁵I will pour out my anger upon Pelusium, the stronghold of Egypt; I will cut off the hordes of Thebes.

¹⁶I will ignite a fire in Egypt; Syene will writhe in agony, Thebes will be broken down, and Memphis will face enemies every day.

¹⁷The young men of On and of Pi-beseth will die by the sword; and the cities will go into captivity.

¹⁸In Tahpanhes the day will be dark when I break the yoke of Egypt there. Her confident pride will cease within her; a cloud will cover her, and her daughters will go into captivity.

¹⁹I will execute judgments on Egypt. Then they will know that I am the Lord.'"

²⁰In the eleventh year, in the first month, on the seventh day of the month, the word of the Lord came to me:

²¹"Son of man, I have broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt. Look, it has not been bandaged for healing or set with a dressing so that it might become strong enough to grasp a sword.

²²Therefore this is what the sovereign Lord says: Look, I am against Pharaoh king of Egypt, and I will break his arms, the strong arm and the broken one, and I will make the sword drop from his hand.

²³I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations, and disperse them among foreign countries.

²⁴I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, and I will place my sword in his hand, but I will break the arms of Pharaoh, and he will groan like the fatally wounded before the king of Babylon.

²⁵I will strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, but the arms of Pharaoh will fall limp. Then they will know that I am the Lord when I place my sword in the hand of the king of Babylon and he extends it against the land of Egypt.

²⁶I will scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them among foreign countries. Then they will know that I am the Lord.”

31 ¹In the eleventh year, in the third month, on the first day of the month, the word of the Lord came to me:

²“Son of man, say to Pharaoh king of Egypt and his hordes: “‘Who are you like in your greatness?

³Consider Assyria, a cedar in Lebanon, with beautiful branches, like a forest giving shade, and extremely tall; its top reached into the clouds.

⁴The water made it grow; underground springs made it grow tall. Rivers flowed all around the place it was planted, while smaller channels watered all the trees of the field.

⁵Therefore it grew taller than all the trees of the field; its boughs grew large and its branches grew long, because of the plentiful water in its shoots.

⁶All the birds of the sky nested in its boughs; under its branches all the beasts of the field gave birth, in its shade all the great nations lived.

⁷It was beautiful in its loftiness, in the length of its branches; for its roots went down deep to plentiful waters.

⁸The cedars in the garden of God could not eclipse it, nor could the fir trees match its boughs; the plane trees were as nothing compared to its branches; no

tree in the garden of God could rival its beauty.

⁹I made it beautiful with its many branches; all the trees of Eden, in the garden of God, envied it.

¹⁰“Therefore this is what the sovereign Lord says: Because it was tall in stature, and its top reached into the clouds, and it was proud of its height,

¹¹I gave it over to the leader of the nations. He has judged it thoroughly, as its sinfulness deserves. I have thrown it out.

¹²Foreigners from the most terrifying nations have cut it down and left it to lie there on the mountains. In all the valleys its branches have fallen, and its boughs lie broken in the ravines of the land. All the peoples of the land have departed from its shade and left it.

¹³On its ruins all the birds of the sky will live, and all the wild animals will walk on its branches.

¹⁴For this reason no watered trees will grow so tall; their tops will not reach into the clouds, nor will the well-watered ones grow that high. For all of them have been appointed to die in the lower parts

of the earth; they will be among mere mortals, with those who descend to the pit.

¹⁵“This is what the sovereign Lord says: On the day it went down to Sheol I caused observers to lament. I covered it with the deep and held back its rivers; its plentiful water was restrained. I clothed Lebanon in black for it, and all the trees of the field wilted because of it.

¹⁶I made the nations shake at the sound of its fall, when I threw it down to Sheol, along with those who descend to the pit. Then all the trees of Eden, the choicest and the best of Lebanon, all that were well-watered, were comforted in the earth below.

¹⁷Those who lived in its shade, its allies among the nations, also went down with it to Sheol, to those killed by the sword.

¹⁸Which of the trees of Eden was like you in majesty and loftiness? You will be brought down with the trees of Eden to the lower parts of the earth; you will lie among the uncircumcised, with those killed by the sword! This is what will happen to Pharaoh and all his hordes, declares the sovereign Lord.”

32¹ In the twelfth year, in the twelfth month, on the first of the month, the word of the Lord came to me:

² "Son of man, sing a lament for Pharaoh king of Egypt, and say to him: "'You were like a lion among the nations, but you are a monster in the seas; you thrash about in your streams, stir up the water with your feet, and muddy your streams.

³ "'This is what the sovereign Lord says: "'I will throw my net over you in the assembly of many peoples; and they will haul you up in my dragnet.

⁴ I will leave you on the ground, I will fling you on the open field, I will allow all the birds of the sky to settle on you, and I will permit all the wild animals to gorge themselves on you.

⁵ I will put your flesh on the mountains, and fill the valleys with your maggot-infested carcass.

⁶ I will drench the land with the flow of your blood up to the mountains, and the ravines will be full of your blood.

⁷ When I extinguish you, I will cover the sky; I will darken its stars. I will cover

the sun with a cloud, and the moon will not shine.

⁸I will darken all the lights in the sky over you, and I will darken your land, declares the sovereign Lord.

⁹I will disturb many peoples, when I bring about your destruction among the nations, among countries you do not know.

¹⁰I will shock many peoples with you, and their kings will shiver with horror because of you. When I brandish my sword before them, every moment each one will tremble for his life, on the day of your fall.

¹¹“For this is what the sovereign Lord says: “The sword of the king of Babylon will attack you.

¹²By the swords of the mighty warriors I will cause your hordes to fall – all of them are the most terrifying among the nations. They will devastate the pride of Egypt, and all its hordes will be destroyed.

¹³I will destroy all its cattle beside the plentiful waters; and no human foot will disturb the waters again, nor will the hooves of cattle disturb them.

¹⁴Then I will make their waters calm, and will make their streams flow like olive oil, declares the sovereign Lord.

¹⁵When I turn the land of Egypt into desolation and the land is destitute of everything that fills it, when I strike all those who live in it, then they will know that I am the Lord.'

¹⁶This is a lament; they will chant it. The daughters of the nations will chant it. They will chant it over Egypt and over all her hordes, declares the sovereign Lord."

¹⁷In the twelfth year, on the fifteenth day of the month, the word of the Lord came to me:

¹⁸"Son of man, wail over the horde of Egypt. Bring it down; bring her and the daughters of powerful nations down to the lower parts of the earth, along with those who descend to the pit.

¹⁹Say to them, 'Whom do you surpass in beauty? Go down and be laid to rest with the uncircumcised!'

²⁰They will fall among those killed by the sword. The sword is drawn; they carry her and all her hordes away.

²¹ The bravest of the warriors will speak to him from the midst of Sheol along with his allies, saying: 'The uncircumcised have come down; they lie still, killed by the sword.'

²² "Assyria is there with all her assembly around her grave, all of them struck down by the sword.

²³ Their graves are located in the remote slopes of the pit. Her assembly is around her grave, all of them struck down by the sword, those who spread terror in the land of the living.

²⁴ "Elam is there with all her hordes around her grave; all of them struck down by the sword. They went down uncircumcised to the lower parts of the earth, those who spread terror in the land of the living. Now they will bear their shame with those who descend to the pit.

²⁵ Among the dead they have made a bed for her, along with all her hordes around her grave. All of them are uncircumcised, killed by the sword, for their terror had spread in the land of the living. They bear their shame along with

those who descend to the pit; they are placed among the dead.

²⁶ "Meshech-Tubal is there, along with all her hordes around her grave. All of them are uncircumcised, killed by the sword, for they spread their terror in the land of the living.

²⁷ They do not lie with the fallen warriors of ancient times, who went down to Sheol with their weapons of war, having their swords placed under their heads and their shields on their bones, when the terror of these warriors was in the land of the living.

²⁸ "But as for you, in the midst of the uncircumcised you will be broken, and you will lie with those killed by the sword.

²⁹ "Edom is there with her kings and all her princes. Despite their might they are laid with those killed by the sword; they lie with the uncircumcised and those who descend to the pit.

³⁰ "All the leaders of the north are there, along with all the Sidonians; despite their might they have gone down in shameful terror with the dead. They lie uncircumcised with those killed by the

sword, and bear their shame with those who descend to the pit.

³¹ "Pharaoh will see them and be consoled over all his hordes who were killed by the sword, Pharaoh and all his army, declares the sovereign Lord.

³² Indeed, I terrified him in the land of the living, yet he will lie in the midst of the uncircumcised with those killed by the sword, Pharaoh and all his hordes, declares the sovereign Lord."

33 ¹ The word of the Lord came to me:

² "Son of man, speak to your people, and say to them, 'Suppose I bring a sword against the land, and the people of the land take one man from their borders and make him their watchman.

³ He sees the sword coming against the land, blows the trumpet, and warns the people,

⁴ but there is one who hears the sound of the trumpet yet does not heed the warning. Then the sword comes and sweeps him away. He will be responsible for his own death.

⁵ He heard the sound of the trumpet but did not heed the warning, so he is

responsible for himself. If he had heeded the warning, he would have saved his life.

⁶But suppose the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet to warn the people. Then the sword comes and takes one of their lives. He is swept away for his iniquity, but I will hold the watchman accountable for that person's death.'

⁷"As for you, son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you must warn them on my behalf.

⁸When I say to the wicked, 'O wicked man, you must certainly die,' and you do not warn the wicked about his behavior, the wicked man will die for his iniquity, but I will hold you accountable for his death.

⁹But if you warn the wicked man to change his behavior, and he refuses to change, he will die for his iniquity, but you have saved your own life.

¹⁰"And you, son of man, say to the house of Israel, 'This is what you have said: "Our rebellious acts and our sins

have caught up with us, and we are wasting away because of them. How then can we live?"'

¹¹ Say to them, 'As surely as I live, declares the sovereign Lord, I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but prefer that the wicked change his behavior and live. Turn back, turn back from your evil deeds! Why should you die, O house of Israel?'

¹² "And you, son of man, say to your people, 'The righteousness of the righteous will not deliver him if he rebels. As for the wicked, his wickedness will not make him stumble if he turns from it. The righteous will not be able to live by his righteousness if he sins.'

¹³ Suppose I tell the righteous that he will certainly live, but he becomes confident in his righteousness and commits iniquity. None of his righteous deeds will be remembered; because of the iniquity he has committed he will die.

¹⁴ Suppose I say to the wicked, 'You must certainly die,' but he turns from his sin and does what is just and right.

¹⁵ He returns what was taken in pledge, pays back what he has stolen, and

follows the statutes that give life, committing no iniquity. He will certainly live – he will not die.

¹⁶None of the sins he has committed will be counted against him. He has done what is just and right; he will certainly live.

¹⁷“Yet your people say, ‘The behavior of the Lord is not right,’ when it is their behavior that is not right.

¹⁸When a righteous man turns from his godliness and commits iniquity, he will die for it.

¹⁹When the wicked turns from his sin and does what is just and right, he will live because of it.

²⁰Yet you say, ‘The behavior of the Lord is not right.’ House of Israel, I will judge each of you according to his behavior.”

²¹In the twelfth year of our exile, in the tenth month, on the fifth of the month, a refugee came to me from Jerusalem saying, “The city has been defeated!”

²²Now the hand of the Lord had been on me the evening before the refugee reached me, but the Lord opened my mouth by the time the refugee arrived in

the morning; he opened my mouth and I was no longer unable to speak.

²³The word of the Lord came to me:

²⁴"Son of man, the ones living in these ruins in the land of Israel are saying, 'Abraham was only one man, yet he possessed the land, but we are many; surely the land has been given to us for a possession.'

²⁵Therefore say to them, 'This is what the sovereign Lord says: You eat the meat with the blood still in it, pray to your idols, and shed blood. Do you really think you will possess the land?

²⁶You rely on your swords and commit abominable deeds; each of you defiles his neighbor's wife. Will you possess the land?'

²⁷"This is what you must say to them, 'This is what the sovereign Lord says: As surely as I live, those living in the ruins will die by the sword, those in the open field I will give to the wild beasts for food, and those who are in the strongholds and caves will die of disease.

²⁸I will turn the land into a desolate ruin; her confident pride will come to an

end. The mountains of Israel will be so desolate no one will pass through them.

²⁹Then they will know that I am the Lord when I turn the land into a desolate ruin because of all the abominable deeds they have committed.'

³⁰"But as for you, son of man, your people (who are talking about you by the walls and at the doors of the houses) say to one another, 'Come hear the word that comes from the Lord.'

³¹They come to you in crowds, and they sit in front of you as my people. They hear your words, but do not obey them. For they talk lustfully, and their heart is set on their own advantage.

³²Realize that to them you are like a sensual song, a beautiful voice and skilled musician. They hear your words, but they do not obey them.

³³When all this comes true – and it certainly will – then they will know that a prophet was among them."

34¹The word of the Lord came to me:

²"Son of man, prophesy against the shepherds of Israel; prophesy, and say to them – to the shepherds: 'This is

what the sovereign Lord says: Woe to the shepherds of Israel who have been feeding themselves! Should not shepherds feed the flock?

³You eat the fat, you clothe yourselves with the wool, you slaughter the choice animals, but you do not feed the sheep!

⁴You have not strengthened the weak, healed the sick, bandaged the injured, brought back the strays, or sought the lost, but with force and harshness you have ruled over them.

⁵They were scattered because they had no shepherd, and they became food for every wild beast.

⁶My sheep wandered over all the mountains and on every high hill. My sheep were scattered over the entire face of the earth with no one looking or searching for them.

⁷Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord:

⁸As surely as I live, declares the sovereign Lord, my sheep have become prey and have become food for all the wild beasts. There was no shepherd, and my shepherds did not search for my

flock, but fed themselves and did not feed my sheep,

⁹Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the Lord:

¹⁰This is what the sovereign Lord says: Look, I am against the shepherds, and I will demand my sheep from their hand. I will no longer let them be shepherds; the shepherds will not feed themselves anymore. I will rescue my sheep from their mouth, so that they will no longer be food for them.

¹¹“For this is what the sovereign Lord says: Look, I myself will search for my sheep and seek them out.

¹²As a shepherd seeks out his flock when he is among his scattered sheep, so I will seek out my flock. I will rescue them from all the places where they have been scattered on a cloudy, dark day.

¹³I will bring them out from among the peoples and gather them from foreign countries; I will bring them to their own land. I will feed them on the mountains of Israel, by the streams and all the inhabited places of the land.

¹⁴ In a good pasture I will feed them; the mountain heights of Israel will be their pasture. There they will lie down in a lush pasture, and they will feed on rich grass on the mountains of Israel.

¹⁵ I myself will feed my sheep and I myself will make them lie down, declares the sovereign Lord.

¹⁶ I will seek the lost and bring back the strays; I will bandage the injured and strengthen the sick, but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them - with judgment!

¹⁷ "As for you, my sheep, this is what the sovereign Lord says: Look, I am about to judge between one sheep and another, between rams and goats.

¹⁸ Is it not enough for you to feed on the good pasture, that you must trample the rest of your pastures with your feet? When you drink clean water, must you muddy the rest of the water by trampling it with your feet?

¹⁹ As for my sheep, they must eat what you trampled with your feet, and drink what you have muddied with your feet!

²⁰ "Therefore, this is what the sovereign Lord says to them: Look, I myself will

judge between the fat sheep and the lean sheep.

²¹ Because you push with your side and your shoulder, and thrust your horns at all the weak sheep until you scatter them abroad,

²² I will save my sheep; they will no longer be prey. I will judge between one sheep and another.

²³ I will set one shepherd over them, and he will feed them – namely, my servant David. He will feed them and will be their shepherd.

²⁴ I, the Lord, will be their God, and my servant David will be prince among them; I, the Lord, have spoken!

²⁵ “I will make a covenant of peace with them and will rid the land of wild beasts, so that they can live securely in the wilderness and even sleep in the woods.

²⁶ I will turn them and the regions around my hill into a blessing. I will make showers come down in their season; they will be showers that bring blessing.

²⁷ The trees of the field will yield their fruit and the earth will yield its crops. They will live securely on their land; they will know that I am the Lord,

when I break the bars of their yoke and rescue them from the hand of those who enslaved them.

²⁸They will no longer be prey for the nations and the wild beasts will not devour them. They will live securely and no one will make them afraid.

²⁹I will prepare for them a healthy planting. They will no longer be victims of famine in the land and will no longer bear the insults of the nations.

³⁰Then they will know that I, the Lord their God, am with them, and that they are my people, the house of Israel, declares the sovereign Lord.

³¹And you, my sheep, the sheep of my pasture, are my people, and I am your God, declares the sovereign Lord."

35¹ The word of the Lord came to me:

²"Son of man, turn toward Mount Seir, and prophesy against it.

³Say to it, 'This is what the sovereign Lord says: "'Look, I am against you, Mount Seir; I will stretch out my hand against you and turn you into a desolate ruin.

⁴ I will lay waste your cities; and you will become desolate. Then you will know that I am the Lord!

⁵ "You have shown unrelenting hostility and poured the people of Israel onto the blades of a sword at the time of their calamity, at the time of their final punishment.

⁶ Therefore, as surely as I live, declares the sovereign Lord, I will subject you to bloodshed, and bloodshed will pursue you. Since you did not hate bloodshed, bloodshed will pursue you.

⁷ I will turn Mount Seir into a desolate ruin; I will cut off from it the one who passes through or returns.

⁸ I will fill its mountains with its dead; on your hills and in your valleys and in all your ravines, those killed by the sword will fall.

⁹ I will turn you into a perpetual desolation, and your cities will not be inhabited. Then you will know that I am the Lord.

¹⁰ "You said, "These two nations, these two lands will be mine, and we will possess them," - although the Lord was there -

¹¹ therefore, as surely as I live, declares the sovereign Lord, I will deal with you according to your anger, and according to your envy, by which you acted spitefully against them. I will reveal myself to them when I judge you.

¹² Then you will know that I, the Lord, have heard all the insults you spoke against the mountains of Israel, saying, "They are desolate, they have been given to us for food."

¹³ You exalted yourselves against me with your speech and hurled many insults against me – I have heard them all!

¹⁴ This is what the sovereign Lord says: While the whole earth rejoices, I will turn you into a desolation.

¹⁵ As you rejoiced over the inheritance of the house of Israel because it was desolate, so will I deal with you – you will be desolate, Mount Seir, and all of Edom – all of it! Then they will know that I am the Lord."

36¹ "As for you, son of man, prophesy to the mountains of Israel, and say: 'O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Lord!

²This is what the sovereign Lord says: The enemy has spoken against you, saying "Aha!" and, "The ancient heights have become our property!"

³So prophesy and say: 'This is what the sovereign Lord says: Surely because they have made you desolate and crushed you from all directions, so that you have become the property of the rest of the nations, and have become the subject of gossip and slander among the people,

⁴therefore, O mountains of Israel, hear the word of the sovereign Lord: This is what the sovereign Lord says to the mountains and hills, the ravines and valleys, and to the desolate ruins and the abandoned cities that have become prey and an object of derision to the rest of the nations round about -

⁵therefore this is what the sovereign Lord says: Surely I have spoken in the fire of my zeal against the rest of the nations, and against all Edom, who with great joy and utter contempt have made my land their property and prey, because of its pasture.'

⁶ "Therefore prophesy concerning the land of Israel, and say to the mountains and hills, the ravines and valleys, 'This is what the sovereign Lord says: Look, I have spoken in my zeal and in my anger, because you have endured the insults of the nations.

⁷ So this is what the sovereign Lord says: I vow that the nations around you will endure insults as well.

⁸ "'But you, mountains of Israel, will grow your branches, and bear your fruit for my people Israel; for they will arrive soon.

⁹ For indeed, I am on your side; I will turn to you, and you will be plowed and planted.

¹⁰ I will multiply your people – the whole house of Israel, all of it. The cities will be populated and the ruins rebuilt.

¹¹ I will increase the number of people and animals on you; they will increase and be fruitful. I will cause you to be inhabited as in ancient times, and will do more good for you than at the beginning of your history. Then you will know that I am the Lord.

¹²I will lead people, my people Israel, across you; they will possess you and you will become their inheritance. No longer will you bereave them of their children.

¹³“This is what the sovereign Lord says: Because they are saying to you, “You are a devourer of men, and bereave your nation of children,”

¹⁴therefore you will no longer devour people and no longer bereave your nation of children, declares the sovereign Lord.

¹⁵I will no longer subject you to the nations’ insults; no longer will you bear the shame of the peoples, and no longer will you bereave your nation, declares the sovereign Lord.”

¹⁶The word of the Lord came to me:

¹⁷“Son of man, when the house of Israel was living on their own land, they defiled it by their behavior and their deeds. In my sight their behavior was like the uncleanness of a woman having her monthly period.

¹⁸So I poured my anger on them because of the blood they shed on the

land and because of the idols with which they defiled it.

¹⁹I scattered them among the nations; they were dispersed throughout foreign countries. In accordance with their behavior and their deeds I judged them.

²⁰But when they arrived in the nations where they went, they profaned my holy name. It was said of them, 'These are the people of the Lord, yet they have departed from his land.'

²¹I was concerned for my holy reputation which the house of Israel profaned among the nations where they went.

²²"Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'This is what the sovereign Lord says: It is not for your sake that I am about to act, O house of Israel, but for the sake of my holy reputation which you profaned among the nations where you went.

²³I will magnify my great name that has been profaned among the nations, that you have profaned among them. The nations will know that I am the Lord, declares the sovereign Lord, when I magnify myself among you in their sight.

²⁴ "I will take you from the nations and gather you from all the countries; then I will bring you to your land.

²⁵ I will sprinkle you with pure water and you will be clean from all your impurities. I will purify you from all your idols.

²⁶ I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit within you. I will remove the heart of stone from your body and give you a heart of flesh.

²⁷ I will put my Spirit within you; I will take the initiative and you will obey my statutes and carefully observe my regulations.

²⁸ Then you will live in the land I gave to your fathers; you will be my people, and I will be your God.

²⁹ I will save you from all your uncleanness. I will call for the grain and multiply it; I will not bring a famine on you.

³⁰ I will multiply the fruit of the trees and the produce of the fields, so that you will never again suffer the disgrace of famine among the nations.

³¹ Then you will remember your evil behavior and your deeds which were

not good; you will loathe yourselves on account of your sins and your abominable deeds.

³² Understand that it is not for your sake I am about to act, declares the sovereign Lord. Be ashamed and embarrassed by your behavior, O house of Israel.

³³ "This is what the sovereign Lord says: In the day I cleanse you from all your sins, I will populate the cities and the ruins will be rebuilt.

³⁴ The desolate land will be plowed, instead of being desolate in the sight of everyone who passes by.

³⁵ They will say, "This desolate land has become like the garden of Eden; the ruined, desolate, and destroyed cities are now fortified and inhabited."

³⁶ Then the nations which remain around you will know that I, the Lord, have rebuilt the ruins and replanted what was desolate. I, the Lord, have spoken - and I will do it!

³⁷ "This is what the sovereign Lord says: I will allow the house of Israel to ask me to do this for them: I will multiply their people like sheep.

³⁸Like the sheep for offerings, like the sheep of Jerusalem during her appointed feasts, so will the ruined cities be filled with flocks of people. Then they will know that I am the Lord."

37 ¹The hand of the Lord was on me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the Lord and placed me in the midst of the valley, and it was full of bones.

²He made me walk all around among them. I realized there were a great many bones in the valley and they were very dry.

³He said to me, "Son of man, can these bones live?" I said to him, "Sovereign Lord, you know."

⁴Then he said to me, "Prophecy over these bones, and tell them: 'Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord.

⁵This is what the sovereign Lord says to these bones: Look, I am about to infuse breath into you and you will live.

⁶I will put tendons on you and muscles over you and will cover you with skin; I will put breath in you and you will live. Then you will know that I am the Lord."

⁷ So I prophesied as I was commanded. There was a sound when I prophesied – I heard a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to bone.

⁸ As I watched, I saw tendons on them, then muscles appeared, and skin covered over them from above, but there was no breath in them.

⁹ He said to me, “Prophecy to the breath, – prophecy, son of man – and say to the breath: ‘This is what the sovereign Lord says: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe on these corpses so that they may live.’”

¹⁰ So I prophesied as I was commanded, and the breath came into them; they lived and stood on their feet, an extremely great army.

¹¹ Then he said to me, “Son of man, these bones are all the house of Israel. Look, they are saying, ‘Our bones are dry, our hope has perished; we are cut off.’”

¹² Therefore prophecy, and tell them, ‘This is what the sovereign Lord says: Look, I am about to open your graves and will raise you from your graves, my

people. I will bring you to the land of Israel.

¹³Then you will know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves and raise you from your graves, my people.

¹⁴I will place my breath in you and you will live; I will give you rest in your own land. Then you will know that I am the Lord – I have spoken and I will act, declares the Lord.'"

¹⁵The word of the Lord came to me:

¹⁶"As for you, son of man, take one branch, and write on it, 'For Judah, and for the Israelites associated with him.' Then take another branch and write on it, 'For Joseph, the branch of Ephraim and all the house of Israel associated with him.'

¹⁷Join them as one stick; they will be as one in your hand.

¹⁸When your people say to you, 'Will you not tell us what these things mean?'

¹⁹tell them, 'This is what the sovereign Lord says: Look, I am about to take the branch of Joseph which is in the hand of Ephraim and the tribes of Israel associated with him, and I will place them on the stick of Judah, and make

them into one stick – they will be one in my hand.'

²⁰The sticks you write on will be in your hand in front of them.

²¹Then tell them, 'This is what the sovereign Lord says: Look, I am about to take the Israelites from among the nations where they have gone. I will gather them from round about and bring them to their land.

²²I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel, and one king will rule over them all. They will never again be two nations and never again be divided into two kingdoms.

²³They will not defile themselves with their idols, their detestable things, and all their rebellious deeds. I will save them from all their unfaithfulness by which they sinned. I will purify them; they will become my people and I will become their God.

²⁴''My servant David will be king over them; there will be one shepherd for all of them. They will follow my regulations and carefully observe my statutes.

²⁵They will live in the land I gave to my servant Jacob, in which your fathers

lived; they will live in it – they and their children and their grandchildren forever. David my servant will be prince over them forever.

²⁶I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be a perpetual covenant with them. I will establish them, increase their numbers, and place my sanctuary among them forever.

²⁷My dwelling place will be with them; I will be their God, and they will be my people.

²⁸Then, when my sanctuary is among them forever, the nations will know that I, the Lord, sanctify Israel.'"

38¹The word of the Lord came to me:

²"Son of man, turn toward Gog, of the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal. Prophecy against him

³and say: 'This is what the sovereign Lord says: Look, I am against you, Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal.

⁴I will turn you around, put hooks into your jaws, and bring you out with all your army, horses and horsemen, all of them fully armed, a great company with

shields of different types, all of them armed with swords.

⁵ Persia, Ethiopia, and Put are with them, all of them with shields and helmets.

⁶ They are joined by Gomer with all its troops, and by Beth Togarmah from the remote parts of the north with all its troops - many peoples are with you.

⁷ "Be ready and stay ready, you and all your companies assembled around you, and be a guard for them.

⁸ After many days you will be summoned; in the latter years you will come to a land restored from the ravages of war, with many peoples gathered on the mountains of Israel that had long been in ruins. Its people were brought out from the peoples, and all of them will be living securely.

⁹ You will advance; you will come like a storm. You will be like a cloud covering the earth, you, all your troops, and the many other peoples with you.

¹⁰ "This is what the sovereign Lord says: On that day thoughts will come into your mind, and you will devise an evil plan.

¹¹ You will say, "I will invade a land of unwallled towns; I will advance against those living quietly in security – all of them living without walls and barred gates –

¹² to loot and plunder, to attack the inhabited ruins and the people gathered from the nations, who are acquiring cattle and goods, who live at the center of the earth."

¹³ Sheba and Dedan and the traders of Tarshish with all its young warriors will say to you, "Have you come to loot? Have you assembled your armies to plunder, to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to haul away a great amount of spoils?"

¹⁴ "Therefore, prophesy, son of man, and say to Gog: 'This is what the sovereign Lord says: On that day when my people Israel are living securely, you will take notice

¹⁵ and come from your place, from the remote parts of the north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great company and a vast army.

¹⁶You will advance against my people Israel like a cloud covering the earth. In the latter days I will bring you against my land so that the nations may acknowledge me, when before their eyes I magnify myself through you, O Gog.

¹⁷“This is what the sovereign Lord says: Are you the one of whom I spoke in former days by my servants the prophets of Israel, who prophesied in those days that I would bring you against them?

¹⁸On that day, when Gog invades the land of Israel, declares the sovereign Lord, my rage will mount up in my anger.

¹⁹In my zeal, in the fire of my fury, I declare that on that day there will be a great earthquake in the land of Israel.

²⁰The fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the wild beasts, all the things that creep on the ground, and all people who live on the face of the earth will shake at my presence. The mountains will topple, the cliffs will fall, and every wall will fall to the ground.

²¹I will call for a sword to attack Gog on all my mountains, declares the sovereign Lord; every man's sword will be against his brother.

²²I will judge him with plague and bloodshed. I will rain down on him, his troops and the many peoples who are with him a torrential downpour, hailstones, fire, and brimstone.

²³I will exalt and magnify myself; I will reveal myself before many nations. Then they will know that I am the Lord.'

39¹ "As for you, son of man, prophesy against Gog, and say: 'This is what the sovereign Lord says: Look, I am against you, O Gog, chief prince of Meshech and Tubal!

²I will turn you around and drag you along; I will lead you up from the remotest parts of the north and bring you against the mountains of Israel.

³I will knock your bow out of your left hand and make your arrows fall from your right hand.

⁴You will fall dead on the mountains of Israel, you and all your troops and the people who are with you. I give you as food to every kind of bird and every wild beast.

⁵You will fall dead in the open field; for I have spoken, declares the sovereign Lord.

⁶ I will send fire on Magog and those who live securely in the coastlands; then they will know that I am the Lord.

⁷ "I will make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel; I will not let my holy name be profaned anymore. Then the nations will know that I am the Lord, the Holy One of Israel.

⁸ Realize that it is coming and it will be done, declares the sovereign Lord. It is the day I have spoken about.

⁹ "Then those who live in the cities of Israel will go out and use the weapons for kindling - the shields, bows and arrows, war clubs and spears - they will burn them for seven years.

¹⁰ They will not need to take wood from the field or cut down trees from the forests, because they will make fires with the weapons. They will take the loot from those who looted them and seize the plunder of those who plundered them, declares the sovereign Lord.

¹¹ "On that day I will assign Gog a grave in Israel. It will be the valley of those who travel east of the sea; it will block the way of the travelers. There

they will bury Gog and all his horde; they will call it the valley of Hamon-Gog.

¹²For seven months Israel will bury them, in order to cleanse the land.

¹³All the people of the land will bury them, and it will be a memorial for them on the day I magnify myself, declares the sovereign Lord.

¹⁴They will designate men to scout continually through the land, burying those who remain on the surface of the ground, in order to cleanse it. They will search for seven full months.

¹⁵When the scouts survey the land and see a human bone, they will place a sign by it, until those assigned to burial duty have buried it in the valley of Hamon-Gog.

¹⁶(A city by the name of Hamonah will also be there.) They will cleanse the land.'

