

Revised English Version

Old Testament
(Genesis s.d. Job)

Genesis

1 ¹IN the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

²The earth was a vast waste, darkness covered the deep, and the spirit of God hovered over the surface of the water.

³God said, Let there be light, and there was light;

⁴and God saw the light was good, and he separated light from darkness.

⁵He called the light day, and the darkness night. So evening came, and morning came; it was the first day.

⁶God said, Let there be a vault between the waters, to separate water from water.

⁷So God made the vault, and separated the water under the vault from the water above it, and so it was;

⁸and God called the vault the heavens. Evening came, and morning came, the second day.

⁹God said, Let the water under the heavens be gathered into one place, so that dry land may appear; and so it was.

¹⁰God called the dry land earth, and the gathering of the water he called sea; and God saw that it was good.

¹¹Then God said, Let the earth produce growing things; let there be on the earth plants that bear seed, and trees bearing fruit each with its own kind of seed. So it was;

¹²the earth produced growing things: plants bearing their own kind of seed and trees bearing fruit, each with its own kind of seed; and God saw that it was good.

¹³Evening came, and morning came, the third day.

¹⁴God said, Let there be lights in the vault of the heavens to separate day from night, and let them serve as signs both for festivals and for seasons and years.

¹⁵Let them also shine in the heavens to give light on earth. So it was;

¹⁶God made two great lights, the greater to govern the day and the lesser to govern the night; he also made the stars.

¹⁷God put these lights in the vault of the heavens to give light on earth,

¹⁸to govern day and night, and to separate light from darkness; and God saw that it was good.

¹⁹Evening came, and morning came, the fourth day.

²⁰God said, Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the heavens.

²¹God then created the great sea-beasts and all living creatures that move and swarm in the water, according to their various kinds, and every kind of bird; and God saw that it was good.

²²He blessed them and said, Be fruitful and increase; fill the water of the sea, and let the birds increase on the land.

²³Evening came, and morning came, the fifth day.

²⁴God said, Let the earth bring forth living creatures, according to their various kinds: cattle, creeping things, and wild animals, all according to their various kinds. So it was;

²⁵God made wild animals, cattle, and every creeping thing, all according to their various kinds; and he saw that it was good.

²⁶Then God said, Let us make human beings in our image, after our likeness, to have dominion over the fish in the sea, the birds of the air, the cattle, all wild animals on land, and everything that creeps on the earth.

²⁷God created human beings in his own image; in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

²⁸God blessed them and said to them, Be fruitful and increase, fill the earth and subdue it, have dominion over the fish in the sea, the birds of the air, and every living thing that moves on the earth.

²⁹God also said, Throughout the earth I give you all plants that bear seed, and every tree that bears fruit with seed: they shall be yours for food.

³⁰All green plants I give for food to the wild animals, to all the birds of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, every living creature. So it was;

³¹and God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. Evening came, and morning came, the sixth day.

2¹ Thus the heavens and the earth and everything in them were completed.

²On the sixth day God brought to an end all the work he had been doing; on the seventh day, having finished all his work,

³God blessed the day and made it holy, because it was the day he finished all his work of creation.

⁴THIS is the story of the heavens and the earth after their creation. When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens,

⁵there was neither shrub nor plant growing on the earth, because the LORD God had sent no rain; nor was there anyone to till the ground.

⁶Moisture used to well up out of the earth and water all the surface of the ground.

⁷The LORD God formed a human being from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, so that he became a living creature.

⁸The LORD God planted a garden in Eden away to the east, and in it he put the man he had formed.

⁹The LORD God made trees grow up from the ground, every kind of tree pleasing to the eye and good for food;

and in the middle of the garden he set the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

¹⁰There was a river flowing from Eden to water the garden, and from there it branched into four streams.

¹¹The name of the first is Pishon; it is the river which skirts the whole land of Havilah, where gold is found.

¹²The gold of that land is good; gum resin and cornelians are also to be found there.

¹³The name of the second river is Gihon; this is the one which skirts the whole land of Cush.

¹⁴The name of the third is Tigris; this is the river which flows east of Asshur. The fourth river is the Euphrates.

¹⁵The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and look after it.