¹⁷"As for you, son of man, this is what the sovereign Lord says: Tell every kind of bird and every wild beast: 'Assemble and come! Gather from all around to my slaughter which I am going to make for you, a great slaughter on the mountains

of Israel! You will eat flesh and drink blood.

¹⁸You will eat the flesh of warriors and drink the blood of the princes of the earth – the rams, lambs, goats, and bulls, all of them fattened animals of Bashan.

¹⁹You will eat fat until you are full, and drink blood until you are drunk, at my slaughter which I have made for you.

²⁰You will fill up at my table with horses and charioteers, with warriors and all the soldiers,' declares the sovereign Lord.

²¹"I will display my majesty among the nations. All the nations will witness the judgment I have executed, and the power I have exhibited among them.

²²Then the house of Israel will know that I am the Lord their God, from that day forward.

²³The nations will know that the house of Israel went into exile due to their iniquity, for they were unfaithful to me. So I hid my face from them and handed them over to their enemies; all of them died by the sword.

²⁴ According to their uncleanness and rebellion I have dealt with them, and I hid my face from them.

²⁵ “Therefore this is what the sovereign Lord says: Now I will restore the fortunes of Jacob, and I will have mercy on the entire house of Israel. I will be zealous for my holy name.

²⁶ They will bear their shame for all their unfaithful acts against me, when they live securely on their land with no one to make them afraid.

²⁷ When I have brought them back from the peoples and gathered them from the countries of their enemies, I will magnify myself among them in the sight of many nations.

²⁸ Then they will know that I am the Lord their God, because I sent them into exile among the nations, and then gathered them into their own land. I will not leave any of them in exile any longer.

²⁹ I will no longer hide my face from them, when I pour out my Spirit on the house of Israel, declares the sovereign Lord.”

40¹ In the twenty-fifth year of our exile, at the beginning of the year,

on the tenth day of the month, in the fourteenth year after the city was struck down, on this very day, the hand of the Lord was on me, and he brought me there.

²By means of divine visions he brought me to the land of Israel and placed me on a very high mountain, and on it was a structure like a city, to the south.

³When he brought me there, I saw a man whose appearance was like bronze, with a linen cord and a measuring stick in his hand. He was standing in the gateway.

⁴The man said to me, "Son of man, watch closely, listen carefully, and pay attention to everything I show you, for you have been brought here so that I can show it to you. Tell the house of Israel everything you see."

⁵I saw a wall all around the outside of the temple. In the man's hand was a measuring stick 10 feet long. He measured the thickness of the wall as 10 feet, and its height as 10 feet.

⁶Then he went to the gate facing east. He climbed its steps and measured the threshold of the gate as 10 feet deep.

⁷The alcoves were 10 feet long and 10 feet wide; between the alcoves were 8 feet. The threshold of the gate by the porch of the gate facing inward was 10 feet.

⁸Then he measured the porch of the gate facing inward as 10 feet.

⁹He measured the porch of the gate as 14 feet, and its jambs as 3 feet; the porch of the gate faced inward.

¹⁰There were three alcoves on each side of the east gate; the three had the same measurement, and the jambs on either side had the same measurement.

¹¹He measured the width of the entrance of the gateway as 17 feet, and the length of the gateway as 22 feet.

¹²There was a barrier in front of the alcoves, 1 feet on either side; the alcoves were 10 feet on either side.

¹³He measured the gateway from the roof of one alcove to the roof of the other, a width of 43 feet from one entrance to the opposite one.

¹⁴He measured the porch at 105 feet high; the gateway went all around to the jamb of the courtyard.

¹⁵From the front of the entrance gate to the porch of the inner gate was 87 feet.

¹⁶There were closed windows toward the alcoves and toward their jambs within the gate all around, and likewise for the porches. There were windows all around the inside, and on each jamb were decorative palm trees.

¹⁷Then he brought me to the outer court. I saw chambers there, and a pavement made for the court all around; thirty chambers faced the pavement.

¹⁸The pavement was beside the gates, corresponding to the length of the gates; this was the lower pavement.

¹⁹Then he measured the width from before the lower gate to the front of the exterior of the inner court as 175 feet on the east and on the north.

²⁰He measured the length and width of the gate of the outer court which faces north.

²¹Its alcoves, three on each side, and its jambs and porches had the same measurement as the first gate; 87 feet long and 43 feet wide.

²²Its windows, its porches, and its decorative palm trees had the same measurement as the gate which faced east. Seven steps led up to it, and its porch was in front of them.

²³Opposite the gate on the north and the east was a gate of the inner court; he measured the distance from gate to gate at 175 feet.

²⁴Then he led me toward the south. I saw a gate on the south. He measured its jambs and its porches; they had the same dimensions as the others.

²⁵There were windows all around it and its porches, like the windows of the others; 87 feet long and 43 feet wide.

²⁶There were seven steps going up to it; its porches were in front of them. It had decorative palm trees on its jambs, one on either side.

²⁷The inner court had a gate toward the south; he measured it from gate to gate toward the south as 175 feet.

²⁸Then he brought me to the inner court by the south gate. He measured the south gate; it had the same dimensions as the others.

²⁹ Its alcoves, its jambs, and its porches had the same dimensions as the others, and there were windows all around it and its porches; its length was 87 feet and its width 43 feet.

³⁰ There were porches all around, 43 feet long and 8 feet wide.

³¹ Its porches faced the outer court, and decorative palm trees were on its jambs, and its stairway had eight steps.

³² Then he brought me to the inner court on the east side. He measured the gate; it had the same dimensions as the others.

³³ Its alcoves, its jambs, and its porches had the same dimensions as the others, and there were windows all around it and its porches; its length was 87 feet and its width 43 feet.

³⁴ Its porches faced the outer court, it had decorative palm trees on its jambs, and its stairway had eight steps.

³⁵ Then he brought me to the north gate, and he measured it; it had the same dimensions as the others -

³⁶ its alcoves, its jambs, and its porches. It had windows all around it; its length was 87 feet and its width 43 feet.

³⁷ Its jambs faced the outer court, and it had decorative palm trees on its jambs, on either side, and its stairway had eight steps.

³⁸ There was a chamber with its door by the porch of the gate; there they washed the burnt offering.

³⁹ In the porch of the gate were two tables on either side on which to slaughter the burnt offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering.

⁴⁰ On the outside of the porch as one goes up at the entrance of the north gate were two tables, and on the other side of the porch of the gate were two tables.

⁴¹ Four tables were on each side of the gate, eight tables on which the sacrifices were to be slaughtered.

⁴² The four tables for the burnt offering were of carved stone, 32 inches long, 32 inches wide, and 21 inches high. They would put the instruments which they used to slaughter the burnt offering and the sacrifice on them.

⁴³ There were hooks three inches long, fastened in the house all around, and on the tables was the flesh of the offering.

⁴⁴ On the outside of the inner gate were chambers for the singers of the inner court, one at the side of the north gate facing south, and the other at the side of the south gate facing north.

⁴⁵ He said to me, "This chamber which faces south is for the priests who keep charge of the temple,

⁴⁶ and the chamber which faces north is for the priests who keep charge of the altar. These are the descendants of Zadok, from the descendants of Levi, who may approach the Lord to minister to him."

⁴⁷ He measured the court as a square 175 feet long and 175 feet wide; the altar was in front of the temple.

⁴⁸ Then he brought me to the porch of the temple and measured the jambs of the porch as 8 feet on either side, and the width of the gate was 24 feet and the sides were 5 feet on each side.

⁴⁹ The length of the porch was 35 feet and the width 19 feet; steps led up to it, and there were pillars beside the jambs on either side.

41 ¹ Then he brought me to the outer sanctuary, and measured the

jamb; the jamba was 10 feet wide on each side.

²The width of the entrance was 17 feet, and the sides of the entrance were 8 feet on each side. He measured the length of the outer sanctuary as 70 feet, and its width as 35 feet.

³Then he went into the inner sanctuary and measured the jamba of the entrance as 3 feet, the entrance as 10 feet, and the width of the entrance as 12 feet

⁴Then he measured its length as 35 feet, and its width as 35 feet, before the outer sanctuary. He said to me, "This is the most holy place."

⁵Then he measured the wall of the temple as 10 feet, and the width of the side chambers as 7 feet, all around the temple.

⁶The side chambers were in three stories, one above the other, thirty in each story. There were offsets in the wall all around to serve as supports for the side chambers, so that the supports were not in the wall of the temple.

⁷The side chambers surrounding the temple were wider at each successive story; for the structure surrounding the

temple went up story by story all around the temple. For this reason the width of the temple increased as it went up, and one went up from the lowest story to the highest by the way of the middle story.

⁸I saw that the temple had a raised platform all around; the foundations of the side chambers were a full measuring stick of 10 feet high.

⁹The width of the outer wall of the side chambers was 8 feet, and the open area between the side chambers of the temple

¹⁰and the chambers of the court was 35 feet in width all around the temple on every side.

¹¹There were entrances from the side chambers toward the open area, one entrance toward the north, and another entrance toward the south; the width of the open area was 8 feet all around.

¹²The building that was facing the temple courtyard at the west side was 122 feet wide; the wall of the building was 8 feet all around, and its length 157 feet.

¹³Then he measured the temple as 175 feet long, the courtyard of the temple

and the building and its walls as 175 feet long,

¹⁴and also the width of the front of the temple and the courtyard on the east as 175 feet.

¹⁵Then he measured the length of the building facing the courtyard at the rear of the temple, with its galleries on either side as 175 feet. The interior of the outer sanctuary and the porch of the court,

¹⁶as well as the thresholds, narrow windows and galleries all around on three sides facing the threshold were paneled with wood all around, from the ground up to the windows (now the windows were covered),

¹⁷to the space above the entrance, to the inner room, and on the outside, and on all the walls in the inner room and outside, by measurement.

¹⁸It was made with cherubim and decorative palm trees, with a palm tree between each cherub. Each cherub had two faces:

¹⁹a human face toward the palm tree on one side and a lion's face toward the palm tree on the other side. They were carved on the whole temple all around;

²⁰from the ground to the area above the entrance, cherubim and decorative palm trees were carved on the wall of the outer sanctuary.

²¹The doorposts of the outer sanctuary were square. In front of the sanctuary one doorpost looked just like the other.

²²The altar was of wood, 5 feet high, with its length 3 feet; its corners, its length, and its walls were of wood. He said to me, "This is the table that is before the Lord."

²³The outer sanctuary and the inner sanctuary each had a double door.

²⁴Each of the doors had two leaves, two swinging leaves; two leaves for one door and two leaves for the other.

²⁵On the doors of the outer sanctuary were carved cherubim and palm trees, like those carved on the walls, and there was a canopy of wood on the front of the outside porch.

²⁶There were narrow windows and decorative palm trees on either side of the side walls of the porch; this is what the side chambers of the temple and the canopies were like.

42¹ Then he led me out to the outer court, toward the north, and brought me to the chamber which was opposite the courtyard and opposite the building on the north.

² Its length was 175 feet on the north side, and its width 87 feet.

³ Opposite the 35 feet that belonged to the inner court, and opposite the pavement which belonged to the outer court, gallery faced gallery in the three stories.

⁴ In front of the chambers was a walkway on the inner side, 17 feet wide at a distance of 1 feet, and their entrances were on the north.

⁵ Now the upper chambers were narrower, because the galleries took more space from them than from the lower and middle chambers of the building.

⁶ For they were in three stories and had no pillars like the pillars of the courts; therefore the upper chambers were set back from the ground more than the lower and upper ones.

⁷As for the outer wall by the side of the chambers, toward the outer court facing the chambers, it was 87 feet long.

⁸For the chambers on the outer court were 87 feet long, while those facing the temple were 175 feet long.

⁹Below these chambers was a passage on the east side as one enters from the outer court.

¹⁰At the beginning of the wall of the court toward the south, facing the courtyard and the building, were chambers

¹¹with a passage in front of them. They looked like the chambers on the north. Of the same length and width, and all their exits according to their arrangements and entrances

¹²were the chambers which were toward the south. There was an opening at the head of the passage, the passage in front of the corresponding wall toward the east when one enters.

¹³Then he said to me, "The north chambers and the south chambers which face the courtyard are holy chambers where the priests who approach the Lord will eat the most holy offerings. There

they will place the most holy offerings – the grain offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering, because the place is holy.

¹⁴When the priests enter, then they will not go out from the sanctuary to the outer court without taking off their garments in which they minister, for these are holy; they will put on other garments, then they will go near the places where the people are.”

¹⁵Now when he had finished measuring the interior of the temple, he led me out by the gate which faces east and measured all around.

¹⁶He measured the east side with the measuring stick as 875 feet by the measuring stick.

¹⁷He measured the north side as 875 feet by the measuring stick.

¹⁸He measured the south side as 875 feet by the measuring stick.

¹⁹He turned to the west side and measured 875 feet by the measuring stick.

²⁰He measured it on all four sides. It had a wall around it, 875 feet long and

875 feet wide, to separate the holy and common places.

43¹ Then he brought me to the gate that faced toward the east.

² I saw the glory of the God of Israel coming from the east; the sound was like that of rushing water; and the earth radiated his glory.

³ It was like the vision I saw when he came to destroy the city, and the vision I saw by the Kebar River. I threw myself face down.

⁴ The glory of the Lord came into the temple by way of the gate that faces east.

⁵ Then a wind lifted me up and brought me to the inner court; I watched the glory of the Lord filling the temple.

⁶ I heard someone speaking to me from the temple, while the man was standing beside me.

⁷ He said to me: "Son of man, this is the place of my throne and the place for the soles of my feet, where I will live among the people of Israel forever. The house of Israel will no longer profane my holy name, neither they nor their kings, by their spiritual prostitution or by the

pillars of their kings set up when they die.

⁸When they placed their threshold by my threshold and their doorpost by my doorpost, with only the wall between me and them, they profaned my holy name by the abominable deeds they committed. So I consumed them in my anger.

⁹Now they must put away their spiritual prostitution and the pillars of their kings far from me, and then I will live among them forever.

¹⁰"As for you, son of man, describe the temple to the house of Israel, so that they will be ashamed of their sins and measure the pattern.

¹¹When they are ashamed of all that they have done, make known to them the design of the temple, its pattern, its exits and entrances, and its whole design – all its statutes, its entire design, and all its laws; write it all down in their sight, so that they may observe its entire design and all its statutes and do them.

¹²"This is the law of the temple: The entire area on top of the mountain all

around will be most holy. Indeed, this is the law of the temple.

¹³“And these are the measurements of the altar: Its base is 1 foot high, and 1 foot wide, and its border nine inches on its edge. This is to be the height of the altar.

¹⁴From the base of the ground to the lower edge is 3 feet, and the width 1 foot; and from the smaller ledge to the larger edge, 7 feet, and the width 1 foot;

¹⁵and the altar hearth, 7 feet, and from the altar hearth four horns projecting upward.

¹⁶Now the altar hearth is a perfect square, 21 feet long and 21 feet wide.

¹⁷The ledge is 24 feet long and 24 feet wide on four sides; the border around it is 10 inches, and its surrounding base 1 foot. Its steps face east.”

¹⁸Then he said to me: “Son of man, this is what the sovereign Lord says: These are the statutes of the altar: On the day it is built to offer up burnt offerings on it and to sprinkle blood on it,

¹⁹you will give a young bull for a sin offering to the Levitical priests who are descended from Zadok, who approach

me to minister to me, declares the sovereign Lord.

²⁰You will take some of its blood, and place it on the four horns of the altar, on the four corners of the ledge, and on the border all around; you will cleanse it and make atonement for it.

²¹You will also take the bull for the sin offering, and it will be burned in the appointed place in the temple, outside the sanctuary.

²²"On the second day, you will offer a male goat without blemish for a sin offering. They will purify the altar just as they purified it with the bull.

²³When you have finished purifying it, you will offer an unblemished young bull and an unblemished ram from the flock.

²⁴You will present them before the Lord, and the priests will scatter salt on them and offer them up as a burnt offering to the Lord.

²⁵"For seven days you will provide every day a goat for a sin offering; a young bull and a ram from the flock, both without blemish, will be provided.

²⁶For seven days they will make atonement for the altar and cleanse it, so they will consecrate it.

²⁷When the prescribed period is over, on the eighth day and thereafter the priests will offer up on the altar your burnt offerings and your peace offerings; I will accept you, declares the sovereign Lord."

44 ¹Then he brought me back by way of the outer gate of the sanctuary which faces east, but it was shut.

²The Lord said to me: "This gate will be shut; it will not be opened, and no one will enter by it. For the Lord, the God of Israel, has entered by it; therefore it will remain shut.

³Only the prince may sit in it to eat a sacrificial meal before the Lord; he will enter by way of the porch of the gate and will go out by the same way."

⁴Then he brought me by way of the north gate to the front of the temple. As I watched, I noticed the glory of the Lord filling the Lord's temple, and I threw myself face down.

⁵The Lord said to me: "Son of man, pay attention, watch closely and listen carefully to everything I tell you concerning all the statutes of the Lord's house and all its laws. Pay attention to the entrances to the temple with all the exits of the sanctuary.

⁶Say to the rebellious, to the house of Israel, 'This is what the sovereign Lord says: Enough of all your abominable practices, O house of Israel!

⁷When you bring foreigners, those uncircumcised in heart and in flesh, into my sanctuary, you desecrate it - even my house - when you offer my food, the fat and the blood. You have broken my covenant by all your abominable practices.

⁸You have not kept charge of my holy things, but you have assigned foreigners to keep charge of my sanctuary for you.

⁹This is what the sovereign Lord says: No foreigner, who is uncircumcised in heart and flesh among all the foreigners who are among the people of Israel, will enter into my sanctuary.

¹⁰"'But the Levites who went far from me, straying off from me after their

idols when Israel went astray, will be responsible for their sin.

¹¹ Yet they will be ministers in my sanctuary, having oversight at the gates of the temple, and serving the temple. They will slaughter the burnt offerings and the sacrifices for the people, and they will stand before them to minister to them.

¹² Because they used to minister to them before their idols, and became a sinful obstacle to the house of Israel, consequently I have made a vow concerning them, declares the sovereign Lord, that they will be responsible for their sin.

¹³ They will not come near me to serve me as priest, nor will they come near any of my holy things, the things which are most sacred. They will bear the shame of the abominable deeds they have committed.

¹⁴ Yet I will appoint them to keep charge of the temple, all of its service and all that will be done in it.

¹⁵ "But the Levitical priests, the descendants of Zadok who kept the charge of my sanctuary when the people

of Israel went astray from me, will approach me to minister to me; they will stand before me to offer me the fat and the blood, declares the sovereign Lord.

¹⁶They will enter my sanctuary, and approach my table to minister to me; they will keep my charge.

¹⁷“When they enter the gates of the inner court, they must wear linen garments; they must not have any wool on them when they minister in the inner gates of the court and in the temple.

¹⁸Linen turbans will be on their heads and linen undergarments will be around their waists; they must not bind themselves with anything that causes sweat.

¹⁹When they go out to the outer court to the people, they must remove the garments they were ministering in, and place them in the holy chambers; they must put on other garments so that they will not transmit holiness to the people with their garments.

²⁰“They must not shave their heads nor let their hair grow long; they must only trim their heads.

²¹ No priest may drink wine when he enters the inner court.

²² They must not marry a widow or a divorcee, but they may marry a virgin from the house of Israel or a widow who is a priest's widow.

²³ Moreover, they will teach my people the difference between the holy and the common, and show them how to distinguish between the ceremonially unclean and the clean.

²⁴ "In a controversy they will act as judges; they will judge according to my ordinances. They will keep my laws and my statutes regarding all my appointed festivals and will observe my Sabbaths.

²⁵ "They must not come near a dead person or they will be defiled; however, for father, mother, son, daughter, brother or sister, they may defile themselves.

²⁶ After a priest has become ceremonially clean, they must count off a period of seven days for him.

²⁷ On the day he enters the sanctuary, into the inner court to serve in the sanctuary, he must offer his sin offering, declares the sovereign Lord.

²⁸ "This will be their inheritance: I am their inheritance, and you must give them no property in Israel; I am their property.

²⁹ They may eat the grain offering, the sin offering, and the guilt offering, and every devoted thing in Israel will be theirs.

³⁰ The first of all the first fruits and all contributions of any kind will be for the priests; you will also give to the priest the first portion of your dough, so that a blessing may rest on your house.

³¹ The priests will not eat any bird or animal that has died a natural death or was torn to pieces by a wild animal.

45 ¹ "When you allot the land as an inheritance, you will offer an allotment to the Lord, a holy portion from the land; the length will be eight and a quarter miles and the width three and one-third miles. This entire area will be holy.

² Of this area a square 875 feet by 875 feet will be designated for the sanctuary, with 87 feet set aside for its open space round about.

³From this measured area you will measure a length of eight and a quarter miles and a width of three and one-third miles; in it will be the sanctuary, the most holy place.

⁴It will be a holy portion of the land; it will be for the priests, the ministers of the sanctuary who approach the Lord to minister to him. It will be a place for their houses and a holy place for the sanctuary.

⁵An area eight and a quarter miles in length and three and one-third miles in width will be for the Levites, who minister at the temple, as the place for the cities in which they will live.

⁶“Alongside the portion set apart as the holy allotment, you will allot for the city an area one and two-thirds miles wide and eight and a quarter miles long; it will be for the whole house of Israel.

⁷“For the prince there will be land on both sides of the holy allotment and the allotted city, alongside the holy allotment and the allotted city, on the west side and on the east side; it will be comparable in length to one of the

portions, from the west border to the east border

⁸of the land. This will be his property in Israel. My princes will no longer oppress my people, but the land will be allotted to the house of Israel according to their tribes.

⁹“This is what the sovereign Lord says: Enough, you princes of Israel! Put away violence and destruction, and do what is just and right. Put an end to your evictions of my people, declares the sovereign Lord.

¹⁰You must use just balances, a just dry measure (an ephah), and a just liquid measure (a bath).

¹¹The dry and liquid measures will be the same, the bath will contain a tenth of a homer, and the ephah a tenth of a homer; the homer will be the standard measure.

¹²The shekel will be twenty gerahs. Sixty shekels will be a mina for you.

¹³“This is the offering you must offer: a sixth of an ephah from a homer of wheat; a sixth of an ephah from a homer of barley,

¹⁴ and as the prescribed portion of olive oil, one tenth of a bath from each kor (which is ten baths or a homer, for ten baths make a homer);

¹⁵ and one sheep from each flock of two hundred, from the watered places of Israel, for a grain offering, burnt offering, and peace offering, to make atonement for them, declares the sovereign Lord.

¹⁶ All the people of the land will contribute to this offering for the prince of Israel.

¹⁷ It will be the duty of the prince to provide the burnt offerings, the grain offering, and the drink offering at festivals, on the new moons and Sabbaths, at all the appointed feasts of the house of Israel; he will provide the sin offering, the grain offering, the burnt offering, and the peace offerings to make atonement for the house of Israel.

¹⁸ "This is what the sovereign Lord says: In the first month, on the first day of the month, you must take an unblemished young bull and purify the sanctuary.

¹⁹ The priest will take some of the blood of the sin offering and place it on the

doorpost of the temple, on the four corners of the ledge of the altar, and on the doorpost of the gate of the inner court.

²⁰This is what you must do on the seventh day of the month for anyone who sins inadvertently or through ignorance; so you will make atonement for the temple.

²¹ "In the first month, on the fourteenth day of the month, you will celebrate the Passover, and for seven days bread made without yeast will be eaten.

²²On that day the prince will provide for himself and for all the people of the land a bull for a sin offering.

²³And during the seven days of the feast he will provide as a burnt offering to the Lord seven bulls and seven rams, all without blemish, on each of the seven days, and a male goat daily for a sin offering.

²⁴He will provide as a grain offering an ephah for each bull, an ephah for each ram, and a gallon of olive oil for each ephah of grain.

²⁵In the seventh month, on the fifteenth day of the month, at the feast,

he will make the same provisions for the sin offering, burnt offering, and grain offering, and for the olive oil, for the seven days.

46¹ "This is what the sovereign Lord says: The gate of the inner court that faces east will be closed six working days, but on the Sabbath day it will be opened and on the day of the new moon it will be opened.

²The prince will enter by way of the porch of the gate from the outside, and will stand by the doorpost of the gate. The priests will provide his burnt offering and his peace offerings, and he will bow down at the threshold of the gate and then go out. But the gate will not be closed until evening.

³The people of the land will bow down at the entrance of that gate before the Lord on the Sabbaths and on the new moons.

⁴The burnt offering which the prince will offer to the Lord on the Sabbath day will be six unblemished lambs and one unblemished ram.

⁵The grain offering will be an ephah with the ram, and the grain offering with

the lambs will be as much as he is able to give, and a gallon of olive oil with an ephah.

⁶On the day of the new moon he will offer an unblemished young bull, and six lambs and a ram, all without blemish.

⁷He will provide a grain offering: an ephah with the bull and an ephah with the ram, and with the lambs as much as he wishes, and a gallon of olive oil with each ephah of grain.

⁸When the prince enters, he will come by way of the porch of the gate and will go out the same way.

⁹“When the people of the land come before the Lord at the appointed feasts, whoever enters by way of the north gate to worship will go out by way of the south gate; whoever enters by way of the south gate will go out by way of the north gate. No one will return by way of the gate they entered but will go out straight ahead.

¹⁰When they come in, the prince will come in with them, and when they go out, he will go out.

¹¹“At the festivals and at the appointed feasts the grain offering will be an ephah

with the bull and an ephah with the ram, and with the lambs as much as one is able, and a gallon of olive oil with each ephah of grain.

¹²When the prince provides a freewill offering, a burnt offering, or peace offerings as a voluntary offering to the Lord, the gate facing east will be opened for him, and he will provide his burnt offering and his peace offerings just as he did on the Sabbath. Then he will go out, and the gate will be closed after he goes out.

¹³“You will provide a lamb a year old without blemish for a burnt offering daily to the Lord; morning by morning he will provide it.

¹⁴And you will provide a grain offering with it morning by morning, a sixth of an ephah, and a third of a gallon of olive oil to moisten the choice flour, as a grain offering to the Lord; this is a perpetual statute.

¹⁵Thus they will provide the lamb, the grain offering, and the olive oil morning by morning, as a perpetual burnt offering.

¹⁶“This is what the sovereign Lord says: If the prince should give a gift to one of his sons as his inheritance, it will belong to his sons, it is their property by inheritance.

¹⁷But if he gives a gift from his inheritance to one of his servants, it will be his until the year of liberty; then it will revert to the prince. His inheritance will only remain with his sons.

¹⁸The prince will not take away any of the people's inheritance by oppressively removing them from their property. He will give his sons an inheritance from his own possessions so that my people will not be scattered, each from his own property.”

¹⁹Then he brought me through the entrance, which was at the side of the gate, into the holy chambers for the priests which faced north. There I saw a place at the extreme western end.

²⁰He said to me, “This is the place where the priests will boil the guilt offering and the sin offering, and where they will bake the grain offering, so that they do not bring them out to the outer court to transmit holiness to the people.”

²¹ Then he brought me out to the outer court and led me past the four corners of the court, and I noticed that in every corner of the court there was a court.

²² In the four corners of the court were small courts, 70 feet in length and 52 feet in width; the four were all the same size.

²³ There was a row of masonry around each of the four courts, and places for boiling offerings were made under the rows all around.

²⁴ Then he said to me, "These are the houses for boiling, where the ministers of the temple boil the sacrifices of the people."

47 ¹ Then he brought me back to the entrance of the temple. I noticed that water was flowing from under the threshold of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east). The water was flowing down from under the right side of the temple, from south of the altar.

² He led me out by way of the north gate and brought me around the outside of the outer gate that faces toward

the east; I noticed that the water was trickling out from the south side.

³When the man went out toward the east with a measuring line in his hand, he measured 1,750 feet, and then he led me through water, which was ankle deep.

⁴Again he measured 1,750 feet and led me through the water, which was now knee deep. Once more he measured 1,750 feet and led me through the water, which was waist deep.

⁵Again he measured 1,750 feet and it was a river I could not cross, for the water had risen; it was deep enough to swim in, a river that could not be crossed.

⁶He said to me, "Son of man, have you seen this?" Then he led me back to the bank of the river.

⁷When I had returned, I noticed a vast number of trees on the banks of the river, on both sides.

⁸He said to me, "These waters go out toward the eastern region and flow down into the Arabah; when they enter the Dead Sea, where the sea is stagnant, the waters become fresh.

⁹Every living creature which swarms where the river flows will live; there will be many fish, for these waters flow there. It will become fresh and everything will live where the river flows.

¹⁰Fishermen will stand beside it; from Engedi to En-eglaim they will spread nets. They will catch many kinds of fish, like the fish of the Great Sea.

¹¹But its swamps and its marshes will not become fresh; they will remain salty.

¹²On both sides of the river's banks, every kind of tree will grow for food. Their leaves will not wither nor will their fruit fail, but they will bear fruit every month, because their water source flows from the sanctuary. Their fruit will be for food and their leaves for healing."

¹³This is what the sovereign Lord says: "Here are the borders you will observe as you allot the land to the twelve tribes of Israel. (Joseph will have two portions.)

¹⁴You must divide it equally just as I vowed to give it to your forefathers; this land will be assigned as your inheritance.

¹⁵"This will be the border of the land: On the north side, from the Great Sea by way of Hethlon to the entrance of Zedad;

¹⁶Hamath, Berothah, Sibram, which is between the border of Damascus and the border of Hamath, as far as Hazer-hattikon, which is on the border of Hauran.

¹⁷The border will run from the sea to Hazar-enan, at the border of Damascus, and on the north is the border of Hamath. This is the north side.

¹⁸On the east side, between Hauran and Damascus, and between Gilead and the land of Israel, will be the Jordan. You will measure from the border to the eastern sea. This is the east side.

¹⁹On the south side it will run from Tamar to the waters of Meribath Kadesh, the river, to the Great Sea. This is the south side.

²⁰On the west side the Great Sea will be the boundary to a point opposite Lebo-hamath. This is the west side.

²¹ "This is how you will divide this land for yourselves among the tribes of Israel.

²²You must allot it as an inheritance among yourselves and for the foreigners who reside among you, who have fathered sons among you. You must treat them as native-born among the

people of Israel; they will be allotted an inheritance with you among the tribes of Israel.

²³In whatever tribe the foreigner resides, there you will give him his inheritance," declares the sovereign Lord.

48¹ "These are the names of the tribes: From the northern end beside the road of Hethlon to Lebohamath, as far as Hazar-enan (which is on the border of Damascus, toward the north beside Hamath), extending from the east side to the west, Dan will have one portion.

²Next to the border of Dan, from the east side to the west, Asher will have one portion.

³Next to the border of Asher from the east side to the west, Naphtali will have one portion.

⁴Next to the border of Naphtali from the east side to the west, Manasseh will have one portion.

⁵Next to the border of Manasseh from the east side to the west, Ephraim will have one portion.

⁶Next to the border of Ephraim from the east side to the west, Reuben will have one portion.

⁷Next to the border of Reuben from the east side to the west, Judah will have one portion.

⁸"Next to the border of Judah from the east side to the west will be the allotment you must set apart. It is to be eight and a quarter miles wide, and the same length as one of the tribal portions, from the east side to the west; the sanctuary will be in the middle of it.

⁹The allotment you set apart to the Lord will be eight and a quarter miles in length and three and one-third miles in width.

¹⁰These will be the allotments for the holy portion: for the priests, toward the north eight and a quarter miles in length, toward the west three and one-third miles in width, toward the east three and one-third miles in width, and toward the south eight and a quarter miles in length; the sanctuary of the Lord will be in the middle.

¹¹This will be for the priests who are set apart from the descendants of Zadok

who kept my charge and did not go astray when the people of Israel strayed off, like the Levites did.

¹²It will be their portion from the allotment of the land, a most holy place, next to the border of the Levites.

¹³“Alongside the border of the priests, the Levites will have an allotment eight and a quarter miles in length and three and one-third miles in width. The whole length will be eight and a quarter miles and the width three and one-third miles.

¹⁴They must not sell or exchange any of it; they must not transfer this choice portion of land, for it is set apart to the Lord.

¹⁵“The remainder, one and two-thirds miles in width and eight and a quarter miles in length, will be for common use by the city, for houses and for open space. The city will be in the middle of it;

¹⁶these will be its measurements: The north side will be one and one-half miles, the south side one and one-half miles, the east side one and one-half miles, and the west side one and one-half miles.

¹⁷The city will have open spaces: On the north there will be 437 feet, on the

south 437 feet, on the east 437 feet, and on the west 437 feet.

¹⁸The remainder of the length alongside the holy allotment will be three and one-third miles to the east and three and one-third miles toward the west, and it will be beside the holy allotment. Its produce will be for food for the workers of the city.

¹⁹The workers of the city from all the tribes of Israel will cultivate it.

²⁰The whole allotment will be eight and a quarter miles square, you must set apart the holy allotment with the possession of the city.

²¹ "The rest, on both sides of the holy allotment and the property of the city, will belong to the prince. Extending from the eight and a quarter miles of the holy allotment to the east border, and westward from the eight and a quarter miles to the west border, alongside the portions, it will belong to the prince. The holy allotment and the sanctuary of the temple will be in the middle of it.

²²The property of the Levites and of the city will be in the middle of that which belongs to the prince. The portion

between the border of Judah and the border of Benjamin will be for the prince.

²³“As for the rest of the tribes: From the east side to the west side, Benjamin will have one portion.

²⁴Next to the border of Benjamin, from the east side to the west side, Simeon will have one portion.

²⁵Next to the border of Simeon, from the east side to the west side, Issachar will have one portion.

²⁶Next to the border of Issachar, from the east side to the west side, Zebulun will have one portion.

²⁷Next to the border of Zebulun, from the east side to the west side, Gad will have one portion.

²⁸Next to the border of Gad, at the south side, the border will run from Tamar to the waters of Meribath Kadesh, to the Stream of Egypt and on to the Great Sea.

²⁹This is the land which you will allot to the tribes of Israel, and these are their portions, declares the sovereign Lord.

³⁰“These are the exits of the city: On the north side, one and one-half miles by measure,

³¹ the gates of the city will be named for the tribes of Israel; there will be three gates to the north: one gate for Reuben, one gate for Judah, and one gate for Levi.

³² On the east side, one and one-half miles in length, there will be three gates: one gate for Joseph, one gate for Benjamin, and one gate for Dan.

³³ On the south side, one and one-half miles by measure, there will be three gates: one gate for Simeon, one gate for Issachar, and one gate for Zebulun.

³⁴ On the west side, one and one-half miles in length, there will be three gates: one gate for Gad, one gate for Asher, and one gate for Naphtali.

³⁵ The circumference of the city will be six miles. The name of the city from that day forward will be: 'The Lord Is There.'"

Daniel

1 ¹In the third year of the reign of King Jehoiakim of Judah, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon advanced against Jerusalem and laid it under siege.

²Now the Lord delivered King Jehoiakim of Judah into his power, along with some of the vessels of the temple of God. He brought them to the land of Babylonia to the temple of his god and put the vessels in the treasury of his god.

³The king commanded Ashpenaz, who was in charge of his court officials, to choose some of the Israelites who were of royal and noble descent –

⁴young men in whom there was no physical defect and who were handsome, well versed in all kinds of wisdom, well educated and having keen insight, and who were capable of entering the king's royal service – and to teach them the literature and language of the Babylonians.

⁵So the king assigned them a daily ration from his royal delicacies and from the wine he himself drank. They were to be trained for the next three years. At the end of that time they were to enter the king's service.

⁶As it turned out, among these young men were some from Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.

⁷But the overseer of the court officials renamed them. He gave Daniel the name Belteshazzar, Hananiah he named Shadrach, Mishael he named Meshach, and Azariah he named Abednego.

⁸But Daniel made up his mind that he would not defile himself with the royal delicacies or the royal wine. He therefore asked the overseer of the court officials for permission not to defile himself.

⁹Then God made the overseer of the court officials sympathetic to Daniel.

¹⁰But he responded to Daniel, "I fear my master the king. He is the one who has decided your food and drink. What would happen if he saw that you looked malnourished in comparison to the other young men your age? If that happened,

you would endanger my life with the king!"

¹¹ Daniel then spoke to the warden whom the overseer of the court officials had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah:

¹² "Please test your servants for ten days by providing us with some vegetables to eat and water to drink.

¹³ Then compare our appearance with that of the young men who are eating the royal delicacies; deal with us in light of what you see."

¹⁴ So the warden agreed to their proposal and tested them for ten days.

¹⁵ At the end of the ten days their appearance was better and their bodies were healthier than all the young men who had been eating the royal delicacies.

¹⁶ So the warden removed the delicacies and the wine from their diet and gave them a diet of vegetables instead.

¹⁷ Now as for these four young men, God endowed them with knowledge and skill in all sorts of literature and wisdom – and Daniel had insight into all kinds of visions and dreams.

¹⁸When the time appointed by the king arrived, the overseer of the court officials brought them into Nebuchadnezzar's presence.

¹⁹When the king spoke with them, he did not find among the entire group anyone like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, or Azariah. So they entered the king's service.

²⁰In every matter of wisdom and insight the king asked them about, he found them to be ten times better than any of the magicians and astrologers that were in his entire empire.

²¹Now Daniel lived on until the first year of Cyrus the king.

2¹In the second year of his reign Nebuchadnezzar had many dreams. His mind was disturbed and he suffered from insomnia.

²The king issued an order to summon the magicians, astrologers, sorcerers, and wise men in order to explain his dreams to him. So they came and awaited the king's instructions.

³The king told them, "I have had a dream, and I am anxious to understand the dream."

⁴The wise men replied to the king: [What follows is in Aramaic] "O king, live forever! Tell your servants the dream, and we will disclose its interpretation."

⁵The king replied to the wise men, "My decision is firm. If you do not inform me of both the dream and its interpretation, you will be dismembered and your homes reduced to rubble!

⁶But if you can disclose the dream and its interpretation, you will receive from me gifts, a reward, and considerable honor. So disclose to me the dream and its interpretation!"

⁷They again replied, "Let the king inform us of the dream; then we will disclose its interpretation."

⁸The king replied, "I know for sure that you are attempting to gain time, because you see that my decision is firm.

⁹If you don't inform me of the dream, there is only one thing that is going to happen to you. For you have agreed among yourselves to report to me something false and deceitful until such time as things might change. So tell me the dream, and I will have confidence that you can disclose its interpretation."

¹⁰The wise men replied to the king, "There is no man on earth who is able to disclose the king's secret, for no king, regardless of his position and power, has ever requested such a thing from any magician, astrologer, or wise man.

¹¹What the king is asking is too difficult, and no one exists who can disclose it to the king, except for the gods – but they don't live among mortals!"

¹²Because of this the king got furiously angry and gave orders to destroy all the wise men of Babylon.

¹³So a decree went out, and the wise men were about to be executed. They also sought Daniel and his friends so that they could be executed.

¹⁴Then Daniel spoke with prudent counsel to Arioch, who was in charge of the king's executioners and who had gone out to execute the wise men of Babylon.

¹⁵He inquired of Arioch the king's deputy, "Why is the decree from the king so urgent?" Then Arioch informed Daniel about the matter.

¹⁶So Daniel went in and requested the king to grant him time, that he might disclose the interpretation to the king.

¹⁷Then Daniel went to his home and informed his friends Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah of the matter.

¹⁸He asked them to pray for mercy from the God of heaven concerning this mystery so that he and his friends would not be destroyed along with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

¹⁹Then in a night vision the mystery was revealed to Daniel. So Daniel praised the God of heaven,

²⁰saying, "Let the name of God be praised forever and ever, for wisdom and power belong to him.

²¹He changes times and seasons, deposing some kings and establishing others. He gives wisdom to the wise; he imparts knowledge to those with understanding;

²²he reveals deep and hidden things. He knows what is in the darkness, and light resides with him.

²³O God of my fathers, I acknowledge and glorify you, for you have bestowed wisdom and power on me. Now you

have enabled me to understand what I requested from you. For you have enabled me to understand the king's dilemma."

²⁴Then Daniel went in to see Arioch (whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon). He came and said to him, "Don't destroy the wise men of Babylon! Escort me to the king, and I will disclose the interpretation to him!"

²⁵So Arioch quickly ushered Daniel into the king's presence, saying to him, "I have found a man from the captives of Judah who can make known the interpretation to the king."

²⁶The king then asked Daniel (whose name was also Belteshazzar), "Are you able to make known to me the dream that I saw, as well as its interpretation?"

²⁷Daniel replied to the king, "The mystery that the king is asking about is such that no wise men, astrologers, magicians, or diviners can possibly disclose it to the king.

²⁸However, there is a God in heaven who reveals mysteries, and he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will happen in the times to come. The dream

and the visions you had while lying on your bed are as follows.

²⁹“As for you, O king, while you were in your bed your thoughts turned to future things. The revealer of mysteries has made known to you what will take place.

³⁰As for me, this mystery was revealed to me not because I possess more wisdom than any other living person, but so that the king may understand the interpretation and comprehend the thoughts of your mind.

³¹“You, O king, were watching as a great statue – one of impressive size and extraordinary brightness – was standing before you. Its appearance caused alarm.

³²As for that statue, its head was of fine gold, its chest and arms were of silver, its belly and thighs were of bronze.

³³Its legs were of iron; its feet were partly of iron and partly of clay.

³⁴You were watching as a stone was cut out, but not by human hands. It struck the statue on its iron and clay feet, breaking them in pieces.

³⁵Then the iron, clay, bronze, silver, and gold were broken in pieces without

distinction and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors that the wind carries away. Not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the statue became a large mountain that filled the entire earth.

³⁶This was the dream. Now we will set forth before the king its interpretation.

³⁷“You, O king, are the king of kings. The God of heaven has granted you sovereignty, power, strength, and honor.

³⁸Wherever human beings, wild animals, and birds of the sky live – he has given them into your power. He has given you authority over them all. You are the head of gold.

³⁹Now after you another kingdom will arise, one inferior to yours. Then a third kingdom, one of bronze, will rule in all the earth.

⁴⁰Then there will be a fourth kingdom, one strong like iron. Just like iron breaks in pieces and shatters everything, and as iron breaks in pieces all of these metals, so it will break in pieces and crush the others.

⁴¹In that you were seeing feet and toes partly of wet clay and partly of iron, so

this will be a divided kingdom. Some of the strength of iron will be in it, for you saw iron mixed with wet clay.

⁴²In that the toes of the feet were partly of iron and partly of clay, the latter stages of this kingdom will be partly strong and partly fragile.

⁴³And in that you saw iron mixed with wet clay, so people will be mixed with one another without adhering to one another, just as iron does not mix with clay.

⁴⁴In the days of those kings the God of heaven will raise up an everlasting kingdom that will not be destroyed and a kingdom that will not be left to another people. It will break in pieces and bring about the demise of all these kingdoms. But it will stand forever.

⁴⁵You saw that a stone was cut from a mountain, but not by human hands; it smashed the iron, bronze, clay, silver, and gold into pieces. The great God has made known to the king what will occur in the future. The dream is certain, and its interpretation is reliable."

⁴⁶Then King Nebuchadnezzar bowed down with his face to the ground and

paid homage to Daniel. He gave orders to offer sacrifice and incense to him.

⁴⁷The king replied to Daniel, "Certainly your God is a God of gods and Lord of kings and revealer of mysteries, for you were able to reveal this mystery!"

⁴⁸Then the king elevated Daniel to high position and bestowed on him many marvelous gifts. He granted him authority over the entire province of Babylon and made him the main prefect over all the wise men of Babylon.

⁴⁹And at Daniel's request, the king appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego over the administration of the province of Babylon. Daniel himself served in the king's court.

3¹ King Nebuchadnezzar had a golden statue made. It was ninety feet tall and nine feet wide. He erected it on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon.

²Then King Nebuchadnezzar sent out a summons to assemble the satraps, prefects, governors, counselors, treasurers, judges, magistrates, and all the other authorities of the province to attend the dedication of the statue that he had erected.

³So the satraps, prefects, governors, counselors, treasurers, judges, magistrates, and all the other provincial authorities assembled for the dedication of the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had erected. They were standing in front of the statue that Nebuchadnezzar had erected.

⁴Then the herald made a loud proclamation: "To you, O peoples, nations, and language groups, the following command is given:

⁵When you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, trigon, harp, pipes, and all kinds of music, you must bow down and pay homage to the golden statue that King Nebuchadnezzar has erected.

⁶Whoever does not bow down and pay homage will immediately be thrown into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire!"

⁷Therefore when they all heard the sound of the horn, flute, zither, trigon, harp, pipes, and all kinds of music, all the peoples, nations, and language groups began bowing down and paying homage to the golden statue that King Nebuchadnezzar had erected.

⁸ Now at that time certain Chaldeans came forward and brought malicious accusations against the Jews.

⁹ They said to King Nebuchadnezzar, "O king, live forever!

¹⁰ You have issued an edict, O king, that everyone must bow down and pay homage to the golden statue when they hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, trigon, harp, pipes, and all kinds of music.

¹¹ And whoever does not bow down and pay homage must be thrown into the midst of a furnace of blazing fire.

¹² But there are Jewish men whom you appointed over the administration of the province of Babylon – Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego – and these men have not shown proper respect to you, O king. They don't serve your gods and they don't pay homage to the golden statue that you have erected."

¹³ Then Nebuchadnezzar in a fit of rage demanded that they bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego before him. So they brought them before the king.

¹⁴ Nebuchadnezzar said to them, "Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego,

that you don't serve my gods and that you don't pay homage to the golden statue that I erected?

¹⁵ Now if you are ready, when you hear the sound of the horn, flute, zither, trigon, harp, pipes, and all kinds of music, you must bow down and pay homage to the statue that I had made. If you don't pay homage to it, you will immediately be thrown into the midst of the furnace of blazing fire. Now, who is that god who can rescue you from my power?"

¹⁶ Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego replied to King Nebuchadnezzar, "We do not need to give you a reply concerning this.

¹⁷ If our God whom we are serving exists, he is able to rescue us from the furnace of blazing fire, and he will rescue us, O king, from your power as well.

¹⁸ But if not, let it be known to you, O king, that we don't serve your gods, and we will not pay homage to the golden statue that you have erected."

¹⁹ Then Nebuchadnezzar was filled with rage, and his disposition changed toward Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He

gave orders to heat the furnace seven times hotter than it was normally heated.

²⁰He ordered strong soldiers in his army to tie up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and to throw them into the furnace of blazing fire.

²¹So those men were tied up while still wearing their cloaks, trousers, turbans, and other clothes, and were thrown into the furnace of blazing fire.

²²But since the king's command was so urgent, and the furnace was so excessively hot, the men who escorted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were killed by the leaping flames.

²³But those three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell into the furnace of blazing fire while still securely bound.

²⁴Then King Nebuchadnezzar was startled and quickly got up. He said to his ministers, "Wasn't it three men that we tied up and threw into the fire?" They replied to the king, "For sure, O king."

²⁵He answered, "But I see four men, untied and walking around in the midst of the fire! No harm has come to them!

And the appearance of the fourth is like that of a god!"

²⁶Then Nebuchadnezzar approached the door of the furnace of blazing fire. He called out, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the most high God, come out! Come here!" Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego emerged from the fire.

²⁷Once the satraps, prefects, governors, and ministers of the king had gathered around, they saw that those men were physically unharmed by the fire. The hair of their heads was not singed, nor were their trousers damaged. Not even the smell of fire was to be found on them!

²⁸Nebuchadnezzar exclaimed, "Praised be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who has sent forth his angel and has rescued his servants who trusted in him, ignoring the edict of the king and giving up their bodies rather than serve or pay homage to any god other than their God!

²⁹I hereby decree that any people, nation, or language group that blasphemes the god of Shadrach,

Meshach, or Abednego will be dismembered and his home reduced to rubble! For there exists no other god who can deliver in this way."

³⁰Then Nebuchadnezzar promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the province of Babylon.

4¹ "King Nebuchadnezzar, to all peoples, nations, and language groups that live in all the land: Peace and prosperity!

²I am delighted to tell you about the signs and wonders that the most high God has done for me.

³"How great are his signs! How mighty are his wonders! His kingdom will last forever, and his authority continues from one generation to the next."

⁴I, Nebuchadnezzar, was relaxing in my home, living luxuriously in my palace.

⁵I saw a dream that frightened me badly. The things I imagined while lying on my bed – these visions of my mind – were terrifying me.

⁶So I issued an order for all the wise men of Babylon to be brought before me so that they could make known to me the interpretation of the dream.

⁷ When the magicians, astrologers, wise men, and diviners entered, I recounted the dream for them. But they were unable to make known its interpretation to me.

⁸ Later Daniel entered (whose name is Belteshazzar after the name of my god, and in whom there is a spirit of the holy gods). I recounted the dream for him as well,

⁹ saying, "Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, in whom I know there to be a spirit of the holy gods and whom no mystery baffles, consider my dream that I saw and set forth its interpretation!

¹⁰ Here are the visions of my mind while I was on my bed. While I was watching, there was a tree in the middle of the land. It was enormously tall.

¹¹ The tree grew large and strong. Its top reached far into the sky; it could be seen from the borders of all the land.

¹² Its foliage was attractive and its fruit plentiful; on it there was food enough for all. Under it the wild animals used to seek shade, and in its branches the birds of the sky used to nest. All creatures used to feed themselves from it.

¹³While I was watching in my mind's visions on my bed, a holy sentinel came down from heaven.

¹⁴He called out loudly as follows: 'Chop down the tree and lop off its branches! Strip off its foliage and scatter its fruit! Let the animals flee from under it and the birds from its branches!

¹⁵But leave its taproot in the ground, with a band of iron and bronze around it surrounded by the grass of the field. Let it become damp with the dew of the sky, and let it live with the animals in the grass of the land.

¹⁶Let his mind be altered from that of a human being, and let an animal's mind be given to him, and let seven periods of time go by for him.

¹⁷This announcement is by the decree of the sentinels; this decision is by the pronouncement of the holy ones, so that those who are alive may understand that the Most High has authority over human kingdoms, and he bestows them on whomever he wishes. He establishes over them even the lowliest of human beings.'

¹⁸“This is the dream that I, King Nebuchadnezzar, saw. Now you, Belshazzar, declare its interpretation, for none of the wise men in my kingdom are able to make known to me the interpretation. But you can do so, for a spirit of the holy gods is in you.”

¹⁹Then Daniel (whose name is also Belshazzar) was upset for a brief time; his thoughts were alarming him. The king said, “Belshazzar, don’t let the dream and its interpretation alarm you.” But Belshazzar replied, “Sir, if only the dream were for your enemies and its interpretation applied to your adversaries!

²⁰The tree that you saw that grew large and strong, whose top reached to the sky, and which could be seen in all the land,

²¹whose foliage was attractive and its fruit plentiful, and from which there was food available for all, under whose branches wild animals used to live, and in whose branches birds of the sky used to nest –

²²it is you, O king! For you have become great and strong. Your greatness

is such that it reaches to heaven, and your authority to the ends of the earth.

²³As for the king seeing a holy sentinel coming down from heaven and saying, 'Chop down the tree and destroy it, but leave its taproot in the ground, with a band of iron and bronze around it, surrounded by the grass of the field. Let it become damp with the dew of the sky, and let it live with the wild animals, until seven periods of time go by for him' –

²⁴this is the interpretation, O king! It is the decision of the Most High that this has happened to my lord the king.

²⁵You will be driven from human society, and you will live with the wild animals. You will be fed grass like oxen, and you will become damp with the dew of the sky. Seven periods of time will pass by for you, before you understand that the Most High is ruler over human kingdoms and gives them to whomever he wishes.

²⁶They said to leave the taproot of the tree, for your kingdom will be restored to you when you come to understand that heaven rules.

²⁷ Therefore, O king, may my advice be pleasing to you. Break away from your sins by doing what is right, and from your iniquities by showing mercy to the poor. Perhaps your prosperity will be prolonged."

²⁸ Now all of this happened to King Nebuchadnezzar.

²⁹ After twelve months, he happened to be walking around on the battlements of the royal palace of Babylon.

³⁰ The king uttered these words: "Is this not the great Babylon that I have built for a royal residence by my own mighty strength and for my majestic honor?"

³¹ While these words were still on the king's lips, a voice came down from heaven: "It is hereby announced to you, King Nebuchadnezzar, that your kingdom has been removed from you!

³² You will be driven from human society, and you will live with the wild animals. You will be fed grass like oxen, and seven periods of time will pass by for you before you understand that the Most High is ruler over human kingdoms and gives them to whomever he wishes."

³³ Now in that very moment this pronouncement about Nebuchadnezzar came true. He was driven from human society, he ate grass like oxen, and his body became damp with the dew of the sky, until his hair became long like an eagle's feathers, and his nails like a bird's claws.

³⁴ But at the end of the appointed time I, Nebuchadnezzar, looked up toward heaven, and my sanity returned to me. I extolled the Most High, and I praised and glorified the one who lives forever. For his authority is an everlasting authority, and his kingdom extends from one generation to the next.

³⁵ All the inhabitants of the earth are regarded as nothing. He does as he wishes with the army of heaven and with those who inhabit the earth. No one slaps his hand and says to him, 'What have you done?'

³⁶ At that time my sanity returned to me. I was restored to the honor of my kingdom, and my splendor returned to me. My ministers and my nobles were seeking me out, and I was reinstated

over my kingdom. I became even greater than before.

³⁷ Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify the King of heaven, for all his deeds are right and his ways are just. He is able to bring down those who live in pride.

5¹ King Belshazzar prepared a great banquet for a thousand of his nobles, and he was drinking wine in front of them all.

² While under the influence of the wine, Belshazzar issued an order to bring in the gold and silver vessels – the ones that Nebuchadnezzar his father had confiscated from the temple in Jerusalem – so that the king and his nobles, together with his wives and his concubines, could drink from them.

³ So they brought the gold and silver vessels that had been confiscated from the temple, the house of God in Jerusalem, and the king and his nobles, together with his wives and concubines, drank from them.

⁴ As they drank wine, they praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone.

⁵At that very moment the fingers of a human hand appeared and wrote on the plaster of the royal palace wall, opposite the lampstand. The king was watching the back of the hand that was writing.

⁶Then all the color drained from the king's face and he became alarmed. The joints of his hips gave way, and his knees began knocking together.

⁷The king called out loudly to summon the astrologers, wise men, and diviners. The king proclaimed to the wise men of Babylon that anyone who could read this inscription and disclose its interpretation would be clothed in purple and have a golden collar placed on his neck and be third ruler in the kingdom.

⁸So all the king's wise men came in, but they were unable to read the writing or to make known its interpretation to the king.

⁹Then King Belshazzar was very terrified, and he was visibly shaken. His nobles were completely dumbfounded.

¹⁰Due to the noise caused by the king and his nobles, the queen mother then entered the banquet room. She said,

“O king, live forever! Don’t be alarmed! Don’t be shaken!

¹¹ There is a man in your kingdom who has within him a spirit of the holy gods. In the days of your father, he proved to have insight, discernment, and wisdom like that of the gods. King Nebuchadnezzar your father appointed him chief of the magicians, astrologers, wise men, and diviners.

¹² Thus there was found in this man Daniel, whom the king renamed Belteshazzar, an extraordinary spirit, knowledge, and skill to interpret dreams, solve riddles, and decipher knotty problems. Now summon Daniel, and he will disclose the interpretation.”

¹³ So Daniel was brought in before the king. The king said to Daniel, “Are you that Daniel who is one of the captives of Judah, whom my father the king brought from Judah?”

¹⁴ I have heard about you, how there is a spirit of the gods in you, and how you have insight, discernment, and extraordinary wisdom.

¹⁵ Now the wise men and astrologers were brought before me to read this

writing and make known to me its interpretation. But they were unable to disclose the interpretation of the message.

¹⁶However, I have heard that you are able to provide interpretations and to decipher knotty problems. Now if you are able to read this writing and make known to me its interpretation, you will wear purple and have a golden collar around your neck and be third ruler in the kingdom."

¹⁷But Daniel replied to the king, "Keep your gifts, and give your rewards to someone else! However, I will read the writing for the king and make known its interpretation.

¹⁸As for you, O king, the most high God bestowed on your father Nebuchadnezzar a kingdom, greatness, honor, and majesty.

¹⁹Due to the greatness that he bestowed on him, all peoples, nations, and language groups were trembling with fear before him. He killed whom he wished, he spared whom he wished, he exalted whom he wished, and he brought low whom he wished.

²⁰And when his mind became arrogant and his spirit filled with pride, he was deposed from his royal throne and his honor was removed from him.

²¹He was driven from human society, his mind was changed to that of an animal, he lived with the wild donkeys, he was fed grass like oxen, and his body became damp with the dew of the sky, until he came to understand that the most high God rules over human kingdoms, and he appoints over them whomever he wishes.

²²"But you, his son Belshazzar, have not humbled yourself, although you knew all this.

²³Instead, you have exalted yourself against the Lord of heaven. You brought before you the vessels from his temple, and you and your nobles, together with your wives and concubines, drank wine from them. You praised the gods of silver, gold, bronze, iron, wood, and stone – gods that cannot see or hear or comprehend! But you have not glorified the God who has in his control your very breath and all your ways!

²⁴Therefore the palm of a hand was sent from him, and this writing was inscribed.

²⁵“This is the writing that was inscribed: MENE, MENE, TEQEL, and PHARSIN.

²⁶This is the interpretation of the words: As for mene – God has numbered your kingdom’s days and brought it to an end.

²⁷As for teqel – you are weighed on the balances and found to be lacking.

²⁸As for peres – your kingdom is divided and given over to the Medes and Persians.”

²⁹Then, on Belshazzar’s orders, Daniel was clothed in purple, a golden collar was placed around his neck, and he was proclaimed third ruler in the kingdom.

³⁰And in that very night Belshazzar, the Babylonian king, was killed.

³¹So Darius the Mede took control of the kingdom when he was about sixty-two years old.

6¹It seemed like a good idea to Darius to appoint over the kingdom 120 satraps who would be in charge of the entire kingdom.

²Over them would be three supervisors, one of whom was Daniel. These satraps were accountable to them, so that the king's interests might not incur damage.

³Now this Daniel was distinguishing himself above the other supervisors and the satraps, for he had an extraordinary spirit. In fact, the king intended to appoint him over the entire kingdom.

⁴Consequently the supervisors and satraps were trying to find some pretext against Daniel in connection with administrative matters. But they were unable to find any such damaging evidence, because he was trustworthy and guilty of no negligence or corruption.

⁵So these men concluded, "We won't find any pretext against this man Daniel unless it is in connection with the law of his God."

⁶So these supervisors and satraps came by collusion to the king and said to him, "O King Darius, live forever!

⁷To all the supervisors of the kingdom, the prefects, satraps, counselors, and governors it seemed like a good idea for a royal edict to be issued and an interdict to be enforced. For the next thirty days

anyone who prays to any god or human other than you, O king, should be thrown into a den of lions.

⁸Now let the king issue a written interdict so that it cannot be altered, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be changed.

⁹So King Darius issued the written interdict.

¹⁰When Daniel realized that a written decree had been issued, he entered his home, where the windows in his upper room opened toward Jerusalem. Three times daily he was kneeling and offering prayers and thanks to his God just as he had been accustomed to do previously.

¹¹Then those officials who had gone to the king came by collusion and found Daniel praying and asking for help before his God.

¹²So they approached the king and said to him, "Did you not issue an edict to the effect that for the next thirty days anyone who prays to any god or human other than to you, O king, would be thrown into a den of lions?" The king replied, "That is correct, according to the

law of the Medes and Persians, which cannot be changed.”

¹³Then they said to the king, “Daniel, who is one of the captives from Judah, pays no attention to you, O king, or to the edict that you issued. Three times daily he offers his prayer.”

¹⁴When the king heard this, he was very upset and began thinking about how he might rescue Daniel. Until late afternoon he was struggling to find a way to rescue him.

¹⁵Then those men came by collusion to the king and said to him, “Recall, O king, that it is a law of the Medes and Persians that no edict or decree that the king issues can be changed.”

¹⁶So the king gave the order, and Daniel was brought and thrown into a den of lions. The king consoled Daniel by saying, “Your God whom you continually serve will rescue you!”

¹⁷Then a stone was brought and placed over the opening to the den. The king sealed it with his signet ring and with those of his nobles so that nothing could be changed with regard to Daniel.

¹⁸Then the king departed to his palace. But he spent the night without eating, and no diversions were brought to him. He was unable to sleep.

¹⁹In the morning, at the earliest sign of daylight, the king got up and rushed to the lions' den.

²⁰As he approached the den, he called out to Daniel in a worried voice, "Daniel, servant of the living God, was your God whom you continually serve able to rescue you from the lions?"

²¹Then Daniel spoke to the king, "O king, live forever!

²²My God sent his angel and closed the lions' mouths so that they have not harmed me, because I was found to be innocent before him. Nor have I done any harm to you, O king."

²³Then the king was delighted and gave an order to haul Daniel up from the den. So Daniel was hauled up out of the den. He had no injury of any kind, because he had trusted in his God.

²⁴The king gave another order, and those men who had maliciously accused Daniel were brought and thrown into the lions' den - they, their children, and

their wives. They did not even reach the bottom of the den before the lions overpowered them and crushed all their bones.

²⁵ Then King Darius wrote to all the peoples, nations, and language groups who were living in all the land: “Peace and prosperity!

²⁶ I have issued an edict that throughout all the dominion of my kingdom people are to revere and fear the God of Daniel. “For he is the living God; he endures forever. His kingdom will not be destroyed; his authority is forever.

²⁷ He rescues and delivers and performs signs and wonders in the heavens and on the earth. He has rescued Daniel from the power of the lions!”

²⁸ So this Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian.

7¹ In the first year of King Belshazzar of Babylon, Daniel had a dream filled with visions while he was lying on his bed. Then he wrote down the dream in summary fashion.

² Daniel explained: “I was watching in my vision during the night as the four

winds of the sky were stirring up the great sea.

³Then four large beasts came up from the sea; they were different from one another.

⁴"The first one was like a lion with eagles' wings. As I watched, its wings were pulled off and it was lifted up from the ground. It was made to stand on two feet like a human being, and a human mind was given to it.

⁵"Then a second beast appeared, like a bear. It was raised up on one side, and there were three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. It was told, 'Get up and devour much flesh!'

⁶"After these things, as I was watching, another beast like a leopard appeared, with four bird-like wings on its back. This beast had four heads, and ruling authority was given to it.

⁷"After these things, as I was watching in the night visions a fourth beast appeared - one dreadful, terrible, and very strong. It had two large rows of iron teeth. It devoured and crushed, and anything that was left it trampled with its feet. It was different from all the

beasts that came before it, and it had ten horns.