¹⁶You may eat from any tree in the garden, he told the man,

¹⁷except from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; the day you eat from that, you are surely doomed to die.

¹⁸Then the LORD God said, It is not good for the man to be alone; I shall make a partner suited to him.

¹⁹So from the earth he formed all the wild animals and all the birds of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; whatever the man called each living creature, that would be its name.

²⁰The man gave names to all cattle, to the birds of the air, and to every wild animal; but for the man himself no suitable partner was found.

²¹The LORD God then put the man into a deep sleep and, while he slept, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the flesh over the place.

²²The rib he had taken out of the man the LORD God built up into a woman, and he brought her to the man.

²³The man said: This one at last is bone from my bones, flesh from my flesh! She shall be called woman, for from man was she taken.

²⁴That is why a man leaves his father and mother and attaches himself to his wife, and the two become one.

²⁵ Both were naked, the man and his wife, but they had no feeling of shame.

3¹ THE serpent, which was the most cunning of all the creatures the LORD God had made, asked the woman, Is it true that God has forbidden you to eat from any tree in the garden?

² She replied, We may eat the fruit of any tree in the garden,

³ except for the tree in the middle of the garden. God has forbidden us to eat the fruit of that tree or even to touch it; if we do, we shall die.

⁴ Of course you will not die, said the serpent;

⁵ for God knows that, as soon as you eat it, your eyes will be opened and you will be like God himself, knowing both good and evil.

⁶ The woman looked at the tree: the fruit would be good to eat; it was pleasing to the eye and desirable for the knowledge it could give. So she took some and ate it; she also gave some to her husband, and he ate it.

⁷ Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; so they stitched fig-

leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

⁸The man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God walking about in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and they hid from him among the trees.

⁹The LORD God called to the man, Where are you?

¹⁰He replied, I heard the sound of you in the garden and I was afraid because I was naked, so I hid.

¹¹God said, Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree which I forbade you to eat from?

¹²The man replied, It was the woman you gave to be with me who gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate it.

¹³The LORD God said to the woman, What have you done? The woman answered, It was the serpent who deceived me into eating it.

¹⁴Then the LORD God said to the serpent: Because you have done this you are cursed alone of all cattle and the creatures of the wild. On your belly you will crawl, and dust you will eat all the days of your life.

¹⁵I shall put enmity between you and the woman, between your brood and hers. They will strike at your head, and you will strike at their heel.

¹⁶To the woman he said: I shall give you great labour in childbearing; with labour you will bear children. You will desire your husband, but he will be your master.

¹⁷And to the man he said: Because you have listened to your wife and have eaten from the tree which I forbade you, on your account the earth will be cursed. You will get your food from it only by labour all the days of your life;

¹⁸it will yield thorns and thistles for you. You will eat of the produce of the field,

¹⁹and only by the sweat of your brow will you win your bread until you return to the earth; for from it you were taken. Dust you are, to dust you will return.

²⁰The man named his wife Eve because she was the mother of all living beings.

²¹The LORD God made coverings from skins for the man and his wife and clothed them.

²²But he said, The man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil; what if he now reaches out and takes fruit from the tree of life also, and eats it and lives for ever?

²³So the LORD God banished him from the garden of Eden to till the ground from which he had been taken.

²⁴When he drove him out, God settled him to the east of the garden of Eden, and he stationed the cherubim and a sword whirling and flashing to guard the way to the tree of life.

4¹The man lay with his wife Eve, and she conceived and gave birth to Cain. She said, With the help of the LORD I have brought into being a male child.

²Afterwards she had another child, Abel. He tended the flock, and Cain worked the land.

³In due season Cain brought some of the fruits of the earth as an offering to the LORD,

⁴while Abel brought the choicest of the firstborn of his flock. The LORD regarded Abel and his offering with favour,

⁵but not Cain and his offering. Cain was furious and he glowered.

⁶The LORD said to Cain, Why are you angry? Why are you scowling?

⁷If you do well, you hold your head up; if not, sin is a demon crouching at the door; it will desire you, and you will be mastered by it.

⁸Cain said to his brother Abel, Let us go out into the country. Once there, Cain attacked and murdered his brother.

⁹The LORD asked Cain, Where is your brother Abel? I do not know, Cain answered. Am I my brother's keeper?