⁸“As I was contemplating the horns, another horn – a small one – came up between them, and three of the former horns were torn out by the roots to make room for it. This horn had eyes resembling human eyes and a mouth speaking arrogant things.

⁹“While I was watching, thrones were set up, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His attire was white like snow; the hair of his head was like lamb’s wool. His throne was ablaze with fire and its wheels were all aflame.

¹⁰A river of fire was streaming forth and proceeding from his presence. Many thousands were ministering to him; Many tens of thousands stood ready to serve him. The court convened and the books were opened.

¹¹“Then I kept on watching because of the arrogant words of the horn that was speaking. I was watching until the beast was killed and its body destroyed and thrown into the flaming fire.

¹²As for the rest of the beasts, their ruling authority had already been

removed, though they were permitted to go on living for a time and a season.

¹³I was watching in the night visions, "And with the clouds of the sky one like a son of man was approaching. He went up to the Ancient of Days and was escorted before him.

¹⁴To him was given ruling authority, honor, and sovereignty. All peoples, nations, and language groups were serving him. His authority is eternal and will not pass away. His kingdom will not be destroyed.

¹⁵"As for me, Daniel, my spirit was distressed, and the visions of my mind were alarming me.

¹⁶I approached one of those standing nearby and asked him about the meaning of all this. So he spoke with me and revealed to me the interpretation of the vision:

¹⁷'These large beasts, which are four in number, represent four kings who will arise from the earth.

¹⁸The holy ones of the Most High will receive the kingdom and will take possession of the kingdom forever and ever.'

¹⁹ “Then I wanted to know the meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all the others. It was very dreadful, with two rows of iron teeth and bronze claws, and it devoured, crushed, and trampled anything that was left with its feet.

²⁰ I also wanted to know the meaning of the ten horns on its head, and of that other horn which came up and before which three others fell. This was the horn that had eyes and a mouth speaking arrogant things, whose appearance was more formidable than the others.

²¹ While I was watching, that horn began to wage war against the holy ones and was defeating them,

²² until the Ancient of Days arrived and judgment was rendered in favor of the holy ones of the Most High. Then the time came for the holy ones to take possession of the kingdom.

²³ “This is what he told me: ‘The fourth beast means that there will be a fourth kingdom on earth that will differ from all the other kingdoms. It will devour all the earth and will trample and crush it.

²⁴ The ten horns mean that ten kings will arise from that kingdom. Another king will arise after them, but he will be different from the earlier ones. He will humiliate three kings.

²⁵ He will speak words against the Most High. He will harass the holy ones of the Most High continually. His intention will be to change times established by law. They will be delivered into his hand For a time, times, and half a time.

²⁶ But the court will convene, and his ruling authority will be removed – destroyed and abolished forever!

²⁷ Then the kingdom, authority, and greatness of the kingdoms under all of heaven will be delivered to the people of the holy ones of the Most High. His kingdom is an eternal kingdom; all authorities will serve him and obey him.'

²⁸ "This is the conclusion of the matter. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts troubled me greatly, and the color drained from my face. But I kept the matter to myself."

8¹ In the third year of King Belshazzar's reign, a vision appeared to me, Daniel, after the one that had appeared to me previously.

²In this vision I saw myself in Susa the citadel, which is located in the province of Elam. In the vision I saw myself at the Ulai Canal.

³I looked up and saw a ram with two horns standing at the canal. Its two horns were both long, but one was longer than the other. The longer one was coming up after the shorter one.

⁴I saw that the ram was butting westward, northward, and southward. No animal was able to stand before it, and there was none who could deliver from its power. It did as it pleased and acted arrogantly.

⁵While I was contemplating all this, a male goat was coming from the west over the surface of all the land without touching the ground. This goat had a conspicuous horn between its eyes.

⁶It came to the two-horned ram that I had seen standing beside the canal and rushed against it with raging strength.

⁷I saw it approaching the ram. It went into a fit of rage against the ram and struck it and broke off its two horns. The ram had no ability to resist it. The goat hurled the ram to the ground and

trampled it. No one could deliver the ram from its power.

⁸The male goat acted even more arrogantly. But no sooner had the large horn become strong than it was broken, and there arose four conspicuous horns in its place, extending toward the four winds of the sky.

⁹From one of them came a small horn. But it grew to be very big, toward the south and the east and toward the beautiful land.

¹⁰It grew so big it reached the army of heaven, and it brought about the fall of some of the army and some of the stars to the ground, where it trampled them.

¹¹It also acted arrogantly against the Prince of the army, from whom the daily sacrifice was removed and whose sanctuary was thrown down.

¹²The army was given over, along with the daily sacrifice, in the course of his sinful rebellion. It hurled truth to the ground and enjoyed success.

¹³Then I heard a holy one speaking. Another holy one said to the one who was speaking, "To what period of time does the vision pertain - this vision

concerning the daily sacrifice and the destructive act of rebellion and the giving over of both the sanctuary and army to be trampled?"

¹⁴He said to me, "To 2,300 evenings and mornings; then the sanctuary will be put right again."

¹⁵While I, Daniel, was watching the vision, I sought to understand it. Now one who appeared to be a man was standing before me.

¹⁶Then I heard a human voice coming from between the banks of the Ulai. It called out, "Gabriel, enable this person to understand the vision."

¹⁷So he approached the place where I was standing. As he came, I felt terrified and fell flat on the ground. Then he said to me, "Understand, son of man, that the vision pertains to the time of the end."

¹⁸As he spoke with me, I fell into a trance with my face to the ground. But he touched me and stood me upright.

¹⁹Then he said, "I am going to inform you about what will happen in the latter time of wrath, for the vision pertains to the appointed time of the end."

²⁰The ram that you saw with the two horns stands for the kings of Media and Persia.

²¹The male goat is the king of Greece, and the large horn between its eyes is the first king.

²²The horn that was broken and in whose place there arose four others stands for four kingdoms that will arise from his nation, though they will not have his strength.

²³Toward the end of their rule, when rebellious acts are complete, a rash and deceitful king will arise.

²⁴His power will be great, but it will not be by his strength alone. He will cause terrible destruction. He will be successful in what he undertakes. He will destroy powerful people and the people of the holy ones.

²⁵By his treachery he will succeed through deceit. He will have an arrogant attitude, and he will destroy many who are unaware of his schemes. He will rise up against the Prince of princes, yet he will be broken apart – but not by human agency.

²⁶The vision of the evenings and mornings that was told to you is correct. But you should seal up the vision, for it refers to a time many days from now.”

²⁷I, Daniel, was exhausted and sick for days. Then I got up and again carried out the king’s business. But I was astonished at the vision, and there was no one to explain it.

9¹In the first year of Darius son of Ahasuerus, who was of Median descent and who had been appointed king over the Babylonian empire –

²in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, came to understand from the sacred books that, according to the word of the LORD disclosed to the prophet Jeremiah, the years for the fulfilling of the desolation of Jerusalem were seventy in number.

³So I turned my attention to the Lord God to implore him by prayer and requests, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.

⁴I prayed to the LORD my God, confessing in this way: “O Lord, great and awesome God who is faithful to his

covenant with those who love him and keep his commandments,

⁵ we have sinned! We have done what is wrong and wicked; we have rebelled by turning away from your commandments and standards.

⁶ We have not paid attention to your servants the prophets, who spoke by your authority to our kings, our leaders, and our ancestors, and to all the inhabitants of the land as well.

⁷ "You are righteous, O Lord, but we are humiliated this day – the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, both near and far away in all the countries in which you have scattered them, because they have behaved unfaithfully toward you.

⁸ O LORD, we have been humiliated – our kings, our leaders, and our ancestors – because we have sinned against you.

⁹ Yet the Lord our God is compassionate and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him.

¹⁰ We have not obeyed the LORD our God by living according to his laws that he set before us through his servants the prophets.

¹¹ “All Israel has broken your law and turned away by not obeying you. Therefore you have poured out on us the judgment solemnly threatened in the law of Moses the servant of God, for we have sinned against you.

¹² He has carried out his threats against us and our rulers who were over us by bringing great calamity on us – what has happened to Jerusalem has never been equaled under all heaven!

¹³ Just as it is written in the law of Moses, so all this calamity has come on us. Still we have not tried to pacify the LORD our God by turning back from our sin and by seeking wisdom from your reliable moral standards.

¹⁴ The LORD was mindful of the calamity, and he brought it on us. For the LORD our God is just in all he has done, and we have not obeyed him.

¹⁵ “Now, O Lord our God, who brought your people out of the land of Egypt with great power and made a name for yourself that is remembered to this day – we have sinned and behaved wickedly.

¹⁶ O Lord, according to all your justice, please turn your raging anger away from

your city Jerusalem, your holy mountain. For due to our sins and the iniquities of our ancestors, Jerusalem and your people are mocked by all our neighbors.

¹⁷ "So now, our God, accept the prayer and requests of your servant, and show favor to your devastated sanctuary for your own sake.

¹⁸ Listen attentively, my God, and hear! Open your eyes and look on our desolated ruins and the city called by your name. For it is not because of our own righteous deeds that we are praying to you, but because your compassion is abundant.

¹⁹ O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, pay attention, and act! Don't delay, for your own sake, O my God! For your city and your people are called by your name."

²⁰ While I was still speaking and praying, confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel and presenting my request before the LORD my God concerning his holy mountain -

²¹ yes, while I was still praying, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen previously in a vision, was approaching me in my state

of extreme weariness, around the time of the evening offering.

²²He spoke with me, instructing me as follows: "Daniel, I have now come to impart understanding to you.

²³At the beginning of your requests a message went out, and I have come to convey it to you, for you are of great value in God's sight. Therefore consider the message and understand the vision:

²⁴"Seventy weeks have been determined concerning your people and your holy city to put an end to rebellion, to bring sin to completion, to atone for iniquity, to bring in perpetual righteousness, to seal up the prophetic vision, and to anoint a most holy place.

²⁵So know and understand: From the issuing of the command to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until an anointed one, a prince arrives, there will be a period of seven weeks and sixty-two weeks. It will again be built, with plaza and moat, but in distressful times.

²⁶Now after the sixty-two weeks, an anointed one will be cut off and have nothing. As for the city and the sanctuary, the people of the coming

prince will destroy them. But his end will come speedily like a flood. Until the end of the war that has been decreed there will be destruction.

²⁷He will confirm a covenant with many for one week. But in the middle of that week he will bring sacrifices and offerings to a halt. On the wing of abominations will come one who destroys, until the decreed end is poured out on the one who destroys."

10¹In the third year of King Cyrus of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel (who was also called Belteshazzar). This message was true and concerned a great war. He understood the message and gained insight by the vision.

²In those days I, Daniel, was mourning for three whole weeks.

³I ate no choice food; no meat or wine came to my lips, nor did I anoint myself with oil until the end of those three weeks.

⁴On the twenty-fourth day of the first month I was beside the great river, the Tigris.

⁵I looked up and saw a man clothed in linen; around his waist was a belt made of gold from Upaz.

⁶His body resembled yellow jasper, and his face had an appearance like lightning. His eyes were like blazing torches; his arms and feet had the gleam of polished bronze. His voice thundered forth like the sound of a large crowd.

⁷Only I, Daniel, saw the vision; the men who were with me did not see it. On the contrary, they were overcome with fright and ran away to hide.

⁸I alone was left to see this great vision. My strength drained from me, and my vigor disappeared; I was without energy.

⁹I listened to his voice, and as I did so I fell into a trance-like sleep with my face to the ground.

¹⁰Then a hand touched me and set me on my hands and knees.

¹¹He said to me, "Daniel, you are of great value. Understand the words that I am about to speak to you. So stand up, for I have now been sent to you." When he said this to me, I stood up shaking.

¹²Then he said to me, "Don't be afraid, Daniel, for from the very first day you applied your mind to understand and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard. I have come in response to your words.

¹³However, the prince of the kingdom of Persia was opposing me for twenty-one days. But Michael, one of the leading princes, came to help me, because I was left there with the kings of Persia.

¹⁴Now I have come to help you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision pertains to future days."

¹⁵While he was saying this to me, I was flat on the ground and unable to speak.

¹⁶Then one who appeared to be a human being was touching my lips. I opened my mouth and started to speak, saying to the one who was standing before me, "Sir, due to the vision, anxiety has gripped me and I have no strength.

¹⁷How, sir, am I able to speak with you? My strength is gone, and I am breathless."

¹⁸Then the one who appeared to be a human being touched me again and strengthened me.

¹⁹He said to me, "Don't be afraid, you who are valued. Peace be to you! Be strong! Be really strong!" When he spoke to me, I was strengthened. I said, "Sir, you may speak now, for you have given me strength."

²⁰He said, "Do you know why I have come to you? Now I am about to return to engage in battle with the prince of Persia. When I go, the prince of Greece is coming.

²¹However, I will first tell you what is written in a dependable book. (There is no one who strengthens me against these princes, except Michael your prince.

11 ¹And in the first year of Darius the Mede, I stood to strengthen him and to provide protection for him.)

²Now I will tell you the truth." Three more kings will arise for Persia. Then a fourth king will be unusually rich, more so than all who preceded him. When he has amassed power through his riches,

he will stir up everyone against the kingdom of Greece.

³Then a powerful king will arise, exercising great authority and doing as he pleases.

⁴Shortly after his rise to power, his kingdom will be broken up and distributed toward the four winds of the sky – but not to his posterity or with the authority he exercised, for his kingdom will be uprooted and distributed to others besides these.

⁵“Then the king of the south and one of his subordinates will grow strong. His subordinate will resist him and will rule a kingdom greater than his.

⁶After some years have passed, they will form an alliance. Then the daughter of the king of the south will come to the king of the north to make an agreement, but she will not retain her power, nor will he continue in his strength. She, together with the one who brought her, her child, and her benefactor will all be delivered over at that time.

⁷“There will arise in his place one from her family line who will come against their army and will enter the stronghold

of the king of the north and will move against them successfully.

⁸He will also take their gods into captivity to Egypt, along with their cast images and prized utensils of silver and gold. Then he will withdraw for some years from the king of the north.

⁹Then the king of the north will advance against the empire of the king of the south, but will withdraw to his own land.

¹⁰His sons will wage war, mustering a large army which will advance like an overflowing river and carrying the battle all the way to the enemy's fortress.

¹¹"Then the king of the south will be enraged and will march out to fight against the king of the north, who will also muster a large army, but that army will be delivered into his hand.

¹²When the army is taken away, the king of the south will become arrogant. He will be responsible for the death of thousands and thousands of people, but he will not continue to prevail.

¹³For the king of the north will again muster an army, one larger than before. At the end of some years he will advance

with a huge army and enormous supplies.

¹⁴“In those times many will oppose the king of the south. Those who are violent among your own people will rise up in confirmation of the vision, but they will falter.

¹⁵Then the king of the north will advance and will build siege mounds and capture a well-fortified city. The forces of the south will not prevail, not even his finest contingents. They will have no strength to prevail.

¹⁶The one advancing against him will do as he pleases, and no one will be able to stand before him. He will prevail in the beautiful land, and its annihilation will be within his power.

¹⁷His intention will be to come with the strength of his entire kingdom, and he will form alliances. He will give the king of the south a daughter in marriage in order to destroy the kingdom, but it will not turn out to his advantage.

¹⁸Then he will turn his attention to the coastal regions and will capture many of them. But a commander will bring his shameful conduct to a halt; in addition,

he will make him pay for his shameful conduct.

¹⁹He will then turn his attention to the fortresses of his own land, but he will stumble and fall, not to be found again.

²⁰There will arise after him one who will send out an exactor of tribute to enhance the splendor of the kingdom, but after a few days he will be destroyed, though not in anger or battle.

²¹“Then there will arise in his place a despicable person to whom the royal honor has not been rightfully conferred. He will come on the scene in a time of prosperity and will seize the kingdom through deceit.

²²Armies will be suddenly swept away in defeat before him; both they and a covenant leader will be destroyed.

²³After entering into an alliance with him, he will behave treacherously; he will ascend to power with only a small force.

²⁴In a time of prosperity for the most productive areas of the province he will come and accomplish what neither his fathers nor their fathers accomplished. He will distribute loot, spoils, and

property to his followers, and he will devise plans against fortified cities, but not for long.

²⁵He will rouse his strength and enthusiasm against the king of the south with a large army. The king of the south will wage war with a large and very powerful army, but he will not be able to prevail because of the plans devised against him.

²⁶Those who share the king's fine food will attempt to destroy him, and his army will be swept away; many will be killed in battle.

²⁷These two kings, their minds filled with evil intentions, will trade lies with one another at the same table. But it will not succeed, for there is still an end at the appointed time.

²⁸Then the king of the north will return to his own land with much property. His mind will be set against the holy covenant. He will take action, and then return to his own land.

²⁹At an appointed time he will again invade the south, but this latter visit will not turn out the way the former one did.

³⁰The ships of Kittim will come against him, leaving him disheartened. He will turn back and direct his indignation against the holy covenant. He will return and honor those who forsake the holy covenant.

³¹His forces will rise up and profane the fortified sanctuary, stopping the daily sacrifice. In its place they will set up the abomination that causes desolation.

³²Then with smooth words he will defile those who have rejected the covenant. But the people who are loyal to their God will act valiantly.

³³These who are wise among the people will teach the masses. However, they will fall by the sword and by the flame, and they will be imprisoned and plundered for some time.

³⁴When they stumble, they will be granted some help. But many will unite with them deceitfully.

³⁵Even some of the wise will stumble, resulting in their refinement, purification, and cleansing until the time of the end, for it is still for the appointed time.

³⁶"Then the king will do as he pleases. He will exalt and magnify himself

above every deity and he will utter presumptuous things against the God of gods. He will succeed until the time of wrath is completed, for what has been decreed must occur.

³⁷ He will not respect the gods of his fathers – not even the god loved by women. He will not respect any god; he will elevate himself above them all.

³⁸ What he will honor is a god of fortresses – a god his fathers did not acknowledge he will honor with gold, silver, valuable stones, and treasured commodities.

³⁹ He will attack mighty fortresses, aided by a foreign deity. To those who recognize him he will grant considerable honor. He will place them in authority over many people, and he will parcel out land for a price.

⁴⁰ "At the time of the end the king of the south will attack him. Then the king of the north will storm against him with chariots, horsemen, and a large armada of ships. He will invade lands, passing through them like an overflowing river.

⁴¹ Then he will enter the beautiful land. Many will fall, but these will

escape: Edom, Moab, and the Ammonite leadership.

⁴²He will extend his power against other lands; the land of Egypt will not escape.

⁴³He will have control over the hidden stores of gold and silver, as well as all the treasures of Egypt. Libyans and Ethiopians will submit to him.

⁴⁴But reports will trouble him from the east and north, and he will set out in a tremendous rage to destroy and wipe out many.

⁴⁵He will pitch his royal tents between the seas toward the beautiful holy mountain. But he will come to his end, with no one to help him.

12¹ “At that time Michael, the great prince who watches over your people, will arise. There will be a time of distress unlike any other from the nation’s beginning up to that time. But at that time your own people, all those whose names are found written in the book, will escape.

²Many of those who sleep in the dusty ground will awake – some to everlasting

life, and others to shame and everlasting abhorrence.

³But the wise will shine like the brightness of the heavenly expanse. And those bringing many to righteousness will be like the stars forever and ever.

⁴"But you, Daniel, close up these words and seal the book until the time of the end. Many will dash about, and knowledge will increase."

⁵I, Daniel, watched as two others stood there, one on each side of the river.

⁶One said to the man clothed in linen who was above the waters of the river, "When will the end of these wondrous events occur?"

⁷Then I heard the man clothed in linen who was over the waters of the river as he raised both his right and left hands to the sky and made an oath by the one who lives forever: "It is for a time, times, and half a time. Then, when the power of the one who shatters the holy people has been exhausted, all these things will be finished."

⁸I heard, but I did not understand. So I said, "Sir, what will happen after these things?"

⁹He said, "Go, Daniel. For these matters are closed and sealed until the time of the end.

¹⁰Many will be purified, made clean, and refined, but the wicked will go on being wicked. None of the wicked will understand, though the wise will understand.

¹¹From the time that the daily sacrifice is removed and the abomination that causes desolation is set in place, there are 1,290 days.

¹²Blessed is the one who waits and attains to the 1,335 days.

¹³But you should go your way until the end. You will rest and then at the end of the days you will arise to receive what you have been allotted."

Hosea

1 ¹This is the word of the Lord which was revealed to Hosea son of Beeri during the time when Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah ruled Judah, and during the time when Jeroboam son of Joash ruled Israel.

²When the Lord first spoke through Hosea, he said to him, "Go marry a prostitute who will bear illegitimate children conceived through prostitution, because the nation continually commits spiritual prostitution by turning away from the Lord."

³So Hosea married Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim. Then she conceived and gave birth to a son for him.

⁴Then the Lord said to Hosea, "Name him 'Jezreel,' because in a little while I will punish the dynasty of Jehu on account of the bloodshed in the valley of Jezreel, and I will put an end to the kingdom of Israel.

⁵At that time, I will destroy the military power of Israel in the valley of Jezreel."

⁶She conceived again and gave birth to a daughter. Then the Lord said to him, "Name her 'No Pity' (Lo-Ruhamah) because I will no longer have pity on the nation of Israel. For I will certainly not forgive their guilt.

⁷But I will have pity on the nation of Judah. I will deliver them by the Lord their God; I will not deliver them by the warrior's bow, by sword, by military victory, by chariot horses, or by chariots."

⁸When she had weaned 'No Pity' (Lo-Ruhamah) she conceived again and gave birth to another son.

⁹Then the Lord said: "Name him 'Not My People' (Lo-Ammi), because you are not my people and I am not your God."

¹⁰However, in the future the number of the people of Israel will be like the sand of the sea which can be neither measured nor numbered. Although it was said to them, "You are not my people," it will be said to them, "You are children of the living God!"

¹¹Then the people of Judah and the people of Israel will be gathered together. They will appoint for themselves one

leader, and will flourish in the land.
Certainly, the day of Jezreel will be great!

2¹ Then you will call your brother, “My People” (Ammi)! You will call your sister, “Pity” (Ruhamah)!

² Plead earnestly with your mother (for she is not my wife, and I am not her husband), so that she might put an end to her adulterous lifestyle, and turn away from her sexually immoral behavior.

³ Otherwise, I will strip her naked, and expose her like she was when she was born. I will turn her land into a wilderness and make her country a parched land, so that I might kill her with thirst.

⁴ I will have no pity on her children, because they are children conceived in adultery.

⁵ For their mother has committed adultery; she who conceived them has acted shamefully. For she said, “I will seek out my lovers; they are the ones who give me my bread and my water, my wool, my flax, my olive oil, and my wine.

⁶Therefore, I will soon fence her in with thorns; I will wall her in so that she cannot find her way.

⁷Then she will pursue her lovers, but she will not catch them; she will seek them, but she will not find them. Then she will say, "I will go back to my husband, because I was better off then than I am now."

⁸Yet until now she has refused to acknowledge that I was the one who gave her the grain, the new wine, and the olive oil; and that it was I who lavished on her the silver and gold – which they used in worshiping Baal!

⁹Therefore, I will take back my grain during the harvest time and my new wine when it ripens; I will take away my wool and my flax which I had provided in order to clothe her.

¹⁰Soon I will expose her lewd nakedness in front of her lovers, and no one will be able to rescue her from me!

¹¹I will put an end to all her celebration: her annual religious festivals, monthly new moon celebrations, and weekly Sabbath festivities – all her appointed festivals.

¹²I will destroy her vines and fig trees, about which she said, "These are my wages for prostitution that my lovers gave to me!" I will turn her cultivated vines and fig trees into an uncultivated thicket, so that wild animals will devour them.

¹³"I will punish her for the festival days when she burned incense to the Baal idols; she adorned herself with earrings and jewelry, and went after her lovers, but she forgot me!" says the Lord.

¹⁴However, in the future I will allure her; I will lead her back into the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her.

¹⁵From there I will give back her vineyards to her, and turn the "Valley of Trouble" into an "Opportunity for Hope." There she will sing as she did when she was young, when she came up from the land of Egypt.

¹⁶"At that time," declares the Lord, "you will call, 'My husband'; you will never again call me, 'My master.'"

¹⁷For I will remove the names of the Baal idols from your lips, so that you will never again utter their names!"

¹⁸“At that time I will make a covenant for them with the wild animals, the birds of the air, and the creatures that crawl on the ground. I will abolish the warrior’s bow and sword – that is, every weapon of warfare – from the land, and I will allow them to live securely.”

¹⁹I will commit myself to you forever; I will commit myself to you in righteousness and justice, in steadfast love and tender compassion.

²⁰I will commit myself to you in faithfulness; then you will acknowledge the Lord.”

²¹“At that time, I will willingly respond,” declares the Lord. “I will respond to the sky, and the sky will respond to the ground;

²²then the ground will respond to the grain, the new wine, and the olive oil; and they will respond to ‘God Plants’ (Jezreel)!

²³Then I will plant her as my own in the land. I will have pity on ‘No Pity’ (Lo-Ruhamah). I will say to ‘Not My People’ (Lo-Ammi), ‘You are my people!’ And he will say, ‘You are my God!’”

3¹ The Lord said to me, "Go, show love to your wife again, even though she loves another man and continually commits adultery. Likewise, the Lord loves the Israelites although they turn to other gods and love to offer raisin cakes to idols."

² So I paid fifteen shekels of silver and about seven bushels of barley to purchase her.

³ Then I told her, "You must live with me many days; you must not commit adultery or have sexual intercourse with another man, and I also will wait for you."

⁴ For the Israelites must live many days without a king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred fertility pillar, without ephod or idols.

⁵ Afterward, the Israelites will turn and seek the Lord their God and their Davidic king. Then they will submit to the Lord in fear and receive his blessings in the future.

4¹ Hear the word of the Lord, you Israelites! For the Lord has a covenant lawsuit against the people of Israel. For there is neither faithfulness

nor loyalty in the land, nor do they acknowledge God.

²There is only cursing, lying, murder, stealing, and adultery. They resort to violence and bloodshed.

³Therefore the land will mourn, and all its inhabitants will perish. The wild animals, the birds of the sky, and even the fish in the sea will perish.

⁴Do not let anyone accuse or contend against anyone else: for my case is against you priests!

⁵You stumble day and night, and the false prophets stumble with you; You have destroyed your own people!

⁶You have destroyed my people by failing to acknowledge me! Because you refuse to acknowledge me, I will reject you as my priests. Because you reject the law of your God, I will reject your descendants.

⁷The more the priests increased in numbers, the more they rebelled against me. They have turned their glorious calling into a shameful disgrace!

⁸They feed on the sin offerings of my people; their appetites long for their iniquity!

⁹I will deal with the people and priests together: I will punish them both for their ways, and I will repay them for their deeds.

¹⁰They will eat, but not be satisfied; they will engage in prostitution, but not increase in numbers; because they have abandoned the Lord by pursuing other gods.

¹¹Old and new wine take away the understanding of my people.

¹²They consult their wooden idols, and their diviner's staff answers with an oracle. The wind of prostitution blows them astray; they commit spiritual adultery against their God.

¹³They sacrifice on the mountaintops, and burn offerings on the hills; they sacrifice under oak, poplar, and terebinth, because their shade is so pleasant. As a result, your daughters have become cult prostitutes, and your daughters-in-law commit adultery!

¹⁴I will not punish your daughters when they commit prostitution, nor your daughters-in-law when they commit adultery. For the men consort with harlots, they sacrifice with temple

prostitutes. It is true: "A people that lacks understanding will come to ruin!"

¹⁵Although you, O Israel, commit adultery, do not let Judah become guilty! Do not journey to Gilgal! Do not go up to Beth Aven! Do not swear, "As surely as the Lord lives!"

¹⁶Israel has rebelled like a stubborn heifer! Soon the Lord will put them out to pasture like a lamb in a broad field!

¹⁷Ephraim has attached himself to idols; Do not go near him!

¹⁸They consume their alcohol, then engage in cult prostitution; they dearly love their shameful behavior.

¹⁹A whirlwind has wrapped them in its wings; they will be brought to shame because of their idolatrous worship.

5¹ Hear this, you priests! Pay attention, you Israelites! Listen closely, O king! For judgment is about to overtake you! For you were like a trap to Mizpah, like a net spread out to catch Tabor.

²Those who revolt are knee-deep in slaughter, but I will discipline them all.

³I know Ephraim all too well; the evil of Israel is not hidden from me. For

you have engaged in prostitution, O Ephraim; Israel has defiled itself.

⁴Their wicked deeds do not allow them to return to their God; because a spirit of idolatry controls their heart, and they do not acknowledge the Lord.

⁵The arrogance of Israel testifies against it; Israel and Ephraim will be overthrown because of their iniquity. Even Judah will be brought down with them.

⁶Although they bring their flocks and herds to seek the favor of the Lord, They will not find him – he has withdrawn himself from them!

⁷They have committed treason against the Lord, because they bore illegitimate children. Soon the new moon festival will devour them and their fields.

⁸Blow the ram's horn in Gibeah! Sound the trumpet in Ramah! Sound the alarm in Beth Aven! Tremble in fear, O Benjamin!

⁹Ephraim will be ruined in the day of judgment! What I am declaring to the tribes of Israel will certainly take place!

¹⁰The princes of Judah are like those who move boundary markers. I will pour

out my rage on them like a torrential flood!

¹¹ Ephraim will be oppressed, crushed under judgment, because he was determined to pursue worthless idols.

¹² I will be like a moth to Ephraim, like wood rot to the house of Judah.

¹³ When Ephraim saw his sickness and Judah saw his wound, then Ephraim turned to Assyria, and begged its great king for help. But he will not be able to heal you! He cannot cure your wound!

¹⁴ I will be like a lion to Ephraim, like a young lion to the house of Judah. I myself will tear them to pieces, then I will carry them off, and no one will be able to rescue them!

¹⁵ Then I will return again to my lair until they have suffered their punishment. Then they will seek me; in their distress they will earnestly seek me.

6¹ "Come on! Let's return to the Lord! He himself has torn us to pieces, but he will heal us! He has injured us, but he will bandage our wounds!

² He will restore us in a very short time; he will heal us in a little while, so that we may live in his presence.

³So let us acknowledge him! Let us seek to acknowledge the Lord! He will come to our rescue as certainly as the appearance of the dawn, as certainly as the winter rain comes, as certainly as the spring rain that waters the land."

⁴What am I going to do with you, O Ephraim? What am I going to do with you, O Judah? For your faithfulness is as fleeting as the morning mist; it disappears as quickly as dawn's dew!

⁵Therefore, I will certainly cut you into pieces at the hands of the prophets; I will certainly kill you in fulfillment of my oracles of judgment; for my judgment will come forth like the light of the dawn.

⁶For I delight in faithfulness, not simply in sacrifice; I delight in acknowledging God, not simply in whole burnt offerings.

⁷At Adam they broke the covenant; Oh how they were unfaithful to me!

⁸Gilead is a city full of evildoers; its streets are stained with bloody footprints!

⁹The company of priests is like a gang of robbers, lying in ambush to pounce on a victim. They commit murder on

the road to Shechem; they have done heinous crimes!

¹⁰I have seen a disgusting thing in the temple of Israel: there Ephraim practices temple prostitution and Judah defiles itself.

¹¹I have appointed a time to reap judgment for you also, O Judah! Whenever I want to restore the fortunes of my people,

7¹ whenever I want to heal Israel, the sin of Ephraim is revealed, and the evil deeds of Samaria are exposed. For they do what is wrong; thieves break into houses, and gangs rob people out in the streets.

²They do not realize that I remember all of their wicked deeds. Their evil deeds have now surrounded them; their sinful deeds are always before me.

³The royal advisers delight the king with their evil schemes, the princes make him glad with their lies.

⁴They are all like bakers, they are like a smoldering oven; they are like a baker who does not stoke the fire until the kneaded dough is ready for baking.

⁵At the celebration of their king, his princes become inflamed with wine; they conspire with evildoers.

⁶They approach him, all the while plotting against him. Their hearts are like an oven; their anger smolders all night long, but in the morning it bursts into a flaming fire.

⁷All of them are blazing like an oven; they devour their rulers. All of their kings fall – and none of them call on me!

⁸Ephraim has mixed itself like flour among the nations; Ephraim is like a ruined cake of bread that is scorched on one side.

⁹Foreigners are consuming what his strenuous labor produced, but he does not recognize it! His head is filled with gray hair, but he does not realize it!

¹⁰The arrogance of Israel testifies against him, yet they refuse to return to the Lord their God! In spite of all this they refuse to seek him!

¹¹Ephraim has been like a dove, easily deceived and lacking discernment. They called to Egypt for help; they turned to Assyria for protection.

¹²I will throw my bird net over them while they are flying, I will bring them down like birds in the sky; I will discipline them when I hear them flocking together.

¹³Woe to them! For they have fled from me! Destruction to them! For they have rebelled against me! I want to deliver them, but they have lied to me.

¹⁴They do not pray to me, but howl in distress on their beds; They slash themselves for grain and new wine, but turn away from me.

¹⁵Although I trained and strengthened them, they plot evil against me!

¹⁶They turn to Baal; they are like an unreliable bow. Their leaders will fall by the sword because their prayers to Baal have made me angry. So people will disdain them in the land of Egypt.

8¹ Sound the alarm! An eagle looms over the temple of the Lord! For they have broken their covenant with me, and have rebelled against my law.

²Israel cries out to me, "My God, we acknowledge you!"

³But Israel has rejected what is morally good; so an enemy will pursue him.

⁴They enthroned kings without my consent! They appointed princes without my approval! They made idols out of their silver and gold, but they will be destroyed!

⁵O Samaria, he has rejected your calf idol! My anger burns against them! They will not survive much longer without being punished, even though they are Israelites!

⁶That idol was made by a workman – it is not God! The calf idol of Samaria will be broken to bits.

⁷They sow the wind, and so they will reap the whirlwind! The stalk does not have any standing grain; it will not produce any flour. Even if it were to yield grain, foreigners would swallow it all up.

⁸Israel will be swallowed up among the nations; they will be like a worthless piece of pottery.

⁹They have gone up to Assyria, like a wild donkey that wanders off. Ephraim has hired prostitutes as lovers.

¹⁰Even though they have hired lovers among the nations, I will soon gather them together for judgment. Then they

will begin to waste away under the oppression of a mighty king.

¹¹ Although Ephraim has built many altars for sin offerings, these have become altars for sinning!

¹² I spelled out my law for him in great detail, but they regard it as something totally unknown to them!

¹³ They offer up sacrificial gifts to me, and eat the meat, but the Lord does not accept their sacrifices. Soon he will remember their wrongdoing, he will punish their sins, and they will return to Egypt.

¹⁴ Israel has forgotten his Maker and built royal palaces, and Judah has built many fortified cities. But I will send fire on their cities; it will consume their royal citadels.

9¹ O Israel, do not rejoice jubilantly like the nations, for you are unfaithful to your God. You love to receive a prostitute's wages on all the floors where you thresh your grain.

² Threshing floors and wine vats will not feed the people, and new wine only deceives them.

³They will not remain in the Lord's land. Ephraim will return to Egypt; they will eat ritually unclean food in Assyria.

⁴They will not pour out drink offerings of wine to the Lord; they will not please him with their sacrifices. Their sacrifices will be like bread eaten while in mourning; all those who eat them will make themselves ritually unclean. For their bread will be only to satisfy their appetite; it will not come into the temple of the Lord.

⁵So what will you do on the festival day, on the festival days of the Lord?

⁶Look! Even if they flee from the destruction, Egypt will take hold of them, and Memphis will bury them. The weeds will inherit the silver they treasure – thorn bushes will occupy their homes.

⁷The time of judgment is about to arrive! The time of retribution is imminent! Let Israel know! The prophet is considered a fool – the inspired man is viewed as a madman – because of the multitude of your sins and your intense animosity.

⁸The prophet is a watchman over Ephraim on behalf of God, yet traps

are laid for him along all of his paths; animosity rages against him in the land of his God.

⁹They have sunk deep into corruption as in the days of Gibeah. He will remember their wrongdoing. He will repay them for their sins.

¹⁰When I found Israel, it was like finding grapes in the wilderness. I viewed your ancestors like an early fig on a fig tree in its first season. Then they came to Baal-Peor and they dedicated themselves to shame – they became as detestable as what they loved.

¹¹Ephraim will be like a bird; what they value will fly away. They will not bear children – they will not enjoy pregnancy – they will not even conceive!

¹²Even if they raise their children, I will take away every last one of them. Woe to them! For I will turn away from them.

¹³Just as lion cubs are born predators, so Ephraim will bear his sons for slaughter.

¹⁴Give them, O Lord – what will you give them? Give them wombs that miscarry, and breasts that cannot nurse!

¹⁵Because of all their evil in Gilgal, I hate them there. On account of their evil deeds, I will drive them out of my land. I will no longer love them; all their rulers are rebels.

¹⁶Ephraim will be struck down – their root will be dried up; they will not yield any fruit. Even if they do bear children, I will kill their precious offspring.

¹⁷My God will reject them, for they have not obeyed him; so they will be fugitives among the nations.

10¹Israel was a fertile vine that yielded fruit. As his fruit multiplied, he multiplied altars to Baal. As his land prospered, they adorned the fertility pillars.

²Their heart is slipping; soon they will be punished for their guilt. The Lord will break their altars; he will completely destroy their fertility pillars.

³Very soon they will say, “We have no king since we did not fear the Lord. But what can a king do for us anyway?”

⁴They utter empty words, taking false oaths and making empty agreements. Therefore legal disputes sprout up like

poisonous weeds in the furrows of a plowed field.

⁵The inhabitants of Samaria will lament over the calf idol of Beth Aven. Its people will mourn over it; its idolatrous priests will wail over it, because its splendor will be taken from them into exile.

⁶Even the calf idol will be carried to Assyria, as tribute for the great king. Ephraim will be disgraced; Israel will be put to shame because of its wooden idol.

⁷Samaria and its king will be carried off like a twig on the surface of the waters.

⁸The high places of the “House of Wickedness” will be destroyed; it is the place where Israel sins. Thorns and thistles will grow up over its altars. Then they will say to the mountains, “Cover us!” and to the hills, “Fall on us!”

⁹O Israel, you have sinned since the time of Gibeah, and there you have remained. Did not war overtake the evildoers in Gibeah?

¹⁰When I please, I will discipline them; I will gather nations together to attack them, to bind them in chains for their two sins.

¹¹ Ephraim was a well-trained heifer who loved to thresh grain; I myself put a fine yoke on her neck. I will harness Ephraim. Let Judah plow! Let Jacob break up the unplowed ground for himself!

¹² Sow righteousness for yourselves, reap unfailing love. Break up the unplowed ground for yourselves, for it is time to seek the Lord, until he comes and showers deliverance on you.

¹³ But you have plowed wickedness; you have reaped injustice; you have eaten the fruit of deception. Because you have depended on your chariots; you have relied on your many warriors.

¹⁴ The roar of battle will rise against your people; all your fortresses will be devastated, just as Shalman devastated Beth Arbel on the day of battle, when mothers were dashed to the ground with their children.

¹⁵ So will it happen to you, O Bethel, because of your great wickedness! When that day dawns, the king of Israel will be destroyed.

11 ¹ When Israel was a young man,
I loved him like a son, and I
summoned my son out of Egypt.

² But the more I summoned them, the
farther they departed from me. They
sacrificed to the Baal idols and burned
incense to images.

³ Yet it was I who led Ephraim, I took
them by the arm; but they did not
acknowledge that I had healed them.

⁴ I led them with leather cords, with
leather ropes; I lifted the yoke from their
neck, and gently fed them.

⁵ They will return to Egypt! Assyria will
rule over them because they refuse to
repent!

⁶ A sword will flash in their cities, it will
destroy the bars of their city gates, and
will devour them in their fortresses.

⁷ My people are obsessed with turning
away from me; they call to Baal, but he
will never exalt them!

⁸ How can I give you up, O Ephraim?
How can I surrender you, O Israel?
How can I treat you like Admah? How
can I make you like Zeboiim? I have
had a change of heart! All my tender
compassions are aroused!

⁹I cannot carry out my fierce anger! I cannot totally destroy Ephraim! Because I am God, and not man – the Holy One among you – I will not come in wrath!

¹⁰He will roar like a lion, and they will follow the Lord; when he roars, his children will come trembling from the west.

¹¹They will return in fear and trembling like birds from Egypt, like doves from Assyria, and I will settle them in their homes," declares the Lord.

¹²Ephraim has surrounded me with lies; the house of Israel has surrounded me with deceit. But Judah still roams about with God; he remains faithful to the Holy One.

12¹Ephraim continually feeds on the wind; he chases the east wind all day; he multiplies lies and violence. They make treaties with Assyria, and send olive oil as tribute to Egypt.

²The Lord also has a covenant lawsuit against Judah; he will punish Jacob according to his ways and repay him according to his deeds.

³In the womb he attacked his brother; in his manly vigor he struggled with God.

⁴ He struggled with an angel and prevailed; he wept and begged for his favor. He found God at Bethel, and there he spoke with him!

⁵ As for the Lord God Almighty, the Lord is the name by which he is remembered!

⁶ But you must return to your God, by maintaining love and justice, and by waiting for your God to return to you.

⁷ The businessmen love to cheat; they use dishonest scales.

⁸ Ephraim boasts, "I am very rich! I have become wealthy! In all that I have done to gain my wealth, no one can accuse me of any offense that is actually sinful."

⁹ "I am the Lord your God who brought you out of Egypt; I will make you live in tents again as in the days of old.

¹⁰ I spoke to the prophets; I myself revealed many visions; I spoke in parables through the prophets."

¹¹ Is there idolatry in Gilead? Certainly its inhabitants will come to nothing! Do they sacrifice bulls in Gilgal? Surely their altars will be like stones heaped up on a plowed field!

¹²Jacob fled to the country of Aram, then Israel worked to acquire a wife; he tended sheep to pay for her.

¹³The Lord brought Israel out of Egypt by a prophet, and due to a prophet Israel was preserved alive.

¹⁴But Ephraim bitterly provoked him to anger; so he will hold him accountable for the blood he has shed, his Lord will repay him for the contempt he has shown.

13¹ When Ephraim spoke, there was terror; he was exalted in Israel, but he became guilty by worshiping Baal and died.

²Even now they persist in sin! They make metal images for themselves, idols that they skillfully fashion from their own silver; all of them are nothing but the work of craftsmen! There is a saying about them: "Those who sacrifice to the calf idol are calf kissers!"

³Therefore they will disappear like the morning mist, like early morning dew that evaporates, like chaff that is blown away from a threshing floor, like smoke that disappears through an open window.

⁴ But I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt. Therefore, you must not acknowledge any God but me; except me there is no Savior.

⁵ I cared for you in the wilderness, in the dry desert where no water was.

⁶ When they were fed, they became satisfied; when they were satisfied, they became proud; as a result, they forgot me!

⁷ So I will pounce on them like a lion; like a leopard I will lurk by the path.

⁸ I will attack them like a bear robbed of her cubs – I will rip open their chests. I will devour them there like a lion – like a wild animal would tear them apart.

⁹ I will destroy you, O Israel! Who is there to help you?

¹⁰ Where then is your king, that he may save you in all your cities? Where are your rulers for whom you asked, saying, "Give me a king and princes"?

¹¹ I granted you a king in my anger, and I will take him away in my wrath!

¹² The punishment of Ephraim has been decreed; his punishment is being stored up for the future.

¹³The labor pains of a woman will overtake him, but the baby will lack wisdom; when the time arrives, he will not come out of the womb!

¹⁴Will I deliver them from the power of Sheol? No, I will not! Will I redeem them from death? No, I will not! O Death, bring on your plagues! O Sheol, bring on your destruction! My eyes will not show any compassion!

¹⁵Even though he flourishes like a reed plant, a scorching east wind will come, a wind from the Lord rising up from the desert. As a result, his spring will dry up; his well will become dry. That wind will spoil all his delightful foods in the containers in his storehouse.

¹⁶Samaria will be held guilty, because she rebelled against her God. They will fall by the sword, their infants will be dashed to the ground – their pregnant women will be ripped open.

14¹Return, O Israel, to the Lord your God, for your sin has been your downfall!

²Return to the Lord and repent! Say to him: “Completely forgive our iniquity; accept our penitential prayer, that we

may offer the praise of our lips as sacrificial bulls.

³Assyria cannot save us; we will not ride warhorses. We will never again say, 'Our gods' to what our own hands have made. For only you will show compassion to Orphan Israel!"

⁴"I will heal their waywardness and love them freely, for my anger will turn away from them.

⁵I will be like the dew to Israel; he will blossom like a lily, he will send down his roots like a cedar of Lebanon.

⁶His young shoots will grow; his splendor will be like an olive tree, his fragrance like a cedar of Lebanon.

⁷People will reside again in his shade; they will plant and harvest grain in abundance. They will blossom like a vine, and his fame will be like the wine from Lebanon.

⁸O Ephraim, I do not want to have anything to do with idols anymore! I will answer him and care for him. I am like a luxuriant cypress tree; your fruitfulness comes from me!

⁹Who is wise? Let him discern these things! Who is discerning? Let him

understand them! For the ways of the Lord are right; the godly walk in them, but in them the rebellious stumble.

Joel

1 ¹ This is the Lord's message that was given to Joel the son of Pethuel:

² Listen to this, you elders; pay attention, all inhabitants of the land. Has anything like this ever happened in your whole life or in the lifetime of your ancestors?

³ Tell your children about it, have your children tell their children, and their children the following generation.

⁴ What the gazam-locust left the 'arbeh-locust consumed, what the 'arbeh-locust left the yeleq-locust consumed, and what the yeleq-locust left the hasil-locust consumed!

⁵ Wake up, you drunkards, and weep! Wail, all you wine drinkers, because the sweet wine has been taken away from you.

⁶ For a nation has invaded our land. There are so many of them they are too numerous to count. Their teeth are like those of a lion; they tear apart their prey like a lioness.

⁷They have destroyed our vines; they have turned our fig trees into mere splinters. They have completely stripped off the bark and thrown them aside; the twigs are stripped bare.

⁸Wail like a young virgin clothed in sackcloth, lamenting the death of her husband-to-be.

⁹No one brings grain offerings or drink offerings to the temple of the Lord anymore. So the priests, those who serve the Lord, are in mourning.

¹⁰The crops of the fields have been destroyed. The ground is in mourning because the grain has perished. The fresh wine has dried up; the olive oil languishes.

¹¹Be distressed, farmers; wail, vinedressers, over the wheat and the barley. For the harvest of the field has perished.

¹²The vine has dried up; the fig tree languishes – the pomegranate, date, and apple as well. In fact, all the trees of the field have dried up. Indeed, the joy of the people has dried up!

¹³Get dressed and lament, you priests! Wail, you who minister at the altar!

Come, spend the night in sackcloth, you servants of my God, because no one brings grain offerings or drink offerings to the temple of your God anymore.

¹⁴Announce a holy fast; proclaim a sacred assembly. Gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land to the temple of the Lord your God, and cry out to the Lord.

¹⁵How awful that day will be! For the day of the Lord is near; it will come as destruction from the Divine Destroyer.

¹⁶Our food has been cut off right before our eyes! There is no longer any joy or gladness in the temple of our God!

¹⁷The grains of seed have shriveled beneath their shovels. Storehouses have been decimated and granaries have been torn down, for the grain has dried up.

¹⁸Listen to the cattle groan! The herds of livestock wander around in confusion because they have no pasture. Even the flocks of sheep are suffering.

¹⁹To you, O Lord, I call out for help, for fire has burned up the grassy pastures, flames have razed all the trees in the fields.

²⁰Even the wild animals cry out to you; for the river beds have dried up; fire has destroyed the grassy pastures.

2¹ Blow the trumpet in Zion; sound the alarm signal on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land shake with fear, for the day of the Lord is about to come. Indeed, it is near!

²It will be a day of dreadful darkness, a day of foreboding storm clouds, like blackness spread over the mountains. It is a huge and powerful army – there has never been anything like it ever before, and there will not be anything like it for many generations to come!

³Like fire they devour everything in their path; a flame blazes behind them. The land looks like the Garden of Eden before them, but behind them there is only a desolate wilderness – for nothing escapes them!

⁴They look like horses; they charge ahead like war horses.

⁵They sound like chariots rumbling over mountain tops, like the crackling of blazing fire consuming stubble, like the noise of a mighty army being drawn up for battle.

⁶People writhe in fear when they see them. All of their faces turn pale with fright.

⁷They charge like warriors; they scale walls like soldiers. Each one proceeds on his course; they do not alter their path.

⁸They do not jostle one another; each of them marches straight ahead. They burst through the city defenses and do not break ranks.

⁹They rush into the city; they scale its walls. They climb up into the houses; they go in through the windows like a thief.

¹⁰The earth quakes before them; the sky reverberates. The sun and the moon grow dark; the stars refuse to shine.

¹¹The voice of the Lord thunders as he leads his army. Indeed, his warriors are innumerable; Surely his command is carried out! Yes, the day of the Lord is awesome and very terrifying – who can survive it?

¹²“Yet even now,” the Lord says, “return to me with all your heart – with fasting, weeping, and mourning. Tear your hearts, not just your garments!”

¹³Return to the Lord your God, for he is merciful and compassionate, slow to anger and boundless in loyal love – often relenting from calamitous punishment.

¹⁴Who knows? Perhaps he will be compassionate and grant a reprieve, and leave blessing in his wake – a meal offering and a drink offering for you to offer to the Lord your God!

¹⁵Blow the trumpet in Zion. Announce a holy fast; proclaim a sacred assembly!

¹⁶Gather the people; sanctify an assembly! Gather the elders; gather the children and the nursing infants. Let the bridegroom come out from his bedroom and the bride from her private quarters.

¹⁷Let the priests, those who serve the Lord, weep from the vestibule all the way back to the altar. Let them say, "Have pity, O Lord, on your people; please do not turn over your inheritance to be mocked, to become a proverb among the nations. Why should it be said among the peoples, "Where is their God?"

¹⁸Then the Lord became zealous for his land; he had compassion on his people.

¹⁹The Lord responded to his people, "Look! I am about to restore your grain

as well as fresh wine and olive oil. You will be fully satisfied. I will never again make you an object of mockery among the nations.

²⁰I will remove the one from the north far from you. I will drive him out to a dry and desolate place. Those in front will be driven eastward into the Dead Sea, and those in back westward into the Mediterranean Sea. His stench will rise up as a foul smell." Indeed, the Lord has accomplished great things.

²¹Do not fear, my land! Rejoice and be glad, because the Lord has accomplished great things!

²²Do not fear, wild animals! For the pastures of the wilderness are again green with grass. Indeed, the trees bear their fruit; the fig tree and the vine yield to their fullest.

²³Citizens of Zion, rejoice! Be glad because of what the Lord your God has done! For he has given to you the early rains as vindication. He has sent to you the rains – both the early and the late rains as formerly.

²⁴The threshing floors are full of grain; the vats overflow with fresh wine and olive oil.

²⁵I will make up for the years that the 'arbeh-locust consumed your crops – the yeleq-locust, the hasil-locust, and the gazam-locust – my great army that I sent against you.

²⁶You will have plenty to eat, and your hunger will be fully satisfied; you will praise the name of the Lord your God, who has acted wondrously in your behalf. My people will never again be put to shame.

²⁷You will be convinced that I am in the midst of Israel. I am the Lord your God; there is no other. My people will never again be put to shame.

²⁸After all of this I will pour out my Spirit on all kinds of people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your elderly will have revelatory dreams; your young men will see prophetic visions.

²⁹Even on male and female servants I will pour out my Spirit in those days.

³⁰I will produce portents both in the sky and on the earth – blood, fire, and columns of smoke.

³¹ The sunlight will be turned to darkness and the moon to the color of blood, before the day of the Lord comes – that great and terrible day!

³² It will so happen that everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be delivered. For on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be those who survive, just as the Lord has promised; the remnant will be those whom the Lord will call.

3 ¹ For look! In those days and at that time I will return the exiles to Judah and Jerusalem.

² Then I will gather all the nations, and bring them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat. I will enter into judgment against them there concerning my people Israel who are my inheritance, whom they scattered among the nations. They partitioned my land,

³ and they cast lots for my people. They traded a boy for a prostitute; they sold a little girl for wine so they could drink.

⁴ Why are you doing these things to me, Tyre and Sidon? Are you trying to get even with me, land of Philistia? I

will very quickly repay you for what you have done!

⁵For you took my silver and my gold and brought my precious valuables to your own palaces.

⁶You sold Judeans and Jerusalemites to the Greeks, removing them far from their own country.

⁷Look! I am rousing them from that place to which you sold them. I will repay you for what you have done!

⁸I will sell your sons and daughters to the people of Judah. They will sell them to the Sabeans, a nation far away. Indeed, the Lord has spoken!

⁹Proclaim this among the nations: "Prepare for a holy war! Call out the warriors! Let all these fighting men approach and attack!

¹⁰Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears! Let the weak say, 'I too am a warrior!'

¹¹Lend your aid and come, all you surrounding nations, and gather yourselves to that place." Bring down, O Lord, your warriors!

¹²Let the nations be roused and let them go up to the valley of Jehoshaphat,

for there I will sit in judgment on all the surrounding nations.

¹³Rush forth with the sickle, for the harvest is ripe! Come, stomp the grapes, for the winepress is full! The vats overflow. Indeed, their evil is great!

¹⁴Crowds, great crowds are in the valley of decision, for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision!

¹⁵The sun and moon are darkened; the stars withhold their brightness.

¹⁶The Lord roars from Zion; from Jerusalem his voice bellows out. The heavens and the earth shake. But the Lord is a refuge for his people; he is a stronghold for the citizens of Israel.

¹⁷You will be convinced that I the Lord am your God, dwelling on Zion, my holy mountain. Jerusalem will be holy – conquering armies will no longer pass through it.

¹⁸On that day the mountains will drip with sweet wine, and the hills will flow with milk. All the dry stream beds of Judah will flow with water. A spring will flow out from the temple of the Lord, watering the Valley of Acacia Trees.

¹⁹ Egypt will be desolate and Edom will be a desolate wilderness, because of the violence they did to the people of Judah, in whose land they shed innocent blood.

²⁰ But Judah will reside securely forever, and Jerusalem will be secure from one generation to the next.

²¹ I will avenge their blood which I had not previously acquitted. It is the Lord who dwells in Zion!

Amos

1 ¹ The following is a record of what Amos prophesied. He was one of the herdsmen from Tekoa. These prophecies about Israel were revealed to him during the time of King Uzziah of Judah and King Jeroboam son of Joash of Israel, two years before the earthquake.

² Amos said: "The Lord comes roaring out of Zion; from Jerusalem he comes bellowing! The shepherds' pastures wilt; the summit of Carmel withers."

³ This is what the Lord says: "Because Damascus has committed three crimes – make that four! – I will not revoke my decree of judgment. They ripped through Gilead like threshing sledges with iron teeth.

⁴ So I will set Hazael's house on fire; fire will consume Ben Hadad's fortresses.

⁵ I will break the bar on the gate of Damascus. I will remove the ruler from Wicked Valley, the one who holds the royal scepter from Beth Eden. The people

of Aram will be deported to Kir." The Lord has spoken!

⁶This is what the Lord says: "Because Gaza has committed three crimes – make that four! – I will not revoke my decree of judgment. They deported a whole community and sold them to Edom.

⁷So I will set Gaza's city wall on fire; fire will consume her fortresses.

⁸I will remove the ruler from Ashdod, the one who holds the royal scepter from Ashkelon. I will strike Ekron with my hand; the rest of the Philistines will also die." The sovereign Lord has spoken!

⁹This is what the Lord says: "Because Tyre has committed three crimes – make that four! – I will not revoke my decree of judgment. They sold a whole community to Edom; they failed to observe a treaty of brotherhood.

¹⁰So I will set fire to Tyre's city wall; fire will consume her fortresses."

¹¹This is what the Lord says: "Because Edom has committed three crimes – make that four! – I will not revoke my decree of judgment. He chased his brother with a sword; he wiped out his

allies. In his anger he tore them apart without stopping to rest; in his fury he relentlessly attacked them.

¹²So I will set Teman on fire; fire will consume Bozrah's fortresses."

¹³This is what the Lord says: "Because the Ammonites have committed three crimes – make that four! – I will not revoke my decree of judgment. They ripped open Gilead's pregnant women so they could expand their territory.

¹⁴So I will set fire to Rabbah's city wall; fire will consume her fortresses. War cries will be heard on the day of battle; a strong gale will blow on the day of the windstorm.

¹⁵Ammon's king will be deported; he and his officials will be carried off together." The Lord has spoken!

2¹This is what the Lord says: "Because Moab has committed three crimes – make that four! – I will not revoke my decree of judgment. They burned the bones of Edom's king into lime.

²So I will set Moab on fire, and it will consume Kerioth's fortresses. Moab will perish in the heat of battle amid war cries and the blaring of the ram's horn.

³ I will remove Moab's leader; I will kill all Moab's officials with him." The Lord has spoken!

⁴ This is what the Lord says: "Because Judah has committed three covenant transgressions - make that four! - I will not revoke my decree of judgment. They rejected the Lord's law; they did not obey his commands. Their false gods, to which their fathers were loyal, led them astray.

⁵ So I will set Judah on fire, and it will consume Jerusalem's fortresses."

⁶ This is what the Lord says: "Because Israel has committed three covenant transgressions - make that four! - I will not revoke my decree of judgment. They sold the innocent for silver, the needy for a pair of sandals.

⁷ They trample on the dirt-covered heads of the poor; they push the destitute away. A man and his father go to the same girl; in this way they show disrespect for my moral purity.

⁸ They stretch out on clothing seized as collateral; they do so right beside every altar! They drink wine bought with the

fines they have levied; they do so right in the temple of their God!

⁹For Israel's sake I destroyed the Amorites. They were as tall as cedars and as strong as oaks, but I destroyed the fruit on their branches and their roots in the ground.

¹⁰I brought you up from the land of Egypt; I led you through the wilderness for forty years so you could take the Amorites' land as your own.

¹¹I made some of your sons prophets and some of your young men Nazirites. Is this not true, you Israelites?" The Lord is speaking!

¹²"But you made the Nazirites drink wine; you commanded the prophets, 'Do not prophesy!'

¹³Look! I will press you down, like a cart loaded down with grain presses down.

¹⁴Fast runners will find no place to hide; strong men will have no strength left; warriors will not be able to save their lives.

¹⁵Archers will not hold their ground; fast runners will not save their lives, nor will those who ride horses.

¹⁶ Bravehearted warriors will run away naked in that day." The Lord is speaking!

3¹ Listen, you Israelites, to this message which the Lord is proclaiming against you! This message is for the entire clan I brought up from the land of Egypt:

² "I have chosen you alone from all the clans of the earth. Therefore I will punish you for all your sins."

³ Do two walk together without having met?

⁴ Does a lion roar in the woods if he has not cornered his prey? Does a young lion bellow from his den if he has not caught something?

⁵ Does a bird swoop down into a trap on the ground if there is no bait? Does a trap spring up from the ground unless it has surely caught something?

⁶ If an alarm sounds in a city, do people not fear? If disaster overtakes a city, is the Lord not responsible?

⁷ Certainly the sovereign Lord does nothing without first revealing his plan to his servants the prophets.

⁸A lion has roared! Who is not afraid? The sovereign Lord has spoken! Who can refuse to prophesy?

⁹Make this announcement in the fortresses of Ashdod and in the fortresses in the land of Egypt. Say this: "Gather on the hills around Samaria! Observe the many acts of violence taking place within the city, the oppressive deeds occurring in it."

¹⁰"They do not know how to do what is right." (The Lord is speaking.) "They store up the spoils of destructive violence in their fortresses.

¹¹Therefore," says the sovereign Lord, "an enemy will encircle the land. He will take away your power; your fortresses will be looted."

¹²This is what the Lord says: "Just as a shepherd salvages from the lion's mouth a couple of leg bones or a piece of an ear, so the Israelites who live in Samaria will be salvaged. They will be left with just a corner of a bed, and a part of a couch."

¹³Listen and warn the family of Jacob! The sovereign Lord, the God who commands armies, is speaking!

¹⁴ “Certainly when I punish Israel for their covenant transgressions, I will destroy Bethel’s altars. The horns of the altar will be cut off and fall to the ground.

¹⁵ I will destroy both the winter and summer houses. The houses filled with ivory will be ruined, the great houses will be swept away.” The Lord is speaking!

4 ¹ Listen to this message, you cows of Bashan who live on Mount Samaria! You oppress the poor; you crush the needy. You say to your husbands, “Bring us more to drink!”

² The sovereign Lord confirms this oath by his own holy character: “Certainly the time is approaching when you will be carried away in baskets, every last one of you in fishermen’s pots.

³ Each of you will go straight through the gaps in the walls; you will be thrown out toward Harmon.” The Lord is speaking!

⁴ “Go to Bethel and rebel! At Gilgal rebel some more! Bring your sacrifices in the morning, your tithes on the third day!

⁵ Burn a thank offering of bread made with yeast! Make a public display of your

voluntary offerings! For you love to do this, you Israelites." The sovereign Lord is speaking!

⁶ "But surely I gave you no food to eat in any of your cities; you lacked food everywhere you live. Still you did not come back to me." The Lord is speaking!

⁷ "I withheld rain from you three months before the harvest. I gave rain to one city, but not to another. One field would get rain, but the field that received no rain dried up.

⁸ People from two or three cities staggered into one city to get water, but remained thirsty. Still you did not come back to me." The Lord is speaking!

⁹ "I destroyed your crops with blight and disease. Locusts kept devouring your orchards, vineyards, fig trees, and olive trees. Still you did not come back to me." The Lord is speaking!

¹⁰ "I sent against you a plague like one of the Egyptian plagues. I killed your young men with the sword, along with the horses you had captured. I made the stench from the corpses rise up into your nostrils. Still you did not come back to me." The Lord is speaking!

¹¹ “I overthrew some of you the way God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. You were like a burning stick snatched from the flames. Still you did not come back to me.” The Lord is speaking!

¹² “Therefore this is what I will do to you, Israel. Because I will do this to you, prepare to meet your God, Israel!

¹³ For here he is! He formed the mountains and created the wind. He reveals his plans to men. He turns the dawn into darkness and marches on the heights of the earth. The Lord, the God who commands armies, is his name!”