¹⁰The LORD said, What have you done? Your brother's blood is crying out to me from the ground.

¹¹Now you are accursed and will be banished from the very ground which has opened its mouth to receive the blood you have shed.

¹²When you till the ground, it will no longer yield you its produce. You shall be a wanderer, a fugitive on the earth.

¹³Cain said to the LORD, My punishment is heavier than I can bear;

¹⁴now you are driving me off the land, and I must hide myself from your presence. I shall be a wanderer, a

fugitive on the earth, and I can be killed at sight by anyone.

¹⁵The LORD answered him, No: if anyone kills Cain, sevenfold vengeance will be exacted from him. The LORD put a mark on Cain, so that anyone happening to meet him should not kill him.

¹⁶Cain went out from the LORD's presence and settled in the land of Nod to the east of Eden.

¹⁷Then Cain lay with his wife; and she conceived and gave birth to Enoch. Cain was then building a town which he named Enoch after his son.

¹⁸Enoch was the father of Irad, Irad of Mehujael, Mehujael of Methushael, and Methushael of Lamech.

¹⁹Lamech married two women, one named Adah, the other Zillah.

²⁰Adah gave birth to Jabal, the ancestor of tent-dwellers who raise flocks and herds.

²¹His brother's name was Jubal; he was the ancestor of those who play the harp and pipe.

²²Zillah, the other wife, bore Tubal-cain, the master of all coppersmiths and

blacksmiths, and Tubal-cain's sister was Naamah.

²³Lamech said to his wives: Adah and Zillah, listen to me; wives of Lamech, mark what I say: I kill a man for wounding me, a young man for a blow.

²⁴If sevenfold vengeance was to be exacted for Cain, for Lamech it would be seventy-sevenfold.

²⁵Adam lay with his wife again. She gave birth to a son, and named him Seth, for, she said, God has granted me another son in place of Abel, because Cain killed him.

²⁶Seth too had a son, whom he named Enosh. At that time people began to invoke the LORD by name.

5¹ THIS is the list of Adam's descendants. On the day when God created human beings he made them in his own likeness.

²He created them male and female, and on the day when he created them, he blessed them and called them man.

³Adam was one hundred and thirty years old when he begot a son in his likeness and image, and named him Seth.

⁴After the birth of Seth he lived eight hundred years, and had other sons and daughters.

⁵He lived nine hundred and thirty years, and then he died.

⁶Seth was one hundred and five years old when he begot Enosh.

⁷After the birth of Enosh he lived eight hundred and seven years, and had other sons and daughters.

⁸He lived nine hundred and twelve years, and then he died.

⁹Enosh was ninety years old when he begot Kenan.

¹⁰After the birth of Kenan he lived eight hundred and fifteen years, and had other sons and daughters.

¹¹He lived nine hundred and five years, and then he died.

¹²Kenan was seventy years old when he begot Mahalalel.

¹³After the birth of Mahalalel he lived eight hundred and forty years, and had other sons and daughters.

¹⁴He lived nine hundred and ten years, and then he died.

¹⁵Mahalalel was sixty-five years old when he begot Jared.

¹⁶After the birth of Jared he lived eight hundred and thirty years, and had other sons and daughters.

¹⁷He lived eight hundred and ninety-five years, and then he died.

¹⁸Jared was one hundred and sixty-two years old when he begot Enoch.

¹⁹After the birth of Enoch he lived eight hundred years, and had other sons and daughters.

²⁰He lived nine hundred and sixty-two years, and then he died.

²¹Enoch was sixty-five years old when he begot Methuselah.

²²After the birth of Methuselah, Enoch walked with God for three hundred years, and had other sons and daughters.

²³He lived three hundred and sixty-five years.

²⁴Enoch walked with God, and then was seen no more, because God had taken him away.

²⁵Methuselah was one hundred and eighty-seven years old when he begot Lamech.

²⁶After the birth of Lamech he lived for seven hundred and eighty-two years, and had other sons and daughters.

²⁷ He lived nine hundred and sixty-nine years, and then he died.

²⁸ Lamech was one hundred and eighty-two years old when he begot a son.