5¹ Listen to this funeral song I am ready to sing about you, family of Israel:

² “The virgin Israel has fallen down and will not get up again. She is abandoned on her own land with no one to help her get up.”

³ The sovereign Lord says this: “The city that marches out with a thousand soldiers will have only a hundred left; the town that marches out with a hundred soldiers will have only ten left for the family of Israel.”

⁴The Lord says this to the family of Israel: "Seek me so you can live!

⁵Do not seek Bethel! Do not visit Gilgal! Do not journey down to Beer Sheba! For the people of Gilgal will certainly be carried into exile; and Bethel will become a place where disaster abounds."

⁶Seek the Lord so you can live! Otherwise he will break out like fire against Joseph's family; the fire will consume and no one will be able to quench it and save Bethel.

⁷The Israelites turn justice into bitterness; they throw what is fair and right to the ground.

⁸(But there is one who made the constellations Pleiades and Orion; he can turn the darkness into morning and daylight into night. He summons the water of the seas and pours it out on the earth's surface. The Lord is his name!

⁹He flashes destruction down upon the strong so that destruction overwhelms the fortified places.)

¹⁰The Israelites hate anyone who arbitrates at the city gate; they despise anyone who speaks honestly.

¹¹ Therefore, because you make the poor pay taxes on their crops and exact a grain tax from them, you will not live in the houses you built with chiseled stone, nor will you drink the wine from the fine vineyards you planted.

¹² Certainly I am aware of your many rebellious acts and your numerous sins. You torment the innocent, you take bribes, and you deny justice to the needy at the city gate.

¹³ For this reason whoever is smart keeps quiet in such a time, for it is an evil time.

¹⁴ Seek good and not evil so you can live! Then the Lord, the God who commands armies, just might be with you, as you claim he is.

¹⁵ Hate what is wrong, love what is right! Promote justice at the city gate! Maybe the Lord, the God who commands armies, will have mercy on those who are left from Joseph.

¹⁶ Because of Israel's sins this is what the Lord, the God who commands armies, the sovereign One, says: "In all the squares there will be wailing, in all the streets they will mourn the dead.

They will tell the field workers to lament and the professional mourners to wail.

¹⁷In all the vineyards there will be wailing, for I will pass through your midst," says the Lord.

¹⁸Woe to those who wish for the day of the Lord! Why do you want the Lord's day of judgment to come? It will bring darkness, not light.

¹⁹Disaster will be inescapable, as if a man ran from a lion only to meet a bear, then escaped into a house, leaned his hand against the wall, and was bitten by a poisonous snake.

²⁰Don't you realize the Lord's day of judgment will bring darkness, not light - gloomy blackness, not bright light?

²¹"I absolutely despise your festivals! I get no pleasure from your religious assemblies!

²²Even if you offer me burnt and grain offerings, I will not be satisfied; I will not look with favor on your peace offerings of fattened calves.

²³Take away from me your noisy songs; I don't want to hear the music of your stringed instruments.

²⁴ Justice must flow like torrents of water, righteous actions like a stream that never dries up.

²⁵ You did not bring me sacrifices and grain offerings during the forty years you spent in the wilderness, family of Israel.

²⁶ You will pick up your images of Sikkuth, your king, and Kiyun, your star god, which you made for yourselves,

²⁷ and I will drive you into exile beyond Damascus," says the Lord. He is called the God who commands armies!

6¹ Woe to those who live in ease in Zion, to those who feel secure on Mount Samaria. They think of themselves as the elite class of the best nation. The family of Israel looks to them for leadership.

² They say to the people: "Journey over to Calneh and look at it! Then go from there to Hamath-Rabbah! Then go down to Gath of the Philistines! Are they superior to our two kingdoms? Is their territory larger than yours?"

³ You refuse to believe a day of disaster will come, but you establish a reign of violence.

⁴They lie around on beds decorated with ivory, and sprawl out on their couches. They eat lambs from the flock, and calves from the middle of the pen.

⁵They sing to the tune of stringed instruments; like David they invent musical instruments.

⁶They drink wine from sacrificial bowls, and pour the very best oils on themselves. Yet they are not concerned over the ruin of Joseph.

⁷Therefore they will now be the first to go into exile, and the religious banquets where they sprawl on couches will end.

⁸The sovereign Lord confirms this oath by his very own life. The Lord, the God who commands armies, is speaking: "I despise Jacob's arrogance; I hate their fortresses. I will hand over to their enemies the city of Samaria and everything in it."

⁹If ten men are left in one house, they too will die.

¹⁰When their close relatives, the ones who will burn the corpses, pick up their bodies to remove the bones from the house, they will say to anyone who is in the inner rooms of the house, "Is anyone

else with you?" He will respond, "Be quiet! Don't invoke the Lord's name!"

¹¹ Indeed, look! The Lord is giving the command. He will smash the large house to bits, and the small house into little pieces.

¹² Can horses run on rocky cliffs? Can one plow the sea with oxen? Yet you have turned justice into a poisonous plant, and the fruit of righteous actions into a bitter plant.

¹³ You are happy because you conquered Lo-Debar. You say, "Did we not conquer Karnaim by our own power?"

¹⁴ "Look! I am about to bring a nation against you, family of Israel." The Lord, the God who commands armies, is speaking. "They will oppress you all the way from Lebo-Hamath to the Stream of the Arabah."

7¹ The sovereign Lord showed me this: I saw him making locusts just as the crops planted late were beginning to sprout. (The crops planted late sprout after the royal harvest.)

² When they had completely consumed the earth's vegetation, I said, "Sovereign

Lord, forgive Israel! How can Jacob survive? He is too weak!"

³The Lord decided not to do this. "It will not happen," the Lord said.

⁴The sovereign Lord showed me this: I saw the sovereign Lord summoning a shower of fire. It consumed the great deep and devoured the fields.

⁵I said, "Sovereign Lord, stop! How can Jacob survive? He is too weak!"

⁶The Lord decided not to do this. The sovereign Lord said, "This will not happen either."

⁷He showed me this: I saw the sovereign One standing by a tin wall holding tin in his hand.

⁸The Lord said to me, "What do you see, Amos?" I said, "Tin." The sovereign One then said, "Look, I am about to place tin among my people Israel. I will no longer overlook their sin."

⁹Isaac's centers of worship will become desolate; Israel's holy places will be in ruins. I will attack Jeroboam's dynasty with the sword."

¹⁰Amaziah the priest of Bethel sent this message to King Jeroboam of Israel: "Amos is conspiring against you in the

very heart of the kingdom of Israel! The land cannot endure all his prophecies.

¹¹ As a matter of fact, Amos is saying this: 'Jeroboam will die by the sword and Israel will certainly be carried into exile away from its land.'

¹² Amaziah then said to Amos, "Leave, you visionary! Run away to the land of Judah! Earn your living and prophesy there!

¹³ Don't prophesy at Bethel any longer, for a royal temple and palace are here!"

¹⁴ Amos replied to Amaziah, "I was not a prophet by profession. No, I was a herdsman who also took care of sycamore fig trees.

¹⁵ Then the Lord took me from tending flocks and gave me this commission, 'Go! Prophesy to my people Israel!'

¹⁶ So now listen to the Lord's message! You say, 'Don't prophesy against Israel! Don't preach against the family of Isaac!'

¹⁷ "Therefore this is what the Lord says: 'Your wife will become a prostitute in the streets and your sons and daughters will die violently. Your land will be given to others and you will die in a foreign land.

Israel will certainly be carried into exile away from its land.”

8¹ The sovereign Lord showed me this: I saw a basket of summer fruit.

² He said, “What do you see, Amos?” I replied, “A basket of summer fruit.” Then the Lord said to me, “The end has come for my people Israel! I will no longer overlook their sins.

³ The women singing in the temple will wail in that day.” The sovereign Lord is speaking. “There will be many corpses littered everywhere! Be quiet!”

⁴ Listen to this, you who trample the needy, and do away with the destitute in the land.

⁵ You say, “When will the new moon festival be over, so we can sell grain? When will the Sabbath end, so we can open up the grain bins? We’re eager to sell less for a higher price, and to cheat the buyer with rigged scales!

⁶ We’re eager to trade silver for the poor, a pair of sandals for the needy! We want to mix in some chaff with the grain!”

⁷The Lord confirms this oath by the arrogance of Jacob: "I swear I will never forget all you have done!

⁸Because of this the earth will quake, and all who live in it will mourn. The whole earth will rise like the River Nile, it will surge upward and then grow calm, like the Nile in Egypt.

⁹In that day," says the sovereign Lord, "I will make the sun set at noon, and make the earth dark in the middle of the day.

¹⁰I will turn your festivals into funerals, and all your songs into funeral dirges. I will make everyone wear funeral clothes and cause every head to be shaved bald. I will make you mourn as if you had lost your only son; when it ends it will indeed have been a bitter day.

¹¹Be certain of this, the time is coming," says the sovereign Lord, "when I will send a famine through the land – not a shortage of food or water but an end to divine revelation!

¹²People will stagger from sea to sea, and from the north around to the east. They will wander about looking for a

revelation from the Lord, but they will not find any.

¹³In that day your beautiful young women and your young men will faint from thirst.

¹⁴These are the ones who now take oaths in the name of the sinful idol goddess of Samaria. They vow, 'As surely as your god lives, O Dan,' or 'As surely as your beloved one lives, O Beer Sheba!' But they will fall down and not get up again."

9¹I saw the sovereign One standing by the altar and he said, "Strike the tops of the support pillars, so the thresholds shake! Knock them down on the heads of all the people, and I will kill the survivors with the sword. No one will be able to run away; no one will be able to escape.

²Even if they could dig down into the netherworld, my hand would pull them up from there. Even if they could climb up to heaven, I would drag them down from there.

³Even if they were to hide on the top of Mount Carmel, I would hunt them down and take them from there. Even if they

tried to hide from me at the bottom of the sea, from there I would command the Sea Serpent to bite them.

⁴Even when their enemies drive them into captivity, from there I will command the sword to kill them. I will not let them out of my sight; they will experience disaster, not prosperity."

⁵The sovereign Lord who commands armies will do this. He touches the earth and it dissolves; all who live on it mourn. The whole earth rises like the River Nile, and then grows calm like the Nile in Egypt.

⁶He builds the upper rooms of his palace in heaven and sets its foundation supports on the earth. He summons the water of the sea and pours it out on the earth's surface. The Lord is his name.

⁷"You Israelites are just like the Ethiopians in my sight," says the Lord. "Certainly I brought Israel up from the land of Egypt, but I also brought the Philistines from Caphtor and the Arameans from Kir.

⁸Look, the sovereign Lord is watching the sinful nation, and I will destroy it from the face of the earth. But I will not

completely destroy the family of Jacob," says the Lord.

⁹"For look, I am giving a command and I will shake the family of Israel together with all the nations. It will resemble a sieve being shaken, when not even a pebble falls to the ground.

¹⁰All the sinners among my people will die by the sword – the ones who say, 'Disaster will not come near, it will not confront us.'

¹¹"In that day I will rebuild the collapsing hut of David. I will seal its gaps, repair its ruins, and restore it to what it was like in days gone by.

¹²As a result they will conquer those left in Edom and all the nations subject to my rule." The Lord, who is about to do this, is speaking!

¹³"Be sure of this, the time is coming," says the Lord, "when the plowman will catch up to the reaper and the one who stomps the grapes will overtake the planter. Juice will run down the slopes, it will flow down all the hillsides.

¹⁴I will bring back my people, Israel; they will rebuild the cities lying in rubble and settle down. They will plant

vineyards and drink the wine they produce; they will grow orchards and eat the fruit they produce.

¹⁵I will plant them on their land and they will never again be uprooted from the land I have given them," says the Lord your God.

Obadiah

1 ¹The vision that Obadiah saw.
The Lord God says this concerning Edom: We have heard a report from the Lord. An envoy was sent among the nations, saying, "Arise! Let us make war against Edom!"

²The Lord says, "Look! I will make you a weak nation; you will be greatly despised!

³Your presumptuous heart has deceived you – you who reside in the safety of the rocky cliffs, whose home is high in the mountains. You think to yourself, 'No one can bring me down to the ground!'

⁴Even if you were to soar high like an eagle, even if you were to make your nest among the stars, I can bring you down even from there!" says the Lord.

⁵"If thieves came to rob you during the night, they would steal only as much as they wanted! If grape pickers came to harvest your vineyards, they would leave some behind for the poor! But you will be totally destroyed!

⁶How the people of Esau will be thoroughly plundered! Their hidden valuables will be ransacked!

⁷All your allies will force you from your homeland! Your treaty partners will deceive you and overpower you. Your trusted friends will set an ambush for you that will take you by surprise!

⁸At that time," the Lord says, "I will destroy the wise sages of Edom! the advisers from Esau's mountain!

⁹Your warriors will be shattered, O Teman, so that everyone will be destroyed from Esau's mountain!

¹⁰"Because you violently slaughtered your relatives, the people of Jacob, shame will cover you, and you will be destroyed forever.

¹¹You stood aloof while strangers took his army captive, and foreigners advanced to his gates. When they cast lots over Jerusalem, you behaved as though you were in league with them.

¹²You should not have gloated when your relatives suffered calamity. You should not have rejoiced over the people of Judah when they were destroyed.

You should not have boasted when they suffered adversity.

¹³You should not have entered the city of my people when they experienced distress. You should not have joined in gloating over their misfortune when they suffered distress. You should not have looted their wealth when they endured distress.

¹⁴You should not have stood at the fork in the road to slaughter those trying to escape. You should not have captured their refugees when they suffered adversity.

¹⁵"For the day of the Lord is approaching for all the nations! Just as you have done, so it will be done to you. You will get exactly what your deeds deserve.

¹⁶For just as you have drunk on my holy mountain, so all the nations will drink continually. They will drink, and they will gulp down; they will be as though they had never been.

¹⁷But on Mount Zion there will be a remnant of those who escape, and it will be a holy place once again. The

descendants of Jacob will conquer those who had conquered them.

¹⁸The descendants of Jacob will be a fire, and the descendants of Joseph a flame. The descendants of Esau will be like stubble. They will burn them up and devour them. There will not be a single survivor of the descendants of Esau!" Indeed, the Lord has spoken it.

¹⁹The people of the Negev will take possession of Esau's mountain, and the people of the Shephelah will take possession of the land of the Philistines. They will also take possession of the territory of Ephraim and the territory of Samaria, and the people of Benjamin will take possession of Gilead.

²⁰The exiles of this fortress of the people of Israel will take possession of what belongs to the people of Canaan, as far as Zarephath, and the exiles of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad will take possession of the towns of the Negev.

²¹Those who have been delivered will go up on Mount Zion in order to rule over Esau's mountain. Then the Lord will reign as King!

Jonah

1 ¹ The Lord said to Jonah son of Amittai,

² "Go immediately to Nineveh, that large capital city, and announce judgment against its people because their wickedness has come to my attention."

³ Instead, Jonah immediately headed off to Tarshish to escape from the commission of the Lord. He traveled to Joppa and found a merchant ship heading to Tarshish. So he paid the fare and went aboard it to go with them to Tarshish far away from the Lord.

⁴ But the Lord hurled a powerful wind on the sea. Such a violent tempest arose on the sea that the ship threatened to break up!

⁵ The sailors were so afraid that each cried out to his own god and they flung the ship's cargo overboard to make the ship lighter. Jonah, meanwhile, had gone down into the hold below deck, had lain down, and was sound asleep.

⁶The ship's captain approached him and said, "What are you doing asleep? Get up! Cry out to your god! Perhaps your god might take notice of us so that we might not die!"

⁷The sailors said to one another, "Come on, let's cast lots to find out whose fault it is that this disaster has overtaken us." So they cast lots, and Jonah was singled out.

⁸They said to him, "Tell us, whose fault is it that this disaster has overtaken us? What's your occupation? Where do you come from? What's your country? And who are your people?"

⁹He said to them, "I am a Hebrew! And I worship the Lord, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land."

¹⁰Hearing this, the men became even more afraid and said to him, "What have you done?" (The men said this because they knew that he was trying to escape from the Lord, because he had previously told them.)

¹¹Because the storm was growing worse and worse, they said to him, "What should we do to you to make the sea calm down for us?"

¹²He said to them, “Pick me up and throw me into the sea to make the sea quiet down, because I know it’s my fault you are in this severe storm.”

¹³Instead, they tried to row back to land, but they were not able to do so because the storm kept growing worse and worse.

¹⁴So they cried out to the Lord, “Oh, please, Lord, don’t let us die on account of this man! Don’t hold us guilty of shedding innocent blood. After all, you, Lord, have done just as you pleased.”

¹⁵So they picked Jonah up and threw him into the sea, and the sea stopped raging.

¹⁶The men feared the Lord greatly, and earnestly vowed to offer lavish sacrifices to the Lord.

¹⁷The Lord sent a huge fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was in the stomach of the fish three days and three nights.

2¹Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the stomach of the fish

²and said, “I called out to the Lord from my distress, and he answered me; from the belly of Sheol I cried out for help, and you heard my prayer.

³You threw me into the deep waters, into the middle of the sea; the ocean current engulfed me; all the mighty waves you sent swept over me.

⁴I thought I had been banished from your sight, that I would never again see your holy temple!

⁵Water engulfed me up to my neck; the deep ocean surrounded me; seaweed was wrapped around my head.

⁶I went down to the very bottoms of the mountains; the gates of the netherworld barred me in forever; but you brought me up from the Pit, O Lord, my God.

⁷When my life was ebbing away, I called out to the Lord, and my prayer came to your holy temple.

⁸Those who worship worthless idols forfeit the mercy that could be theirs.

⁹But as for me, I promise to offer a sacrifice to you with a public declaration of praise; I will surely do what I have promised. Salvation belongs to the Lord!"

¹⁰Then the Lord commanded the fish and it disgorged Jonah on dry land.

3¹The Lord said to Jonah a second time,

² "Go immediately to Nineveh, that large city, and proclaim to it the message that I tell you."

³ So Jonah went immediately to Nineveh, as the Lord had said. (Now Nineveh was an enormous city – it required three days to walk through it!)

⁴ When Jonah began to enter the city one day's walk, he announced, "At the end of forty days, Nineveh will be overthrown!"

⁵ The people of Nineveh believed in God, and they declared a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them.

⁶ When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he got up from his throne, took off his royal robe, put on sackcloth, and sat on ashes.

⁷ He issued a proclamation and said, "In Nineveh, by the decree of the king and his nobles: No human or animal, cattle or sheep, is to taste anything; they must not eat and they must not drink water.

⁸ Every person and animal must put on sackcloth and must cry earnestly to God, and everyone must turn from their evil

way of living and from the violence that they do.

⁹Who knows? Perhaps God might be willing to change his mind and relent and turn from his fierce anger so that we might not die."

¹⁰When God saw their actions – they turned from their evil way of living! – God relented concerning the judgment he had threatened them with and he did not destroy them.

4¹This displeased Jonah terribly and he became very angry.

²He prayed to the Lord and said, "Oh, Lord, this is just what I thought would happen when I was in my own country. This is what I tried to prevent by attempting to escape to Tarshish! – because I knew that you are gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in mercy, and one who relents concerning threatened judgment.

³So now, Lord, kill me instead, because I would rather die than live!"

⁴The Lord said, "Are you really so very angry?"

⁵Jonah left the city and sat down east of it. He made a shelter for himself there

and sat down under it in the shade to see what would happen to the city.

⁶The Lord God appointed a little plant and caused it to grow up over Jonah to be a shade over his head to rescue him from his misery. Now Jonah was very delighted about the little plant.

⁷So God sent a worm at dawn the next day, and it attacked the little plant so that it dried up.

⁸When the sun began to shine, God sent a hot east wind. So the sun beat down on Jonah's head, and he grew faint. So he despaired of life, and said, "I would rather die than live!"

⁹God said to Jonah, "Are you really so very angry about the little plant?" And he said, "I am as angry as I could possibly be!"

¹⁰The Lord said, "You were upset about this little plant, something for which you have not worked nor did you do anything to make it grow. It grew up overnight and died the next day.

¹¹Should I not be even more concerned about Nineveh, this enormous city? There are more than one hundred twenty thousand people in it who do not

know right from wrong, as well as many animals!"

Micah

1 ¹ This is the prophetic message that the Lord gave to Micah of Moresheth. He delivered this message during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. The prophecies pertain to Samaria and Jerusalem.

² Listen, all you nations! Pay attention, all inhabitants of earth! The sovereign Lord will testify against you; the Lord will accuse you from his majestic palace.

³ Look, the Lord is coming out of his dwelling place! He will descend and march on the earth's mountaintops!

⁴ The mountains will disintegrate beneath him, and the valleys will be split in two. The mountains will melt like wax in a fire, the rocks will slide down like water cascading down a steep slope.

⁵ All this is because of Jacob's rebellion and the sins of the nation of Israel. How has Jacob rebelled, you ask? Samaria epitomizes their rebellion! Where are Judah's pagan worship centers, you ask? They are right in Jerusalem!

⁶“I will turn Samaria into a heap of ruins in an open field – vineyards will be planted there! I will tumble the rubble of her stone walls down into the valley, and tear down her fortifications to their foundations.

⁷All her carved idols will be smashed to pieces; all her metal cult statues will be destroyed by fire. I will make a waste heap of all her images. Since she gathered the metal as a prostitute collects her wages, the idols will become a prostitute’s wages again.”

⁸For this reason I will mourn and wail; I will walk around barefoot and without my outer garments. I will howl like a wild dog, and screech like an owl.

⁹For Samaria’s disease is incurable. It has infected Judah; it has spread to the leadership of my people and has even contaminated Jerusalem!

¹⁰Don’t spread the news in Gath! Don’t shed even a single tear! In Beth Leaphrah sit in the dust!

¹¹Residents of Shaphir, pass by in nakedness and humiliation! The residents of Zaanán can’t leave their

city. Beth Ezel mourns, "He takes from you what he desires."

¹²Indeed, the residents of Maroth hope for something good to happen, though the Lord has sent disaster against the city of Jerusalem.

¹³Residents of Lachish, hitch the horses to the chariots! You influenced Daughter Zion to sin, for Israel's rebellious deeds can be traced back to you!

¹⁴Therefore you will have to say farewell to Moresheth Gath. The residents of Achzib will be as disappointing as a dried up well to the kings of Israel.

¹⁵Residents of Mareshah, a conqueror will attack you, the leaders of Israel shall flee to Adullam.

¹⁶Shave your heads bald as you mourn for the children you love; shave your foreheads as bald as an eagle, for they are taken from you into exile.

2¹Those who devise sinful plans are as good as dead, those who dream about doing evil as they lie in bed. As soon as morning dawns they carry out their plans, because they have the power to do so.

²They confiscate the fields they desire, and seize the houses they want. They defraud people of their homes, and deprive people of the land they have inherited.

³Therefore the Lord says this: "Look, I am devising disaster for this nation! It will be like a yoke from which you cannot free your neck. You will no longer walk proudly, for it will be a time of catastrophe.

⁴In that day people will sing this taunt song to you – they will mock you with this lament: 'We are completely destroyed; they sell off the property of my people. How they remove it from me! They assign our fields to the conqueror.'

⁵Therefore no one will assign you land in the Lord's community.

⁶'Don't preach with such impassioned rhetoric,' they say excitedly. 'These prophets should not preach of such things; we will not be overtaken by humiliation.'

⁷Does the family of Jacob say, 'The Lord's patience can't be exhausted – he would never do such things'? To be sure,

my commands bring a reward for those who obey them,

⁸but you rise up as an enemy against my people. You steal a robe from a friend, from those who pass by peacefully as if returning from a war.

⁹You wrongly evict widows among my people from their cherished homes. You defraud their children of their prized inheritance.

¹⁰But you are the ones who will be forced to leave! For this land is not secure! Sin will thoroughly destroy it!

¹¹If a lying windbag should come and say, 'I'll promise you blessings of wine and beer,' he would be just the right preacher for these people!

¹²I will certainly gather all of you, O Jacob, I will certainly assemble those Israelites who remain. I will bring them together like sheep in a fold, like a flock in the middle of a pasture; they will be so numerous that they will make a lot of noise.

¹³The one who can break through barriers will lead them out they will break out, pass through the gate, and

leave. Their king will advance before them, The Lord himself will lead them.

3¹ I said, "Listen, you leaders of Jacob, you rulers of the nation of Israel! You ought to know what is just,

² yet you hate what is good, and love what is evil. You flay my people's skin and rip the flesh from their bones.

³ You devour my people's flesh, strip off their skin, and crush their bones. You chop them up like flesh in a pot – like meat in a kettle.

⁴ Someday these sinners will cry to the Lord for help, but he will not answer them. He will hide his face from them at that time, because they have done such wicked deeds."

⁵ This is what the Lord says: "The prophets who mislead my people are as good as dead. If someone gives them enough to eat, they offer an oracle of peace. But if someone does not give them food, they are ready to declare war on him.

⁶ Therefore night will fall, and you will receive no visions; it will grow dark, and you will no longer be able to read the omens. The sun will set on these

prophets, and the daylight will turn to darkness over their heads.

⁷The prophets will be ashamed; the omen readers will be humiliated. All of them will cover their mouths, for they will receive no divine oracles."

⁸But I am full of the courage that the Lord's Spirit gives, and have a strong commitment to justice. This enables me to confront Jacob with its rebellion, and Israel with its sin.

⁹Listen to this, you leaders of the family of Jacob, you rulers of the nation of Israel! You hate justice and pervert all that is right.

¹⁰You build Zion through bloody crimes, Jerusalem through unjust violence.

¹¹Her leaders take bribes when they decide legal cases, her priests proclaim rulings for profit, and her prophets read omens for pay. Yet they claim to trust the Lord and say, "The Lord is among us. Disaster will not overtake us!"

¹²Therefore, because of you, Zion will be plowed up like a field, Jerusalem will become a heap of ruins, and the Temple Mount will become a hill overgrown with brush!

4¹ In the future the Lord's Temple Mount will be the most important mountain of all; it will be more prominent than other hills. People will stream to it.

² Many nations will come, saying, "Come on! Let's go up to the Lord's mountain, to the temple of Jacob's God, so he can teach us his commands and we can live by his laws." For Zion will be the source of instruction; the Lord's teachings will proceed from Jerusalem.

³ He will arbitrate between many peoples and settle disputes between many distant nations. They will beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nations will not use weapons against other nations, and they will no longer train for war.

⁴ Each will sit under his own grapevine or under his own fig tree without any fear. The Lord who commands armies has decreed it.

⁵ Though all the nations follow their respective gods, we will follow the Lord our God forever.

⁶ "In that day," says the Lord, "I will gather the lame, and assemble the outcasts whom I injured.

⁷I will transform the lame into the nucleus of a new nation, and those far off into a mighty nation. The Lord will reign over them on Mount Zion, from that day forward and forevermore."

⁸As for you, watchtower for the flock, fortress of Daughter Zion – your former dominion will be restored, the sovereignty that belongs to Daughter Jerusalem.

⁹Jerusalem, why are you now shouting so loudly? Has your king disappeared? Has your wise leader been destroyed? Is this why pain grips you as if you were a woman in labor?

¹⁰Twist and strain, Daughter Zion, as if you were in labor! For you will leave the city and live in the open field. You will go to Babylon, but there you will be rescued. There the Lord will deliver you from the power of your enemies.

¹¹Many nations have now assembled against you. They say, "Jerusalem must be desecrated, so we can gloat over Zion!"

¹²But they do not know what the Lord is planning; they do not understand his strategy. He has gathered them like

stalks of grain to be threshed at the threshing floor.

¹³“Get up and thresh, Daughter Zion! For I will give you iron horns; I will give you bronze hooves, and you will crush many nations.” You will devote to the Lord the spoils you take from them, and dedicate their wealth to the sovereign Ruler of the whole earth.

5¹ But now slash yourself, daughter surrounded by soldiers! We are besieged! With a scepter they strike Israel’s ruler on the side of his face.

²As for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, seemingly insignificant among the clans of Judah – from you a king will emerge who will rule over Israel on my behalf, one whose origins are in the distant past.

³So the Lord will hand the people of Israel over to their enemies until the time when the woman in labor gives birth. Then the rest of the king’s countrymen will return to be reunited with the people of Israel.

⁴He will assume his post and shepherd the people by the Lord’s strength, by the sovereign authority of the Lord his God. They will live securely, for at that time

he will be honored even in the distant regions of the earth.

⁵He will give us peace. Should the Assyrians try to invade our land and attempt to set foot in our fortresses, we will send against them seven shepherd-rulers, make that eight commanders.

⁶They will rule the land of Assyria with the sword, the land of Nimrod with a drawn sword. Our king will rescue us from the Assyrians should they attempt to invade our land and try to set foot in our territory.

⁷Those survivors from Jacob will live in the midst of many nations. They will be like the dew the Lord sends, like the rain on the grass, that does not hope for men to come or wait around for humans to arrive.

⁸Those survivors from Jacob will live among the nations, in the midst of many peoples. They will be like a lion among the animals of the forest, like a young lion among the flocks of sheep, which attacks when it passes through; it rips its prey and there is no one to stop it.

⁹Lift your hand triumphantly against your adversaries; may all your enemies be destroyed!

¹⁰"In that day," says the Lord, "I will destroy your horses from your midst, and smash your chariots.

¹¹I will destroy the cities of your land, and tear down all your fortresses.

¹²I will remove the sorcery that you practice, and you will no longer have omen readers living among you.

¹³I will remove your idols and sacred pillars from your midst; you will no longer worship what your own hands made.

¹⁴I will uproot your images of Asherah from your midst, and destroy your idols.

¹⁵I will angrily seek vengeance on the nations that do not obey me."

6¹ Listen to what the Lord says:
"Get up! Defend yourself before the mountains! Present your case before the hills!"

²Hear the Lord's accusation, you mountains, you enduring foundations of the earth! For the Lord has a case against his people; he has a dispute with Israel!

³“My people, how have I wronged you? How have I wearied you? Answer me!

⁴In fact, I brought you up from the land of Egypt, I delivered you from that place of slavery. I sent Moses, Aaron, and Miriam to lead you.

⁵My people, recall how King Balak of Moab planned to harm you, how Balaam son of Beor responded to him. Recall how you journeyed from Shittim to Gilgal, so you might acknowledge that the Lord has treated you fairly.”

⁶With what should I enter the Lord’s presence? With what should I bow before the sovereign God? Should I enter his presence with burnt offerings, with year-old calves?

⁷Will the Lord accept a thousand rams, or ten thousand streams of olive oil? Should I give him my firstborn child as payment for my rebellion, my offspring – my own flesh and blood – for my sin?

⁸He has told you, O man, what is good, and what the Lord really wants from you: He wants you to promote justice, to be faithful, and to live obediently before your God.

⁹ Listen! The Lord is calling to the city! It is wise to respect your authority, O Lord! Listen, O nation, and those assembled in the city!

¹⁰ "I will not overlook, O sinful house, the dishonest gain you have hoarded away, or the smaller-than-standard measure I hate so much.

¹¹ I do not condone the use of rigged scales, or a bag of deceptive weights.

¹² The city's rich men think nothing of resorting to violence; her inhabitants lie, their tongues speak deceptive words.

¹³ I will strike you brutally and destroy you because of your sin.

¹⁴ You will eat, but not be satisfied. Even if you have the strength to overtake some prey, you will not be able to carry it away; if you do happen to carry away something, I will deliver it over to the sword.