²⁹ He named him Noah, saying, This boy will bring us relief from our work, from the labour that has come upon us because of the LORD's curse on the ground.

³⁰ After the birth of Noah he lived for five hundred and ninety-five years, and had other sons and daughters.

³¹ Lamech lived seven hundred and seventy-seven years, and then he died.

³² Noah was five hundred years old when he begot Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

6¹ THE human race began to increase and to spread over the earth and daughters were born to them.

² The sons of the gods saw how beautiful these daughters were, so they took for themselves such women as they chose.

³ But the LORD said, My spirit will not remain in a human being for ever; because he is mortal flesh, he will live only for a hundred and twenty years.

⁴In those days as well as later, when the sons of the gods had intercourse with the daughters of mortals and children were born to them, the Nephilim were on the earth; they were the heroes of old, people of renown.

⁵When the LORD saw how great was the wickedness of human beings on earth, and how their every thought and inclination were always wicked,

⁶he bitterly regretted that he had made mankind on earth.

⁷He said, I shall wipe off the face of the earth this human race which I have created -- yes, man and beast, creeping things and birds. I regret that I ever made them.

⁸Noah, however, had won the LORD's favour.

⁹This is the story of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, the one blameless man of his time, and he walked with God.

¹⁰He had three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

¹¹God saw that the world was corrupt and full of violence;

¹²and seeing this corruption, for the life of everyone on earth was corrupt,

¹³God said to Noah, I am going to bring the whole human race to an end, for because of them the earth is full of violence. I am about to destroy them, and the earth along with them.

¹⁴Make yourself an ark with ribs of cypress; cover it with reeds and coat it inside and out with pitch.

¹⁵This is to be its design: the length of the ark is to be three hundred cubits, its breadth fifty cubits, and its height thirty cubits.

¹⁶You are to make a roof for the ark, giving it a fall of one cubit when complete; put a door in the side of the ark, and build three decks, lower, middle, and upper.

¹⁷I am about to bring the waters of the flood over the earth to destroy from under heaven every human being that has the spirit of life; everything on earth shall perish.

¹⁸But with you I shall make my covenant, and you will go into the ark, you with your sons, your wife, and your sons wives.

¹⁹You are to bring living creatures of every kind into the ark to keep them

alive with you, two of each kind, a male and a female;

²⁰two of every kind of bird, beast, and creeping thing are to come to you to be kept alive.

²¹See that you take and store by you every kind of food that can be eaten; this will be food for you and for them.'

²²Noah carried out exactly all God had commanded him.

7¹The LORD said to Noah, Go into the ark, you and all your household; for you alone in this generation have I found to be righteous.

²Take with you seven pairs, a male and female, of all beasts that are ritually clean, and one pair, a male and female, of all beasts that are not clean;

³also seven pairs, males and females, of every bird -- to ensure that life continues on earth.

⁴For in seven days' time I am going to send rain on the earth for forty days and forty nights, and I shall wipe off the face of the earth every living creature I have made.

⁵Noah did all that the LORD had commanded him.

⁶He was six hundred years old when the water of the flood came on the earth.

⁷So to escape the flood Noah went into the ark together with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives.

⁸And to him on board the ark went one pair, a male and a female, of all beasts, clean and unclean, of birds, and of everything that creeps on the ground, two by two, as God had commanded.

⁹(7: 8)

¹⁰At the end of seven days the water of the flood came over the earth.

¹¹In the year when Noah was six hundred years old, on the seventeenth day of the second month, that very day all the springs of the great deep burst out, the windows of the heavens were opened,

¹²and rain fell on the earth for forty days and forty nights.

¹³That was the day Noah went into the ark with his sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, his own wife, and his three sons' wives.

¹⁴Wild animals of every kind, cattle of every kind, every kind of thing that

creeps on the ground, and winged birds of every kind --

¹⁵all living creatures came two by two to Noah in the ark.

¹⁶Those which came were one male and one female of all living things; they came in as God had commanded Noah, and the LORD closed the door on him.

¹⁷The flood continued on the earth for forty days, and the swelling waters lifted up the ark so that it rose high above the ground.

¹⁸The ark floated on the surface of the swollen waters as they increased over the earth.

¹⁹They increased more and more until they covered all the high mountains everywhere under heaven.

²⁰The water increased until the mountains were covered to a depth of fifteen cubits.

²¹Every living thing that moved on earth perished: birds, cattle, wild animals, all creatures that swarm on the ground, and all human beings.

²²Everything on dry land died, everything that had the breath of life in its nostrils.

²³ God wiped out every living creature that existed on earth, man and beast, creeping thing and bird; they were all wiped out over the whole earth, and only Noah and those who were with him in the ark survived.

²⁴ When the water had increased over the earth for a hundred and fifty days,

8¹ God took thought for Noah and all the beasts and cattle with him in the ark, and he caused a wind to blow over the earth, so that the water began to subside.

² The springs of the deep and the windows of the heavens were stopped up, the downpour from the skies was checked.

³ Gradually the water receded from the earth, and by the end of a hundred and fifty days it had abated.

⁴ On the seventeenth day of the seventh month the ark grounded on the mountains of Ararat.

⁵ The water continued to abate until the tenth month, and on the first day of the tenth month the tops of the mountains could be seen.

⁶At the end of forty days Noah opened the hatch that he had made in the ark,
⁷and sent out a raven; it continued flying to and fro until the water on the earth had dried up.

⁸Then Noah sent out a dove to see whether the water on the earth had subsided.

⁹But the dove found no place where she could settle because all the earth was under water, and so she came back to him in the ark. Noah reached out and caught her, and brought her into the ark.

¹⁰He waited seven days more and again sent out the dove from the ark.

¹¹She came back to him towards evening with a freshly plucked olive leaf in her beak. Noah knew then that the water had subsided from the earth's surface.

¹²He waited yet another seven days and, when he sent out the dove, she did not come back to him.

¹³So it came about that, on the first day of the first month of his six hundred and first year, the water had dried up on the earth, and when Noah removed the

hatch and looked out, he saw that the ground was dry.

¹⁴By the twenty-seventh day of the second month the earth was dry,

¹⁵and God spoke to Noah.

¹⁶Come out of the ark together with your wife, your sons, and their wives, he said.

¹⁷Bring out every living creature that is with you, live things of every kind, birds, beasts, and creeping things, and let them spread over the earth and be fruitful and increase on it.

¹⁸So Noah came out with his sons, his wife, and his sons' wives,

¹⁹and all the animals, creeping things, and birds; everything that moves on the ground came out of the ark, one kind after another.

²⁰Noah built an altar to the LORD and, taking beasts and birds of every kind that were ritually clean, he offered them as whole-offerings on it.

²¹When the LORD smelt the soothing odour, he said within himself, Never again shall I put the earth under a curse because of mankind, however evil their inclination may be from their youth

upwards, nor shall I ever again kill all living creatures, as I have just done.

²²As long as the earth lasts, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, they will never cease.

9¹ GOD blessed Noah and his sons; he said to them, Be fruitful and increase in numbers, and fill the earth.

²Fear and dread of you will come on all the animals on earth, on all the birds of the air, on everything that moves on the ground, and on all fish in the sea; they are made subject to you.

³Every creature that lives and moves will be food for you; I give them all to you, as I have given you every green plant.

⁴But you must never eat flesh with its life still in it, that is the blood.

⁵And further, for your life-blood I shall demand satisfaction; from every animal I shall require it, and from human beings also I shall require satisfaction for the death of their fellows.

⁶Anyone who sheds human blood, for that human being his blood will be shed;

because in the image of God has God made human beings.

⁷Be fruitful, then, and increase in number; people the earth and rule over it.

⁸God said to Noah and his sons:

⁹I am now establishing my covenant with you and with your descendants after you,

¹⁰and with every living creature that is with you, all birds and cattle, all the animals with you on earth, all that have come out of the ark.

¹¹I shall sustain my covenant with you: never again will all living creatures be destroyed by the waters of a flood, never again will there be a flood to lay waste the earth.

¹²God said, For all generations to come, this is the sign which I am giving of the covenant between myself and you and all living creatures with you:

¹³My bow I set in the clouds to be a sign of the covenant between myself and the earth.

¹⁴When I bring clouds over the earth, the rainbow will appear in the clouds.