¹⁵ You will plant crops, but will not harvest them; you will squeeze oil from the olives, but you will have no oil to rub on your bodies; you will squeeze juice from the grapes, but you will have no wine to drink.

¹⁶You implement the regulations of Omri, and all the practices of Ahab's dynasty; you follow their policies. Therefore I will make you an appalling sight, the city's inhabitants will be taunted derisively, and nations will mock all of you."

7¹ I am depressed! Indeed, it is as if the summer fruit has been gathered, and the grapes have been harvested. There is no grape cluster to eat, no fresh figs that I crave so much.

²Faithful men have disappeared from the land; there are no godly men left. They all wait in ambush so they can shed blood; they hunt their own brother with a net.

³They are determined to be experts at doing evil; government officials and judges take bribes, prominent men make demands, and they all do what is necessary to satisfy them.

⁴The best of them is like a thorn; the most godly among them are more dangerous than a row of thorn bushes. The day you try to avoid by posting watchmen – your appointed time of

punishment – is on the way, and then you will experience confusion.

⁵Do not rely on a friend; do not trust a companion! Don't even share secrets with the one who lies in your arms!

⁶For a son thinks his father is a fool, a daughter challenges her mother, and a daughter-in-law her mother-in-law; a man's enemies are his own servants.

⁷But I will keep watching for the Lord; I will wait for the God who delivers me. My God will hear my lament.

⁸My enemies, do not gloat over me! Though I have fallen, I will get up. Though I sit in darkness, the Lord will be my light.

⁹I must endure the Lord's anger, for I have sinned against him. But then he will defend my cause, and accomplish justice on my behalf. He will lead me out into the light; I will experience firsthand his deliverance.

¹⁰When my enemies see this, they will be covered with shame. They say to me, "Where is the Lord your God?" I will gloat over them. Then they will be trampled down like mud in the streets.

¹¹ It will be a day for rebuilding your walls; in that day your boundary will be extended.

¹² In that day people will come to you from Assyria as far as Egypt, from Egypt as far as the Euphrates River, from the seacoasts and the mountains.

¹³ The earth will become desolate because of what its inhabitants have done.

¹⁴ Shepherd your people with your shepherd's rod, the flock that belongs to you, the one that lives alone in a thicket, in the midst of a pastureland. Allow them to graze in Bashan and Gilead, as they did in the old days.

¹⁵ "As in the days when you departed from the land of Egypt, I will show you miraculous deeds."

¹⁶ Nations will see this and be disappointed by all their strength, they will put their hands over their mouths, and act as if they were deaf.

¹⁷ They will lick the dust like a snake, like serpents crawling on the ground. They will come trembling from their strongholds to the Lord our God; they will be terrified of you.

¹⁸There is no other God like you! You forgive sin and pardon the rebellion of those who remain among your people. You do not remain angry forever, but delight in showing loyal love.

¹⁹You will once again have mercy on us; you will conquer our evil deeds; you will hurl our sins into the depths of the sea.

²⁰You will be loyal to Jacob and extend your loyal love to Abraham, which you promised on oath to our ancestors in ancient times.

Nahum

1 ¹The oracle against Nineveh; the book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite:

²The Lord is a zealous and avenging God; the Lord is avenging and very angry. The Lord takes vengeance against his foes; he sustains his rage against his enemies.

³The Lord is slow to anger but great in power; the Lord will certainly not allow the wicked to go unpunished. He marches out in the whirlwind and the raging storm; dark storm clouds billow like dust under his feet.

⁴He shouts a battle cry against the sea and makes it dry up; he makes all the rivers run dry. Bashan and Carmel wither; the blossom of Lebanon withers.

⁵The mountains tremble before him, the hills convulse; the earth is laid waste before him, the world and all its inhabitants are laid waste.

⁶No one can withstand his indignation! No one can resist his fierce anger!

His wrath is poured out like volcanic fire, boulders are broken up as he approaches.

⁷The Lord is good – indeed, he is a fortress in time of distress, and he protects those who seek refuge in him.

⁸But with an overwhelming flood he will make a complete end of Nineveh; he will drive his enemies into darkness.

⁹Whatever you plot against the Lord, he will completely destroy! Distress will not arise a second time.

¹⁰Surely they will be totally consumed like entangled thorn bushes, like the drink of drunkards, like very dry stubble.

¹¹From you, O Nineveh, one has marched forth who plots evil against the Lord, a wicked military strategist.

¹²This is what the Lord says: “Even though they are powerful – and what is more, even though their army is numerous – nevertheless, they will be destroyed and trickle away! Although I afflicted you, I will afflict you no more.

¹³And now, I will break Assyria’s yoke bar from your neck; I will tear apart the shackles that are on you.”

¹⁴The Lord has issued a decree against you: "Your dynasty will come to an end. I will destroy the idols and images in the temples of your gods. I will desecrate your grave – because you are accursed!"

¹⁵Look! A herald is running on the mountains! A messenger is proclaiming deliverance: "Celebrate your sacred festivals, O Judah! Fulfill your sacred vows to praise God! For never again will the wicked Assyrians invade you, they have been completely destroyed."

2¹The watchmen of Nineveh shout: "An enemy who will scatter you is marching out to attack you!" "Guard the rampart! Watch the road! Prepare yourselves for battle! Muster your mighty strength!"

²For the Lord will restore the majesty of Jacob, as well as the majesty of Israel, though their enemies have plundered them and have destroyed their fields.

³The shields of his warriors are dyed red; the mighty soldiers are dressed in scarlet garments. The metal fittings of the chariots shine like fire on the day of battle; the soldiers brandish their spears.

⁴The chariots race madly through the streets, they rush back and forth in the broad plazas; they look like lightning bolts, they dash here and there like flashes of lightning.

⁵The commander orders his officers; they stumble as they advance; they rush to the city wall and they set up the covered siege tower.

⁶The sluice gates are opened; the royal palace is deluged and dissolves.

⁷Nineveh is taken into exile and is led away; her slave girls moan like doves while they beat their breasts.

⁸Nineveh was like a pool of water throughout her days, but now her people are running away; she cries out: "Stop! Stop!" - but no one turns back.

⁹Her conquerors cry out: "Plunder the silver! Plunder the gold!" There is no end to the treasure; riches of every kind of precious thing.

¹⁰Destruction, devastation, and desolation! Their hearts faint, their knees tremble, each stomach churns, each face turns pale!

¹¹Where now is the den of the lions, the feeding place of the young lions,

where the lion, lioness, and lion cub once prowled and no one disturbed them?

¹²The lion tore apart as much prey as his cubs needed and strangled prey to provide food for his lionesses; he filled his lairs with prey and his dens with torn flesh.

¹³"I am against you!" declares the Lord who commands armies: "I will burn your chariots with fire; the sword will devour your young lions; you will no longer prey upon the land; the voices of your messengers will no longer be heard."

3¹Woe to the city guilty of bloodshed! She is full of lies; she is filled with plunder; she has hoarded her spoil!

²The chariot drivers will crack their whips; the chariot wheels will shake the ground; the chariot horses will gallop; the war chariots will bolt forward!

³The charioteers will charge ahead; their swords will flash and their spears will glimmer! There will be many people slain; there will be piles of the dead, and countless casualties – so many that people will stumble over the corpses.

⁴"Because you have acted like a wanton prostitute – a seductive mistress who

practices sorcery, who enslaves nations by her harlotry, and entices peoples by her sorcery -

⁵“I am against you,” declares the Lord who commands armies. “I will strip off your clothes! I will show your nakedness to the nations and your shame to the kingdoms;

⁶I will pelt you with filth; I will treat you with contempt; I will make you a public spectacle.

⁷Everyone who sees you will turn away from you in disgust; they will say, ‘Nineveh has been devastated! Who will lament for her?’ There will be no one to comfort you!”

⁸You are no more secure than Thebes - she was located on the banks of the Nile; the waters surrounded her, her rampart was the sea, the water was her wall.

⁹Cush and Egypt had limitless strength; Put and the Libyans were among her allies.

¹⁰Yet she went into captivity as an exile; even her infants were smashed to pieces at the head of every street. They cast lots for her nobility; all her dignitaries were bound with chains.

¹¹ You too will act like drunkards; you will go into hiding; you too will seek refuge from the enemy.

¹² All your fortifications will be like fig trees with first-ripe fruit: If they are shaken, their figs will fall into the mouth of the eater!

¹³ Your warriors will be like women in your midst; the gates of your land will be wide open to your enemies; fire will consume the bars of your gates.

¹⁴ Draw yourselves water for a siege! Strengthen your fortifications! Trample the mud and tread the clay! Make mud bricks to strengthen your walls!

¹⁵ There the fire will consume you; the sword will cut you down; it will devour you like the young locust would. Multiply yourself like the young locust; multiply yourself like the flying locust!

¹⁶ Increase your merchants more than the stars of heaven! They are like the young locust which sheds its skin and flies away.

¹⁷ Your courtiers are like locusts, your officials are like a swarm of locusts! They encamp in the walls on a cold day, yet

when the sun rises, they fly away; and no one knows where they are.

¹⁸Your shepherds are sleeping, O king of Assyria! Your officers are slumbering! Your people are scattered like sheep on the mountains and there is no one to regather them!

¹⁹Your destruction is like an incurable wound; your demise is like a fatal injury! All who hear what has happened to you will clap their hands for joy, for no one ever escaped your endless cruelty!

Habakkuk

1 ¹ The following is the message which God revealed to Habakkuk the prophet:

² How long, Lord, must I cry for help? But you do not listen! I call out to you, "Violence!" But you do not intervene!

³ Why do you force me to witness injustice? Why do you put up with wrongdoing? Destruction and violence confront me; conflict is present and one must endure strife.

⁴ For this reason the law lacks power, and justice is never carried out. Indeed, the wicked intimidate the innocent. For this reason justice is perverted.

⁵ "Look at the nations and pay attention! You will be shocked and amazed! For I will do something in your lifetime that you will not believe even though you are forewarned.

⁶ Look, I am about to empower the Babylonians, that ruthless and greedy nation. They sweep across the surface of

the earth, seizing dwelling places that do not belong to them.

⁷They are frightening and terrifying; they decide for themselves what is right.

⁸Their horses are faster than leopards and more alert than wolves in the desert. Their horses gallop, their horses come a great distance; like a vulture they swoop down quickly to devour their prey.

⁹All of them intend to do violence; every face is determined. They take prisoners as easily as one scoops up sand.

¹⁰They mock kings and laugh at rulers. They laugh at every fortified city; they build siege ramps and capture them.

¹¹They sweep by like the wind and pass on. But the one who considers himself a god will be held guilty."

¹²Lord, you have been active from ancient times; my sovereign God, you are immortal. Lord, you have made them your instrument of judgment. Protector, you have appointed them as your instrument of punishment.

¹³You are too just to tolerate evil; you are unable to condone wrongdoing. So why do you put up with such treacherous

people? Why do you say nothing when the wicked devour those more righteous than they are?

¹⁴You made people like fish in the sea, like animals in the sea that have no ruler.

¹⁵The Babylonian tyrant pulls them all up with a fishhook; he hauls them in with his throw net. When he catches them in his dragnet, he is very happy.

¹⁶Because of his success he offers sacrifices to his throw net and burns incense to his dragnet; for because of them he has plenty of food, and more than enough to eat.

¹⁷Will he then continue to fill and empty his throw net? Will he always destroy nations and spare none?

2¹ I will stand at my watch post; I will remain stationed on the city wall. I will keep watching, so I can see what he says to me and can know how I should answer when he counters my argument.

²The Lord responded: "Write down this message! Record it legibly on tablets, so the one who announces it may read it easily.

³For the message is a witness to what is decreed; it gives reliable testimony

about how matters will turn out. Even if the message is not fulfilled right away, wait patiently; for it will certainly come to pass – it will not arrive late.

⁴Look, the one whose desires are not upright will faint from exhaustion, but the person of integrity will live because of his faithfulness.

⁵Indeed, wine will betray the proud, restless man! His appetite is as big as Sheol's; like death, he is never satisfied. He gathers all the nations; he seizes all peoples.

⁶"But all these nations will someday taunt him and ridicule him with proverbial sayings: 'The one who accumulates what does not belong to him is as good as dead (How long will this go on?) – he who gets rich by extortion!'

⁷Your creditors will suddenly attack; those who terrify you will spring into action, and they will rob you.

⁸Because you robbed many countries, all who are left among the nations will rob you. You have shed human blood and committed violent acts against lands, cities, and those who live in them.

⁹The one who builds his house by unjust gain is as good as dead. He does this so he can build his nest way up high and escape the clutches of disaster.

¹⁰Your schemes will bring shame to your house. Because you destroyed many nations, you will self-destruct.

¹¹For the stones in the walls will cry out, and the wooden rafters will answer back.

¹²The one who builds a city by bloodshed is as good as dead – he who starts a town by unjust deeds.

¹³Be sure of this! The Lord who commands armies has decreed: The nations' efforts will go up in smoke; their exhausting work will be for nothing.

¹⁴For recognition of the Lord's sovereign majesty will fill the earth just as the waters fill up the sea.

¹⁵"You who force your neighbor to drink wine are as good as dead – you who make others intoxicated by forcing them to drink from the bowl of your furious anger, so you can look at their genitals.

¹⁶But you will become drunk with shame, not majesty. Now it is your turn to drink and expose your uncircumcised

foreskin! The cup of wine in the Lord's right hand is coming to you, and disgrace will replace your majestic glory!

¹⁷For you will pay in full for your violent acts against Lebanon; terrifying judgment will come upon you because of the way you destroyed the wild animals living there. You have shed human blood and committed violent acts against lands, cities, and those who live in them.

¹⁸What good is an idol? Why would a craftsman make it? What good is a metal image that gives misleading oracles? Why would its creator place his trust in it and make such mute, worthless things?

¹⁹The one who says to wood, 'Wake up!' is as good as dead – he who says to speechless stone, 'Awake!' Can it give reliable guidance? It is overlaid with gold and silver; it has no life's breath inside it.

²⁰But the Lord is in his majestic palace. The whole earth is speechless in his presence!"

3¹This is a prayer of Habakkuk the prophet:

²Lord, I have heard the report of what you did; I am awed, Lord, by what you

accomplished. In our time repeat those deeds; in our time reveal them again. But when you cause turmoil, remember to show us mercy!

³God comes from Teman, the sovereign one from Mount Paran. Selah. His splendor covers the skies, his glory fills the earth.

⁴He is as bright as lightning; a two-pronged lightning bolt flashes from his hand. This is the outward display of his power.

⁵Plague goes before him; pestilence marches right behind him.

⁶He takes his battle position and shakes the earth; with a mere look he frightens the nations. The ancient mountains disintegrate; the primeval hills are flattened. He travels on the ancient roads.

⁷I see the tents of Cushan overwhelmed by trouble; the tent curtains of the land of Midian are shaking.

⁸Is the Lord mad at the rivers? Are you angry with the rivers? Are you enraged at the sea? Is this why you climb into your horse-drawn chariots, your victorious chariots?

⁹Your bow is ready for action; you commission your arrows. Selah. You cause flash floods on the earth's surface.

¹⁰When the mountains see you, they shake. The torrential downpour sweeps through. The great deep shouts out; it lifts its hands high.

¹¹The sun and moon stand still in their courses; the flash of your arrows drives them away, the bright light of your lightning-quick spear.

¹²You furiously stomp on the earth, you angrily trample down the nations.

¹³You march out to deliver your people, to deliver your special servant. You strike the leader of the wicked nation, laying him open from the lower body to the neck. Selah.

¹⁴You pierce the heads of his warriors with a spear. They storm forward to scatter us; they shout with joy as if they were plundering the poor with no opposition.

¹⁵But you trample on the sea with your horses, on the surging, raging waters.

¹⁶I listened and my stomach churned; the sound made my lips quiver. My frame went limp, as if my bones were decaying,

and I shook as I tried to walk. I long for the day of distress to come upon the people who attack us.

¹⁷When the fig tree does not bud, and there are no grapes on the vines; when the olive trees do not produce, and the fields yield no crops; when the sheep disappear from the pen, and there are no cattle in the stalls,

¹⁸I will rejoice because of the Lord; I will be happy because of the God who delivers me!

¹⁹The sovereign Lord is my source of strength. He gives me the agility of a deer; he enables me to negotiate the rugged terrain. (This prayer is for the song leader. It is to be accompanied by stringed instruments.)

Zephaniah

1 ¹ This is the prophetic message that the Lord gave to Zephaniah son of Cushi, son of Gedaliah, son of Amariah, son of Hezekiah. Zephaniah delivered this message during the reign of King Josiah son of Amon of Judah:

² "I will destroy everything from the face of the earth," says the Lord.

³ "I will destroy people and animals; I will destroy the birds in the sky and the fish in the sea. (The idolatrous images of these creatures will be destroyed along with evil people.) I will remove humanity from the face of the earth," says the Lord.

⁴ "I will attack Judah and all who live in Jerusalem. I will remove from this place every trace of Baal worship, as well as the very memory of the pagan priests.

⁵ I will remove those who worship the stars in the sky from their rooftops, those who swear allegiance to the Lord while taking oaths in the name of their 'king,'

⁶and those who turn their backs on the Lord and do not want the Lord's help or guidance."

⁷Be silent before the Lord God, for the Lord's day of judgment is almost here. The Lord has prepared a sacrificial meal; he has ritually purified his guests.

⁸"On the day of the Lord's sacrificial meal, I will punish the princes and the king's sons, and all who wear foreign styles of clothing.

⁹On that day I will punish all who leap over the threshold, who fill the house of their master with wealth taken by violence and deceit.

¹⁰On that day," says the Lord, "a loud cry will go up from the Fish Gate, wailing from the city's newer district, and a loud crash from the hills.

¹¹Wail, you who live in the market district, for all the merchants will disappear and those who count money will be removed.

¹²At that time I will search through Jerusalem with lamps. I will punish the people who are entrenched in their sin, those who think to themselves, 'The Lord neither rewards nor punishes.'

¹³Their wealth will be stolen and their houses ruined! They will not live in the houses they have built, nor will they drink the wine from the vineyards they have planted.

¹⁴The Lord's great day of judgment is almost here; it is approaching very rapidly! There will be a bitter sound on the Lord's day of judgment; at that time warriors will cry out in battle.

¹⁵That day will be a day of God's anger, a day of distress and hardship, a day of devastation and ruin, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and dark skies,

¹⁶a day of trumpet blasts and battle cries. Judgment will fall on the fortified cities and the high corner towers.

¹⁷I will bring distress on the people and they will stumble like blind men, for they have sinned against the Lord. Their blood will be poured out like dirt; their flesh will be scattered like manure.

¹⁸Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to deliver them in the day of the Lord's angry judgment. The whole earth will be consumed by his fiery

wrath. Indeed, he will bring terrifying destruction on all who live on the earth.”

2¹ Bunch yourselves together like straw, you undesirable nation,
² before God’s decree becomes reality and the day of opportunity disappears like windblown chaff, before the Lord’s raging anger overtakes you – before the day of the Lord’s angry judgment overtakes you!

³ Seek the Lord’s favor, all you humble people of the land who have obeyed his commands! Strive to do what is right! Strive to be humble! Maybe you will be protected on the day of the Lord’s angry judgment.

⁴ Indeed, Gaza will be deserted and Ashkelon will become a heap of ruins. Invaders will drive away the people of Ashdod by noon, and Ekron will be overthrown.

⁵ Those who live by the sea, the people who came from Crete, are as good as dead. The Lord has decreed your downfall, Canaan, land of the Philistines: “I will destroy everyone who lives there!”

⁶The seacoast will be used as pasture lands by the shepherds and as pens for their flocks.

⁷Those who are left from the kingdom of Judah will take possession of it. By the sea they will graze, in the houses of Ashkelon they will lie down in the evening, for the Lord their God will intervene for them and restore their prosperity.

⁸"I have heard Moab's taunts and the Ammonites' insults. They taunted my people and verbally harassed those living in Judah.

⁹Therefore, as surely as I live," says the Lord who commands armies, the God of Israel, "be certain that Moab will become like Sodom and the Ammonites like Gomorrah. They will be overrun by weeds, filled with salt pits, and permanently desolate. Those of my people who are left will plunder their belongings; those who are left in Judah will take possession of their land."

¹⁰This is how they will be repaid for their arrogance, for they taunted and verbally harassed the people of the Lord who commands armies.

¹¹ The Lord will terrify them, for he will weaken all the gods of the earth. All the distant nations will worship the Lord in their own lands.

¹² “You Ethiopians will also die by my sword!”

¹³ The Lord will attack the north and destroy Assyria. He will make Nineveh a heap of ruins; it will be as barren as the desert.

¹⁴ Flocks and herds will lie down in the middle of it, as well as every kind of wild animal. Owls will sleep in the tops of its support pillars; they will hoot through the windows. Rubble will cover the thresholds; even the cedar work will be exposed to the elements.

¹⁵ This is how the once-proud city will end up – the city that was so secure. She thought to herself, “I am unique! No one can compare to me!” What a heap of ruins she has become, a place where wild animals live! Everyone who passes by her taunts her and shakes his fist.

3¹ The filthy, stained city is as good as dead; the city filled with oppressors is finished!

²She is disobedient; she refuses correction. She does not trust the Lord; she does not seek the advice of her God.

³Her princes are as fierce as roaring lions; her rulers are as hungry as wolves in the desert, who completely devour their prey by morning.

⁴Her prophets are proud; they are deceitful men. Her priests defile what is holy; they break God's laws.

⁵The just Lord resides within her; he commits no unjust acts. Every morning he reveals his justice. At dawn he appears without fail. Yet the unjust know no shame.

⁶"I destroyed nations; their walled cities are in ruins. I turned their streets into ruins; no one passes through them. Their cities are desolate; no one lives there.

⁷I thought, 'Certainly you will respect me! Now you will accept correction!' If she had done so, her home would not be destroyed by all the punishments I have threatened. But they eagerly sinned in everything they did.

⁸Therefore you must wait patiently for me," says the Lord, "for the day when I

attack and take plunder. I have decided to gather nations together and assemble kingdoms, so I can pour out my fury on them – all my raging anger. For the whole earth will be consumed by my fiery anger.

⁹ Know for sure that I will then enable the nations to give me acceptable praise. All of them will invoke the Lord's name when they pray, and will worship him in unison.

¹⁰ From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, those who pray to me will bring me tribute.

¹¹ In that day you will not be ashamed of all your rebelliousness against me, for then I will remove from your midst those who proudly boast, and you will never again be arrogant on my holy hill.

¹² I will leave in your midst a humble and meek group of people, and they will find safety in the Lord's presence.

¹³ The Israelites who remain will not act deceitfully. They will not lie, and a deceitful tongue will not be found in their mouth. Indeed, they will graze peacefully like sheep and lie down; no one will terrify them."

¹⁴ Shout for joy, Daughter Zion! Shout out, Israel! Be happy and boast with all your heart, Daughter Jerusalem!

¹⁵ The Lord has removed the judgment against you; he has turned back your enemy. Israel's king, the Lord, is in your midst! You no longer need to fear disaster.

¹⁶ On that day they will say to Jerusalem, "Don't be afraid, Zion! Your hands must not be paralyzed from panic!

¹⁷ The Lord your God is in your midst; he is a warrior who can deliver. He takes great delight in you; he renews you by his love; he shouts for joy over you."

¹⁸ "As for those who grieve because they cannot attend the festivals - I took them away from you; they became tribute and were a source of shame to you.

¹⁹ Look, at that time I will deal with those who mistreated you. I will rescue the lame sheep and gather together the scattered sheep. I will take away their humiliation and make the whole earth admire and respect them.

²⁰ At that time I will lead you - at the time I gather you together. Be sure of

this! I will make all the nations of the earth respect and admire you when you see me restore you," says the Lord.

Haggai

1 ¹ On the first day of the sixth month of King Darius' second year, the Lord spoke this message through the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to the high priest Joshua son of Jehozadak:

² The Lord who rules over all says this: "These people have said, 'The time for rebuilding the Lord's temple has not yet come.'"

³ So the Lord spoke through the prophet Haggai as follows:

⁴ "Is it right for you to live in richly paneled houses while my temple is in ruins?"

⁵ Here then is what the Lord who rules over all says: 'Think carefully about what you are doing.

⁶ You have planted much, but have harvested little. You eat, but are never filled. You drink, but are still thirsty. You put on clothes, but are not warm. Those who earn wages end up with holes in their money bags.'"

⁷ "Moreover, the Lord who rules over all says: 'Pay close attention to these things also.

⁸ Go up to the hill country and bring back timber to build the temple. Then I will be pleased and honored,' says the Lord.

⁹ 'You expected a large harvest, but instead there was little, and when you brought it home it disappeared right away. Why?' asks the Lord who rules over all. 'Because my temple remains in ruins, thanks to each of you favoring his own house!

¹⁰ This is why the sky has held back its dew and the earth its produce.

¹¹ Moreover, I have called for a drought that will affect the fields, the hill country, the grain, new wine, fresh olive oil, and everything that grows from the ground; it also will harm people, animals, and everything they produce.'"

¹² Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and the high priest Joshua son of Jehozadak, along with the whole remnant of the people, obeyed the Lord their God. They responded favorably to the message of the prophet Haggai, who spoke just as

the Lord their God had instructed him, and the people began to respect the Lord.

¹³Then Haggai, the Lord's messenger, spoke the Lord's word to the people: "I am with you!" says the Lord.

¹⁴So the Lord energized and encouraged Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, the high priest Joshua son of Jehozadak, and the whole remnant of the people. They came and worked on the temple of their God, the Lord who rules over all.

¹⁵This took place on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month of King Darius' second year.

2¹On the twenty-first day of the seventh month, the Lord spoke again through the prophet Haggai:

²"Ask the following questions to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, the high priest Joshua son of Jehozadak, and the remnant of the people:

³'Who among you survivors saw the former splendor of this temple? How does it look to you now? Isn't it nothing by comparison?

⁴Even so, take heart, Zerubbabel,' says the Lord. 'Take heart, Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and all you citizens of the land,' says the Lord, 'and begin to work. For I am with you,' says the Lord who rules over all.

⁵'Do not fear, because I made a promise to your ancestors when they left Egypt, and my spirit even now testifies to you.'

⁶Moreover, the Lord who rules over all says: 'In just a little while I will once again shake the sky and the earth, the sea and the dry ground.

⁷I will also shake up all the nations, and they will offer their treasures; then I will fill this temple with glory,' says the Lord who rules over all.

⁸'The silver and gold will be mine,' says the Lord who rules over all.

⁹'The future splendor of this temple will be greater than that of former times,' the Lord who rules over all declares, 'and in this place I will give peace.'

¹⁰On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month of Darius' second year, the Lord spoke again to the prophet Haggai:

¹¹"The Lord who rules over all says, 'Ask the priests about the law.

¹²If someone carries holy meat in a fold of his garment and that fold touches bread, a boiled dish, wine, olive oil, or any other food, will that item become holy?" The priests answered, "It will not."

¹³Then Haggai asked, "If a person who is ritually unclean because of touching a dead body comes in contact with one of these items, will it become unclean?" The priests answered, "It will be unclean."

¹⁴Then Haggai responded, "'The people of this nation are unclean in my sight,' says the Lord. 'And so is all their effort; everything they offer is also unclean.

¹⁵Now therefore reflect carefully on the recent past, before one stone was laid on another in the Lord's temple.

¹⁶From that time when one came expecting a heap of twenty measures, there were only ten; when one came to the wine vat to draw out fifty measures from it, there were only twenty.

¹⁷I struck all the products of your labor with blight, disease, and hail, and yet you brought nothing to me,' says the Lord.

¹⁸ 'Think carefully about the past: from today, the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, to the day work on the temple of the Lord was resumed, think about it.

¹⁹ The seed is still in the storehouse, isn't it? And the vine, fig tree, pomegranate, and olive tree have not produced. Nevertheless, from today on I will bless you.'"

²⁰ Then the Lord spoke again to Haggai on the twenty-fourth day of the month:

²¹ Tell Zerubbabel governor of Judah: 'I am ready to shake the sky and the earth.

²² I will overthrow royal thrones and shatter the might of earthly kingdoms. I will overthrow chariots and those who ride them, and horses and their riders will fall as people kill one another.

²³ On that day,' says the Lord who rules over all, 'I will take you, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, my servant,' says the Lord, 'and I will make you like a signet ring, for I have chosen you,' says the Lord who rules over all."

Zechariah

1 ¹In the eighth month of Darius' second year, the word of the Lord came to the prophet Zechariah, son of Berechiah son of Iddo, as follows:

²The Lord was very angry with your ancestors.

³Therefore say to the people: The Lord who rules over all says, "Turn to me," says the Lord who rules over all, "and I will turn to you," says the Lord who rules over all.

⁴"Do not be like your ancestors, to whom the former prophets called out, saying, 'The Lord who rules over all says, "Turn now from your evil wickedness,"' but they would by no means obey me," says the Lord.

⁵"As for your ancestors, where are they? And did the prophets live forever?

⁶But have my words and statutes, which I commanded my servants the prophets, not outlived your fathers? Then they paid attention and confessed, 'The Lord who rules over all has indeed

done what he said he would do to us, because of our sinful ways.'"

⁷On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, the month Shebat, in Darius' second year, the word of the Lord came to the prophet Zechariah son of Berechiah son of Iddo, as follows:

⁸I was attentive that night and saw a man seated on a red horse that stood among some myrtle trees in the ravine. Behind him were red, sorrel, and white horses.

⁹Then I asked one nearby, "What are these, sir?" The angelic messenger who replied to me said, "I will show you what these are."

¹⁰Then the man standing among the myrtle trees spoke up and said, "These are the ones whom the Lord has sent to walk about on the earth."

¹¹The riders then agreed with the angel of the Lord, who was standing among the myrtle trees, "We have been walking about on the earth, and now everything is at rest and quiet."

¹²The angel of the Lord then asked, "Lord who rules over all, how long before you have compassion on Jerusalem and

the other cities of Judah which you have been so angry with for these seventy years?"

¹³The Lord then addressed good, comforting words to the angelic messenger who was speaking to me.

¹⁴Turning to me, the messenger then said, "Cry out that the Lord who rules over all says, 'I am very much moved for Jerusalem and for Zion.

¹⁵But I am greatly displeased with the nations that take my grace for granted. I was a little displeased with them, but they have only made things worse for themselves.

¹⁶"Therefore,' says the Lord, 'I have become compassionate toward Jerusalem and will rebuild my temple in it,' says the Lord who rules over all. 'Once more a surveyor's measuring line will be stretched out over Jerusalem.'

¹⁷Speak up again with the message of the Lord who rules over all: 'My cities will once more overflow with prosperity, and once more the Lord will comfort Zion and validate his choice of Jerusalem.'"

¹⁸Once again I looked and this time I saw four horns.

¹⁹So I asked the angelic messenger who spoke with me, "What are these?" He replied, "These are the horns that have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem."

²⁰Next the Lord showed me four blacksmiths.

²¹I asked, "What are these going to do?" He answered, "These horns are the ones that have scattered Judah so that there is no one to be seen. But the blacksmiths have come to terrify Judah's enemies and cut off the horns of the nations that have thrust themselves against the land of Judah in order to scatter its people."

2¹I looked again, and there was a man with a measuring line in his hand.

²I asked, "Where are you going?" He replied, "To measure Jerusalem in order to determine its width and its length."