¹⁵Then I shall remember the covenant which I have made with you and with all living creatures, and never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all creation.

¹⁶Whenever the bow appears in the cloud, I shall see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and living creatures of every kind on earth.

¹⁷So God said to Noah, This is the sign of the covenant which I have established with all that lives on earth.

¹⁸The sons of Noah who came out of the ark were Shem, Ham, and Japheth; Ham was the father of Canaan.

¹⁹These three were the sons of Noah, and their descendants spread over the whole earth.

²⁰Noah, who was the first tiller of the soil, planted a vineyard.

²¹He drank so much of the wine that he became drunk and lay naked inside his tent.

²²Ham, father of Canaan, saw his father naked, and went out and told his two brothers.

²³Shem and Japheth took a cloak, put it on their shoulders, and, walking

backwards, covered their father's naked body. They kept their faces averted, so that they did not see his nakedness.

²⁴When Noah woke from his drunkenness and learnt what his youngest son had done to him,

²⁵he said: Cursed be Canaan! Most servile of slaves shall he be to his brothers.

²⁶And he went on: Bless, O LORD, the tents of Shem; may Canaan be his slave.

²⁷May God extend Japheth's boundaries, let him dwell in the tents of Shem, may Canaan be his slave.

²⁸After the flood Noah lived for three hundred and fifty years;

²⁹he was nine hundred and fifty years old when he died.

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

²The sons of Japheth: Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras.

³The sons of Gomer: Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah.

⁴The sons of Javan: Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Rodanim.

⁵From these the peoples of the coasts and islands separated into their own countries, each with their own language, family by family, nation by nation.

⁶The sons of Ham: Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan.

⁷The sons of Cush: Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabtecha. The sons of Raamah: Sheba and Dedan.

⁸Cush was the father of Nimrod, who began to be known on earth for his might.

⁹He was outstanding as a mighty hunter -- as the saying goes, like Nimrod, outstanding as a mighty hunter.

¹⁰At first his kingdom consisted of Babel, Erech, and Accad, all of them in the land of Shinar.

¹¹From that land he migrated to Assyria and built Nineveh, Rehoboth-ir, Calah,

¹²and Resen, a great city between Nineveh and Calah.

¹³From Mizraim sprang the Ludim, Anamites, Lehabites, Naphtuhites,

¹⁴Pathrusites, Casluhites, and the Caphtorites, from whom the Philistines were descended.

¹⁵ Canaan was the father of Sidon, who was his eldest son, and Heth,

¹⁶ the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites,

¹⁷ the Hivites, the Arkites, the Sinites,

¹⁸ the Arvadites, the Zemarites, and the Hamathites. Later the Canaanites spread,

¹⁹ and then the Canaanite border ran from Sidon towards Gerar all the way to Gaza; then all the way to Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboyim as far as Lasha.

²⁰ These were the sons of Ham, by families and languages, with their countries and nations.

²¹ Sons were born also to Shem, elder brother of Japheth, the ancestor of all the sons of Eber.

²² The sons of Shem: Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram.

²³ The sons of Aram: Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash.

²⁴ Arphaxad was the father of Shelah, and Shelah the father of Eber.

²⁵ Eber had two sons: one was named Peleg, because in his time the earth was

divided; and his brother's name was Joktan.

²⁶ Joktan was the father of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmoth, Jerah,

²⁷ Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah,

²⁸ Obal, Abimael, Sheba,

²⁹ Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these were sons of Joktan.

³⁰ They lived in the eastern hill-country, from Mesha all the way to Sephar.

³¹ These were the sons of Shem, by families and languages, with their countries and nations.

³² These were the families of the sons of Noah according to their genealogies, nation by nation; and from them came the separate nations on earth after the flood.

11 ¹ THERE was a time when all the world spoke a single language and used the same words.

² As people journeyed in the east, they came upon a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there.

³ They said to one another, Come, let us make bricks and bake them hard; they used bricks for stone and bitumen for mortar.

⁴Then they said, Let us build ourselves a city and a tower with its top in the heavens and make a name for ourselves, or we shall be dispersed over the face of the earth.

⁵The LORD came down to see the city and tower which they had built,

⁶and he said, Here they are, one people with a single language, and now they have started to do this; from now on nothing they have a mind to do will be beyond their reach.

⁷Come, let us go down there and confuse their language, so that they will not understand what they say to one another.

⁸So the LORD dispersed them from there all over the earth, and they left off building the city.

⁹That is why it is called Babel, because there the LORD made a babble of the language of the whole world. It was from that place the LORD scattered people over the face of the earth.

¹⁰These are the descendants of Shem. Shem was a hundred years old when he begot Arphaxad, two years after the flood.

¹¹ After the birth of Arphaxad he lived five hundred years, and had other sons and daughters.

¹² Arphaxad was thirty-five years old when he begot Shelah.

¹³ After the birth of Shelah he lived four hundred and three years, and had other sons and daughters.

¹⁴ Shelah was thirty years old when he begot Eber.

¹⁵ After the birth of Eber he lived four hundred and three years, and had other sons and daughters.

¹⁶ Eber was thirty-four years old when he begot Peleg.

¹⁷ After the birth of Peleg he lived four hundred and thirty years, and had other sons and daughters.

¹⁸ Peleg was thirty years old when he begot Reu.

¹⁹ After the birth of Reu he lived two hundred and nine years, and had other sons and daughters.

²⁰ Reu was thirty-two years old when he begot Serug.

²¹ After the birth of Serug he lived two hundred and seven years, and had other sons and daughters.

²² Serug was thirty years old when he begot Nahor.

²³ After the birth of Nahor he lived two hundred years, and had other sons and daughters.

²⁴ Nahor was twenty-nine years old when he begot Terah.

²⁵ After the birth of Terah he lived a hundred and nineteen years, and had other sons and daughters.

²⁶ Terah was seventy years old when he begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran.

²⁷ These are the descendants of Terah. Terah was the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Haran was Lot's father.

²⁸ Haran died in the land of his birth, Ur of the Chaldees, during his father's lifetime.

²⁹ Abram and Nahor married wives; Abram's wife was called Sarai, and Nahor's Milcah. She was the daughter of Haran, father of Milcah and Iscah.

³⁰ Sarai was barren; she had no child.

³¹ Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, Abram's wife, and they set out from Ur of the Chaldees for

Canaan. But when they reached Harran, they settled there.

³²Terah was two hundred and five years old when he died in Harran.

12¹THE LORD said to Abram, Leave your own country, your kin, and your father's house, and go to a country that I will show you.

²I shall make you into a great nation; I shall bless you and make your name so great that it will be used in blessings:

³those who bless you, I shall bless; those who curse you, I shall curse. All the peoples on earth will wish to be blessed as you are blessed.

⁴Abram, who was seventy-five years old when he left Harran, set out as the LORD had bidden him, and Lot went with him.

⁵He took his wife Sarai, his brother's son Lot, and all the possessions they had gathered and the dependants they had acquired in Harran, and they departed for Canaan. When they arrived there,

⁶Abram went on as far as the sanctuary at Shechem, the terebinth tree of Moreh. (At that time the Canaanites lived in the land.)

⁷When the LORD appeared to him and said, I am giving this land to your descendants, Abram built an altar there to the LORD who had appeared to him.

⁸From there he moved on to the hill-country east of Bethel and pitched his tent between Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. He built there an altar to the LORD whom he invoked by name.

⁹Thus Abram journeyed by stages towards the Negeb.

¹⁰The land was stricken by a famine so severe that Abram went down to Egypt to live there for a time.

¹¹As he was about to enter Egypt, he said to his wife Sarai, I am well aware that you are a beautiful woman, and

¹²I know that when the Egyptians see you and think, She is his wife, they will let you live but they will kill me.

¹³Tell them you are my sister, so that all may go well with me because of you, and my life be spared on your account.

¹⁴When Abram arrived in Egypt, the Egyptians saw that Sarai was indeed very beautiful,

¹⁵and Pharaoh's courtiers, when they saw her, sang her praises to Pharaoh. She was taken into Pharaoh's household,

¹⁶and he treated Abram well because of her, and Abram acquired sheep and cattle and donkeys, male and female slaves, she-donkeys, and camels.

¹⁷But when the LORD inflicted plagues on Pharaoh and his household on account of Abram's wife Sarai,

¹⁸Pharaoh summoned Abram. Why have you treated me like this? he said. Why did you not tell me she was your wife?