³At this point the angelic messenger who spoke to me went out, and another messenger came to meet him

⁴and said to him, "Hurry, speak to this young man as follows: 'Jerusalem will no longer be enclosed by walls because

of the multitude of people and animals there.

⁵ But I (the Lord says) will be a wall of fire surrounding Jerusalem and the source of glory in her midst."

⁶ "You there! Flee from the northland!" says the Lord, "for like the four winds of heaven I have scattered you," says the Lord.

⁷ "Escape, Zion, you who live among the Babylonians!"

⁸ For the Lord who rules over all says to me that for his own glory he has sent me to the nations that plundered you - for anyone who touches you touches the pupil of his eye.

⁹ "I am about to punish them in such a way," he says, "that they will be looted by their own slaves." Then you will know that the Lord who rules over all has sent me.

¹⁰ "Sing out and be happy, Zion my daughter! For look, I have come; I will settle in your midst," says the Lord.

¹¹ "Many nations will join themselves to the Lord on the day of salvation, and they will also be my people. Indeed, I will settle in the midst of you all." Then

you will know that the Lord who rules over all has sent me to you.

¹²The Lord will take possession of Judah as his portion in the holy land and he will choose Jerusalem once again.

¹³Be silent in the Lord's presence, all people everywhere, for he is being moved to action in his holy dwelling place.

3¹Next I saw Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, with Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him.

²The Lord said to Satan, "May the Lord rebuke you, Satan! May the Lord, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you! Isn't this man like a burning stick snatched from the fire?"

³Now Joshua was dressed in filthy clothes as he stood there before the angel.

⁴The angel spoke up to those standing all around, "Remove his filthy clothes." Then he said to Joshua, "I have freely forgiven your iniquity and will dress you in fine clothing."

⁵Then I spoke up, "Let a clean turban be put on his head." So they put a clean

turban on his head and clothed him, while the angel of the Lord stood nearby.

⁶Then the angel of the Lord exhorted Joshua solemnly:

⁷"The Lord who rules over all says, 'If you live and work according to my requirements, you will be able to preside over my temple and attend to my courtyards, and I will allow you to come and go among these others who are standing by you.

⁸Listen now, Joshua the high priest, both you and your colleagues who are sitting before you, all of you are a symbol that I am about to introduce my servant, the Branch.

⁹As for the stone I have set before Joshua - on the one stone there are seven eyes. I am about to engrave an inscription on it,' says the Lord who rules over all, 'to the effect that I will remove the iniquity of this land in a single day.

¹⁰In that day,' says the Lord who rules over all, 'everyone will invite his friend to fellowship under his vine and under his fig tree.'"

4¹The angelic messenger who had been speaking with me then returned

and woke me, as a person is wakened from sleep.

²He asked me, "What do you see?" I replied, "I see a menorah of pure gold with a receptacle at the top and seven lamps, with fourteen pipes going to the lamps.

³There are also two olive trees beside it, one on the right of the receptacle and the other on the left."

⁴Then I asked the messenger who spoke with me, "What are these, sir?"

⁵He replied, "Don't you know what these are?" So I responded, "No, sir."

⁶Therefore he told me, "These signify the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: 'Not by strength and not by power, but by my Spirit,' says the Lord who rules over all."

⁷"What are you, you great mountain? Because of Zerubbabel you will become a level plain! And he will bring forth the temple capstone with shoutings of 'Grace! Grace!' because of this."

⁸Moreover, the word of the Lord came to me as follows:

⁹"The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundations of this temple, and his hands will complete it." Then you will

know that the Lord who rules over all has sent me to you.

¹⁰For who dares make light of small beginnings? These seven eyes will joyfully look on the tin tablet in Zerubbabel's hand. (These are the eyes of the Lord, which constantly range across the whole earth.)

¹¹Next I asked the messenger, "What are these two olive trees on the right and the left of the menorah?"

¹²Before he could reply I asked again, "What are these two extensions of the olive trees, which are emptying out the golden oil through the two golden pipes?"

¹³He replied, "Don't you know what these are?" And I said, "No, sir."

¹⁴So he said, "These are the two anointed ones who stand by the Lord of the whole earth."

5¹Then I turned to look, and there was a flying scroll!

²Someone asked me, "What do you see?" I replied, "I see a flying scroll thirty feet long and fifteen feet wide."

³The speaker went on to say, "This is a curse traveling across the whole earth."

For example, according to the curse whoever steals will be removed from the community; or on the other hand (according to the curse) whoever swears falsely will suffer the same fate."

⁴"I will send it out," says the Lord who rules over all, "and it will enter the house of the thief and of the person who swears falsely in my name. It will land in the middle of his house and destroy both timber and stones."

⁵After this the angelic messenger who had been speaking to me went out and said, "Look, see what is leaving."

⁶I asked, "What is it?" And he replied, "It is a basket for measuring grain that is moving away from here." Moreover, he said, "This is their 'eye' throughout all the earth."

⁷Then a round lead cover was raised up, revealing a woman sitting inside the basket.

⁸He then said, "This woman represents wickedness," and he pushed her down into the basket and placed the lead cover on top.

⁹Then I looked again and saw two women going forth with the wind in

their wings (they had wings like those of a stork) and they lifted up the basket between the earth and the sky.

¹⁰I asked the messenger who was speaking to me, "Where are they taking the basket?"

¹¹He replied, "To build a temple for her in the land of Babylonia. When it is finished, she will be placed there in her own residence."

6¹ Once more I looked, and this time I saw four chariots emerging from between two mountains of bronze.

²Harnessed to the first chariot were red horses, to the second black horses,

³to the third white horses, and to the fourth spotted horses, all of them strong.

⁴Then I asked the angelic messenger who was speaking with me, "What are these, sir?"

⁵The messenger replied, "These are the four spirits of heaven that have been presenting themselves before the Lord of all the earth.

⁶The chariot with the black horses is going to the north country and the white ones are going after them, but

the spotted ones are going to the south country.

⁷All these strong ones are scattering; they have sought permission to go and walk about over the earth." The Lord had said, "Go! Walk about over the earth!" So they are doing so.

⁸Then he cried out to me, "Look! The ones going to the northland have brought me peace about the northland."

⁹The word of the Lord came to me as follows:

¹⁰"Choose some people from among the exiles, namely, Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah, all of whom have come from Babylon, and when you have done so go to the house of Josiah son of Zephaniah.

¹¹Then take some silver and gold to make a crown and set it on the head of Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest.

¹²Then say to him, 'The Lord who rules over all says, "Look - here is the man whose name is Branch, who will sprout up from his place and build the temple of the Lord.

¹³Indeed, he will build the temple of the Lord, and he will be clothed in splendor, sitting as king on his throne. Moreover,

there will be a priest with him on his throne and they will see eye to eye on everything.

¹⁴The crown will then be turned over to Helem, Tobijah, Jedaiah, and Hen son of Zephaniah as a memorial in the temple of the Lord.

¹⁵Then those who are far away will come and build the temple of the Lord so that you may know that the Lord who rules over all has sent me to you. This will all come to pass if you completely obey the voice of the Lord your God."'"

7¹In King Darius' fourth year, on the fourth day of Kislev, the ninth month, the word of the Lord came to Zechariah.

²Now the people of Bethel had sent Sharezer and Regem-Melech and their companions to seek the Lord's favor

³by asking both the priests of the temple of the Lord who rules over all and the prophets, "Should we weep in the fifth month, fasting as we have done over the years?"

⁴The word of the Lord who rules over all then came to me,

⁵"Speak to all the people and priests of the land as follows: 'When you fasted

and lamented in the fifth and seventh months through all these seventy years, did you truly fast for me – for me, indeed?

⁶And now when you eat and drink, are you not doing so for yourselves?"

⁷Should you not have obeyed the words that the Lord cried out through the former prophets when Jerusalem was peacefully inhabited and her surrounding cities, the Negev, and the Shephelah were also populated?

⁸Again the word of the Lord came to Zechariah:

⁹"The Lord who rules over all said, 'Exercise true judgment and show brotherhood and compassion to each other.

¹⁰You must not oppress the widow, the orphan, the foreigner, or the poor, nor should anyone secretly plot evil against his fellow human being.'

¹¹"But they refused to pay attention, turning away stubbornly and stopping their ears so they could not hear.

¹²Indeed, they made their heart as hard as diamond, so that they could not obey the Torah and the other words

the Lord who rules over all had sent by his Spirit through the former prophets. Therefore, the Lord who rules over all had poured out great wrath.

¹³“‘It then came about that just as I cried out, but they would not obey, so they will cry out, but I will not listen,’ the Lord Lord who rules over all had said.

¹⁴‘Rather, I will sweep them away in a storm into all the nations they are not familiar with.’ Thus the land had become desolate because of them, with no one crossing through or returning, for they had made the fruitful land a waste.”

8¹ Then the word of the Lord who rules over all came to me as follows:

²“The Lord who rules over all says, ‘I am very much concerned for Zion; indeed, I am so concerned for her that my rage will fall on those who hurt her.’

³The Lord says, ‘I have returned to Zion and will live within Jerusalem. Now Jerusalem will be called “truthful city,” “mountain of the Lord who rules over all,” “holy mountain.”’

⁴Moreover, the Lord who rules over all says, ‘Old men and women will once more live in the plazas of Jerusalem,

each one leaning on a cane because of advanced age.

⁵And the streets of the city will be full of boys and girls playing.

⁶And,' says the Lord who rules over all, 'though such a thing may seem to be difficult in the opinion of the small community of those days, will it also appear difficult to me?' asks the Lord who rules over all.

⁷"The Lord who rules over all asserts, 'I am about to save my people from the lands of the east and the west.

⁸And I will bring them to settle within Jerusalem. They will be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and righteousness.'

⁹"The Lord who rules over all also says, 'Gather strength, you who are listening to these words today from the mouths of the prophets who were there at the founding of the house of the Lord who rules over all, so that the temple might be built.

¹⁰Before that time there was no compensation for man or animal, nor was there any relief from adversity for those who came and went, because

I had pitted everybody – each one – against everyone else.

¹¹ But I will be different now to this remnant of my people from the way I was in those days,' says the Lord who rules over all,

¹² 'for there will be a peaceful time of sowing, the vine will produce its fruit and the ground its yield, and the skies will rain down dew. Then I will allow the remnant of my people to possess all these things.

¹³ And it will come about that just as you (both Judah and Israel) were a curse to the nations, so I will save you and you will be a blessing. Do not be afraid! Instead, be strong!'

¹⁴ "For the Lord who rules over all says, 'As I had planned to hurt you when your fathers made me angry,' says the Lord who rules over all, 'and I was not sorry,

¹⁵ so, to the contrary, I have planned in these days to do good to Jerusalem and Judah – do not fear!

¹⁶ These are the things you must do: Speak the truth, each of you, to one another. Practice true and righteous judgment in your courts.

¹⁷ Do not plan evil in your hearts against one another. Do not favor a false oath – these are all things that I hate,’ says the Lord.”

¹⁸ The word of the Lord who rules over all came to me as follows:

¹⁹ “The Lord who rules over all says, ‘The fast of the fourth, fifth, seventh, and tenth months will become joyful and happy, pleasant feasts for the house of Judah, so love truth and peace.’

²⁰ The Lord who rules over all says, ‘It will someday come to pass that people – residents of many cities – will come.

²¹ The inhabitants of one will go to another and say, “Let’s go up at once to ask the favor of the Lord, to seek the Lord who rules over all. Indeed, I’ll go with you.”’

²² Many peoples and powerful nations will come to Jerusalem to seek the Lord who rules over all and to ask his favor.

²³ The Lord who rules over all says, ‘In those days ten people from all languages and nations will grasp hold of – indeed, grab – the robe of one Jew and say, “Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.”’”

9¹ An oracle of the word of the Lord concerning the land of Hadrach, with its focus on Damascus: The eyes of all humanity, especially of the tribes of Israel, are toward the Lord,

² as are those of Hamath also, which adjoins Damascus, and Tyre and Sidon, though they consider themselves to be very wise.

³ Tyre built herself a fortification and piled up silver like dust and gold like the mud of the streets!

⁴ Nevertheless the Lord will evict her and shove her fortifications into the sea – she will be consumed by fire.

⁵ Ashkelon will see and be afraid; Gaza will be in great anguish, as will Ekron, for her hope will have been dried up. Gaza will lose her king, and Ashkelon will no longer be inhabited.

⁶ A mongrel people will live in Ashdod, for I will greatly humiliate the Philistines.

⁷ I will take away their abominable religious practices; then those who survive will become a community of believers in our God, like a clan in Judah, and Ekron will be like the Jebusites.

⁸Then I will surround my temple to protect it like a guard from anyone crossing back and forth; so no one will cross over against them anymore as an oppressor, for now I myself have seen it.

⁹Rejoice greatly, daughter of Zion! Shout, daughter of Jerusalem! Look! Your king is coming to you: he is legitimate and victorious, humble and riding on a donkey – on a young donkey, the foal of a female donkey.

¹⁰I will remove the chariot from Ephraim and the warhorse from Jerusalem, and the battle bow will be removed. Then he will announce peace to the nations. His dominion will be from sea to sea and from the Euphrates River to the ends of the earth.

¹¹Moreover, as for you, because of our covenant relationship secured with blood, I will release your prisoners from the waterless pit.

¹²Return to the stronghold, you prisoners, with hope; today I declare that I will return double what was taken from you.

¹³I will bend Judah as my bow; I will load the bow with Ephraim, my arrow!

I will stir up your sons, Zion, against yours, Greece, and I will make you, Zion, like a warrior's sword.

¹⁴Then the Lord will appear above them, and his arrow will shoot forth like lightning; the Lord God will blow the trumpet and will sally forth on the southern storm winds.

¹⁵The Lord who rules over all will guard them, and they will prevail and overcome with sling stones. Then they will drink, and will become noisy like drunkards, full like the sacrificial basin or like the corners of the altar.

¹⁶On that day the Lord their God will deliver them as the flock of his people, for they are the precious stones of a crown sparkling over his land.

¹⁷How precious and fair! Grain will make the young men flourish and new wine the young women.

10¹Ask the Lord for rain in the season of the late spring rains – the Lord who causes thunderstorms – and he will give everyone showers of rain and green growth in the field.

²For the household gods have spoken wickedness, the soothsayers have seen

a lie, and as for the dreamers, they have disclosed emptiness and give comfort in vain. Therefore the people set out like sheep and become scattered because they have no shepherd.

³I am enraged at the shepherds and will punish the lead-goats. For the Lord who rules over all has brought blessing to his flock, the house of Judah, and will transform them into his majestic warhorse.

⁴From him will come the cornerstone, the wall peg, the battle bow, and every ruler.

⁵And they will be like warriors trampling the mud of the streets in battle. They will fight, for the Lord will be with them, and will defeat the enemy cavalry.

⁶"I (says the Lord) will strengthen the kingdom of Judah and deliver the people of Joseph and will bring them back because of my compassion for them. They will be as though I had never rejected them, for I am the Lord their God and therefore I will hear them.

⁷The Ephraimites will be like warriors and will rejoice as if they had drunk wine.

Their children will see it and rejoice; they will celebrate in the things of the Lord.

⁸I will signal for them and gather them, for I have already redeemed them; then they will become as numerous as they were before.

⁹Though I scatter them among the nations, they will remember in far-off places – they and their children will sprout forth and return.

¹⁰I will bring them back from Egypt and gather them from Assyria. I will bring them to the lands of Gilead and Lebanon, for there will not be enough room for them in their own land.

¹¹The Lord will cross the sea of storms and will calm its turbulence. The depths of the Nile will dry up, the pride of Assyria will be humbled, and the domination of Egypt will be no more.

¹²Thus I will strengthen them by my power, and they will walk about in my name," says the Lord.

11 ¹Open your gates, Lebanon, so that the fire may consume your cedars.

²Howl, fir tree, because the cedar has fallen; the majestic trees have

been destroyed. Howl, oaks of Bashan, because the impenetrable forest has fallen.

³ Listen to the howling of shepherds, because their magnificence has been destroyed. Listen to the roaring of young lions, because the thickets of the Jordan have been devastated.

⁴ The Lord my God says this: "Shepherd the flock set aside for slaughter.

⁵ Those who buy them slaughter them and are not held guilty; those who sell them say, 'Blessed be the Lord, for I am rich.' Their own shepherds have no compassion for them.

⁶ Indeed, I will no longer have compassion on the people of the land," says the Lord, "but instead I will turn every last person over to his neighbor and his king. They will devastate the land, and I will not deliver it from them."

⁷ So I began to shepherd the flock destined for slaughter, the most afflicted of all the flock. Then I took two staves, calling one "Pleasantness" and the other "Binders," and I tended the flock.

⁸ Next I eradicated the three shepherds in one month, for I ran out of patience

with them and, indeed, they detested me as well.

⁹I then said, "I will not shepherd you. What is to die, let it die, and what is to be eradicated, let it be eradicated. As for those who survive, let them eat each other's flesh!"

¹⁰Then I took my staff "Pleasantness" and cut it in two to annul my covenant that I had made with all the people.

¹¹So it was annulled that very day, and then the most afflicted of the flock who kept faith with me knew that that was the word of the Lord.

¹²Then I said to them, "If it seems good to you, pay me my wages, but if not, forget it." So they weighed out my payment - thirty pieces of silver.

¹³The Lord then said to me, "Throw to the potter that exorbitant sum at which they valued me!" So I took the thirty pieces of silver and threw them to the potter at the temple of the Lord.

¹⁴Then I cut the second staff "Binders" in two in order to annul the covenant of brotherhood between Judah and Israel.

¹⁵Again the Lord said to me, "Take up once more the equipment of a foolish shepherd.

¹⁶Indeed, I am about to raise up a shepherd in the land who will not take heed to the sheep headed to slaughter, will not seek the scattered, and will not heal the injured. Moreover, he will not nourish the one that is healthy but instead will eat the meat of the fat sheep and tear off their hooves.

¹⁷Woe to the worthless shepherd who abandons the flock! May a sword fall on his arm and his right eye! May his arm wither completely away, and his right eye become completely blind!"

12¹The revelation of the word of the Lord concerning Israel: The Lord – he who stretches out the heavens and lays the foundations of the earth, who forms the human spirit within a person – says,

²"I am about to make Jerusalem a cup that brings dizziness to all the surrounding nations; indeed, Judah will also be included when Jerusalem is besieged.

³Moreover, on that day I will make Jerusalem a heavy burden for all the nations, and all who try to carry it will be seriously injured; yet all the peoples of the earth will be assembled against it.

⁴In that day," says the Lord, "I will strike every horse with confusion and its rider with madness. I will pay close attention to the house of Judah, but will strike all the horses of the nations with blindness.

⁵Then the leaders of Judah will say to themselves, 'The inhabitants of Jerusalem are a means of strength to us through their God, the Lord who rules over all.'

⁶On that day I will make the leaders of Judah like an igniter among sticks and a burning torch among sheaves, and they will burn up all the surrounding nations right and left. Then the people of Jerusalem will settle once more in their place, the city of Jerusalem.

⁷The Lord also will deliver the homes of Judah first, so that the splendor of the kingship of David and of the people of Jerusalem may not exceed that of Judah.

⁸On that day the Lord himself will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so that the weakest among them will be like mighty David, and the dynasty of David will be like God, like the angel of the Lord before them.

⁹So on that day I will set out to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem."

¹⁰"I will pour out on the kingship of David and the population of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication so that they will look to me, the one they have pierced. They will lament for him as one laments for an only son, and there will be a bitter cry for him like the bitter cry for a firstborn.

¹¹On that day the lamentation in Jerusalem will be as great as the lamentation at Hadad-Rimmon in the plain of Megiddo.

¹²The land will mourn, clan by clan – the clan of the royal household of David by itself and their wives by themselves; the clan of the family of Nathan by itself and their wives by themselves;

¹³the clan of the descendants of Levi by itself and their wives by themselves;

and the clan of the Shimeites by itself and their wives by themselves –

¹⁴all the clans that remain, each separately with their wives.”

13¹ “In that day there will be a fountain opened up for the dynasty of David and the people of Jerusalem to cleanse them from sin and impurity.

²And also on that day,” says the Lord who rules over all, “I will remove the names of the idols from the land and they will never again be remembered. Moreover, I will remove the prophets and the unclean spirit from the land.

³Then, if anyone prophesies in spite of this, his father and mother to whom he was born will say to him, ‘You cannot live, for you lie in the name of the Lord.’ Then his father and mother to whom he was born will run him through with a sword when he prophesies.

⁴“Therefore, on that day each prophet will be ashamed of his vision when he prophesies and will no longer wear the hairy garment of a prophet to deceive the people.

⁵ Instead he will say, 'I am no prophet – indeed, I am a farmer, for a man has made me his indentured servant since my youth.'

⁶ Then someone will ask him, 'What are these wounds on your chest?' and he will answer, 'Some that I received in the house of my friends.'

⁷ "Awake, sword, against my shepherd, against the man who is my associate," says the Lord who rules over all. Strike the shepherd that the flock may be scattered; I will turn my hand against the insignificant ones.

⁸ It will happen in all the land, says the Lord, that two-thirds of the people in it will be cut off and die, but one-third will be left in it.

⁹ Then I will bring the remaining third into the fire; I will refine them like silver is refined and will test them like gold is tested. They will call on my name and I will answer; I will say, 'These are my people,' and they will say, 'The Lord is my God.'"

14¹ A day of the Lord is about to come when your possessions will be divided as plunder in your midst.

²For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to wage war; the city will be taken, its houses plundered, and the women raped. Then half of the city will go into exile, but the remainder of the people will not be taken away.

³Then the Lord will go to battle and fight against those nations, just as he fought battles in ancient days.

⁴On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives which lies to the east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in half from east to west, leaving a great valley. Half the mountain will move northward and the other half southward.

⁵Then you will escape through my mountain valley, for the mountains will extend to Azal. Indeed, you will flee as you fled from the earthquake in the days of King Uzziah of Judah. Then the Lord my God will come with all his holy ones with him.

⁶On that day there will be no light – the sources of light in the heavens will congeal.

⁷ It will happen in one day (a day known to the Lord); not in the day or the night, but in the evening there will be light.

⁸ Moreover, on that day living waters will flow out from Jerusalem, half of them to the eastern sea and half of them to the western sea; it will happen both in summer and in winter.

⁹ The Lord will then be king over all the earth. In that day the Lord will be seen as one with a single name.

¹⁰ All the land will change and become like the Arabah from Geba to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem; and Jerusalem will be raised up and will stay in its own place from the Benjamin Gate to the site of the First Gate and on to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the royal winepresses.

¹¹ And people will settle there, and there will no longer be the threat of divine extermination – Jerusalem will dwell in security.

¹² But this will be the nature of the plague with which the Lord will strike all the nations that have fought against Jerusalem: Their flesh will decay while they stand on their feet, their eyes will

rot away in their sockets, and their tongues will dissolve in their mouths.

¹³On that day there will be great confusion from the Lord among them; they will seize each other and attack one another violently.

¹⁴Moreover, Judah will fight at Jerusalem, and the wealth of all the surrounding nations will be gathered up – gold, silver, and clothing in great abundance.

¹⁵This is the kind of plague that will devastate horses, mules, camels, donkeys, and all the other animals in those camps.

¹⁶Then all who survive from all the nations that came to attack Jerusalem will go up annually to worship the King, the Lord who rules over all, and to observe the Feast of Tabernacles.

¹⁷But if any of the nations anywhere on earth refuse to go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the Lord who rules over all, they will get no rain.

¹⁸If the Egyptians will not do so, they will get no rain – instead there will be the kind of plague which the Lord inflicts

on any nations that do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles.

¹⁹This will be the punishment of Egypt and of all nations that do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles.

²⁰On that day the bells of the horses will bear the inscription "Holy to the Lord." The cooking pots in the Lord's temple will be as holy as the bowls in front of the altar.

²¹Every cooking pot in Jerusalem and Judah will become holy in the sight of the Lord who rules over all, so that all who offer sacrifices may come and use some of them to boil their sacrifices in them. On that day there will no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the Lord who rules over all.

Malachi

1 ¹ What follows is divine revelation. The word of the Lord came to Israel through Malachi:

² "I have shown love to you," says the Lord, but you say, "How have you shown love to us?" "Esau was Jacob's brother," the Lord explains, "yet I chose Jacob ³and rejected Esau. I turned Esau's mountains into a deserted wasteland and gave his territory to the wild jackals."

⁴ Edom says, "Though we are devastated, we will once again build the ruined places." So the Lord who rules over all responds, "They indeed may build, but I will overthrow. They will be known as the land of evil, the people with whom the Lord is permanently displeased."

⁵ Your eyes will see it, and then you will say, "May the Lord be magnified even beyond the border of Israel!"

⁶ "A son naturally honors his father and a slave respects his master. If I am your father, where is my honor? If I am your

master, where is my respect? The Lord who rules over all asks you this, you priests who make light of my name! But you reply, 'How have we made light of your name?'

⁷You are offering improper sacrifices on my altar, yet you ask, 'How have we offended you?' By treating the table of the Lord as if it is of no importance!

⁸For when you offer blind animals as a sacrifice, is that not wrong? And when you offer the lame and sick, is that not wrong as well? Indeed, try offering them to your governor! Will he be pleased with you or show you favor?" asks the Lord who rules over all.

⁹But now plead for God's favor that he might be gracious to us. "With this kind of offering in your hands, how can he be pleased with you?" asks the Lord who rules over all.

¹⁰"I wish that one of you would close the temple doors, so that you no longer would light useless fires on my altar. I am not pleased with you," says the Lord who rules over all, "and I will no longer accept an offering from you.

¹¹ For from the east to the west my name will be great among the nations. Incense and pure offerings will be offered in my name everywhere, for my name will be great among the nations," says the Lord who rules over all.

¹² "But you are profaning it by saying that the table of the Lord is common and its offerings despicable.

¹³ You also say, 'How tiresome it is.' You turn up your nose at it," says the Lord who rules over all, "and instead bring what is stolen, lame, or sick. You bring these things for an offering! Should I accept this from you?" asks the Lord.

¹⁴ "There will be harsh condemnation for the hypocrite who has a valuable male animal in his flock but vows and sacrifices something inferior to the Lord. For I am a great king," says the Lord who rules over all, "and my name is awesome among the nations."

2¹ "Now, you priests, this commandment is for you.

² If you do not listen and take seriously the need to honor my name," says the Lord who rules over all, "I will send judgment on you and turn your blessings

into curses – indeed, I have already done so because you are not taking it to heart.

³I am about to discipline your children and will spread offal on your faces, the very offal produced at your festivals, and you will be carried away along with it.

⁴Then you will know that I sent this commandment to you so that my covenant may continue to be with Levi," says the Lord who rules over all.

⁵"My covenant with him was designed to bring life and peace. I gave its statutes to him to fill him with awe, and he indeed revered me and stood in awe before me.

⁶He taught what was true; sinful words were not found on his lips. He walked with me in peace and integrity, and he turned many people away from sin.

⁷For the lips of a priest should preserve knowledge of sacred things, and people should seek instruction from him because he is the messenger of the Lord who rules over all.

⁸You, however, have turned from the way. You have caused many to violate the law; you have corrupted the

covenant with Levi," says the Lord who rules over all.

⁹"Therefore, I have caused you to be ignored and belittled before all people to the extent to which you are not following after me and are showing partiality in your instruction."

¹⁰Do we not all have one father? Did not one God create us? Why do we betray one another, in this way making light of the covenant of our ancestors?

¹¹Judah has become disloyal, and unspeakable sins have been committed in Israel and Jerusalem. For Judah has profaned the holy things that the Lord loves and has turned to a foreign god!

¹²May the Lord cut off from the community of Jacob every last person who does this, as well as the person who presents improper offerings to the Lord who rules over all!

¹³You also do this: You cover the altar of the Lord with tears as you weep and groan, because he no longer pays any attention to the offering nor accepts it favorably from you.

¹⁴Yet you ask, "Why?" The Lord is testifying against you on behalf of the

wife you married when you were young, to whom you have become unfaithful even though she is your companion and wife by law.

¹⁵No one who has even a small portion of the Spirit in him does this. What did our ancestor do when seeking a child from God? Be attentive, then, to your own spirit, for one should not be disloyal to the wife he took in his youth.

¹⁶“I hate divorce,” says the Lord God of Israel, “and the one who is guilty of violence,” says the Lord who rules over all. “Pay attention to your conscience, and do not be unfaithful.”

¹⁷You have wearied the Lord with your words. But you say, “How have we wearied him?” Because you say, “Everyone who does evil is good in the Lord’s opinion, and he delights in them,” or “Where is the God of justice?”

3¹ “I am about to send my messenger, who will clear the way before me. Indeed, the Lord you are seeking will suddenly come to his temple, and the messenger of the covenant, whom you long for, is certainly coming,” says the Lord who rules over all.

²Who can endure the day of his coming? Who can keep standing when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire, like a launderer's soap.

³He will act like a refiner and purifier of silver and will cleanse the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. Then they will offer the Lord a proper offering.

⁴The offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the Lord as in former times and years past.

⁵"I will come to you in judgment. I will be quick to testify against those who practice divination, those who commit adultery, those who break promises, and those who exploit workers, widows, and orphans, who refuse to help the immigrant and in this way show they do not fear me," says the Lord who rules over all.

⁶"Since, I, the Lord, do not go back on my promises, you, sons of Jacob, have not perished.

⁷From the days of your ancestors you have ignored my commandments and have not kept them! Return to me, and I will return to you," says the Lord who

rules over all. "But you say, 'How should we return?'

⁸Can a person rob God? You indeed are robbing me, but you say, 'How are we robbing you?' In tithes and contributions!

⁹You are bound for judgment because you are robbing me – this whole nation is guilty.

¹⁰"Bring the entire tithe into the storehouse so that there may be food in my temple. Test me in this matter," says the Lord who rules over all, "to see if I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you a blessing until there is no room for it all.

¹¹Then I will stop the plague from ruining your crops, and the vine will not lose its fruit before harvest," says the Lord who rules over all.

¹²"All nations will call you happy, for you indeed will live in a delightful land," says the Lord who rules over all.

¹³"You have criticized me sharply," says the Lord, "but you ask, 'How have we criticized you?'

¹⁴You have said, 'It is useless to serve God. How have we been helped by keeping his requirements and going

about like mourners before the Lord who rules over all?

¹⁵ So now we consider the arrogant to be happy; indeed, those who practice evil are successful. In fact, those who challenge God escape!"

¹⁶ Then those who respected the Lord spoke to one another, and the Lord took notice. A scroll was prepared before him in which were recorded the names of those who respected the Lord and honored his name.

¹⁷ "They will belong to me," says the Lord who rules over all, "in the day when I prepare my own special property. I will spare them as a man spares his son who serves him.

¹⁸ Then once more you will see that I make a distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between the one who serves God and the one who does not.

4¹ "For indeed the day is coming, burning like a furnace, and all the arrogant evildoers will be chaff. The coming day will burn them up," says the Lord who rules over all. "It will not leave even a root or branch.

² But for you who respect my name, the sun of vindication will rise with healing wings, and you will skip about like calves released from the stall.

³ You will trample on the wicked, for they will be like ashes under the soles of your feet on the day which I am preparing," says the Lord who rules over all.

⁴ "Remember the law of my servant Moses, to whom at Horeb I gave rules and regulations for all Israel to obey.

⁵ Look, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of the Lord arrives.

⁶ He will encourage fathers and their children to return to me, so that I will not come and strike the earth with judgment."

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