¹⁹Why did you say she was your sister, so that I took her as a wife? Here she is: take her and go.

²⁰Pharaoh gave his men orders, and they sent Abram on his way with his wife and all that belonged to him.

13¹FROM Egypt Abram went up into the Negeb, he and his wife and all that he possessed, and Lot went with him.

²Abram had become very rich in cattle and in silver and gold.

³From the Negeb he journeyed by stages towards Bethel, to the place

between Bethel and Ai where he had earlier pitched his tent,

⁴and where he had previously set up an altar and invoked the LORD by name.

⁵Since Lot, who was travelling with Abram, also possessed sheep and cattle and tents,

⁶the land could not support them while they were together. They had so much livestock that they could not settle in the same district,

⁷and quarrels arose between Abram's herdsmen and Lot's. (The Canaanites and the Perizzites were then living in the land.)

⁸Abram said to Lot, There must be no quarrelling between us, or between my herdsmen and yours; for we are close kinsmen.

⁹The whole country is there in front of you. Let us part company: if you go north, I shall go south; if you go south, I shall go north.

¹⁰Lot looked around and saw how well watered the whole plain of Jordan was; all the way to Zoar it was like the Garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt. This

was before the LORD had destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.

¹¹ So Lot chose all the Jordan plain and took the road to the east. They parted company:

¹² Abram settled in Canaan, while Lot settled among the cities of the plain and pitched his tent near Sodom.

¹³ Now the men of Sodom in their wickedness had committed monstrous sins against the LORD.

¹⁴ After Lot and Abram had parted, the LORD said to Abram, Look around from where you are towards north, south, east, and west:

¹⁵ all the land you see I shall give to you and to your descendants for ever.

¹⁶ I shall make your descendants countless as the dust of the earth; only if the specks of dust on the ground could be counted could your descendants be counted.

¹⁷ Now go through the length and breadth of the land, for I am giving it to you.

¹⁸ Abram moved his tent and settled by the terebinths of Mamre at Hebron, where he built an altar to the LORD.

14¹ IN those days King Amraphel of Shinar, King Arioch of Ellasar, King Kedorlaomer of Elam, and King Tidal of Goyim

² went to war against King Bera of Sodom, King Birsha of Gomorrah, King Shinab of Admah, King Shemeber of Zeboyim, and the king of Bela, which is Zoar.

³ These kings joined forces in the valley of Siddim, which is now the Dead Sea.

⁴ For twelve years they had been subject to Kedorlaomer, but in the thirteenth year they rebelled.

⁵ Then in the fourteenth year Kedorlaomer and the kings allied with him came and defeated the Rephaim in Ashteroth-karnaim, the Zuzim in Ham, the Emim in Shaveh-kiriathaim,

⁶ and the Horites in their hill-country, Seir as far as El-paran on the edge of the wilderness.

⁷ On their way back they came to En-mishpat, which is now Kadesh, and laid waste all the territory of the Amalekites as well as that of the Amorites who lived in Hazazon-tamar.

⁸Then the kings of Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboyim, and Bela, which is now Zoar, marched out and drew up their forces against them in the valley of Siddim,

⁹against King Kedorlaomer of Elam, King Tidal of Goyim, King Amraphel of Shinar, and King Arioch of Ellasar, four kings against five.

¹⁰Now the valley of Siddim was full of bitumen pits, and when the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled, some of their men fell into them, but the rest made their escape to the hills.

¹¹The four kings captured all the flocks and herds of Sodom and Gomorrah and all their provisions, and withdrew,

¹²carrying off Abram's nephew, Lot, who was living in Sodom, and his flocks and herds.

¹³A fugitive brought the news to Abram the Hebrew, who at that time had his camp by the terebinths of Mamre the Amorite. This Mamre was the brother of Eshcol and Aner, allies of Abram.

¹⁴When Abram heard that his kinsman had been taken prisoner, he mustered his three hundred and eighteen retainers,

men born in his household, and went in pursuit as far as Dan.

¹⁵ Abram and his followers surrounded the enemy by night, routed them, and pursued them as far as Hobah, north of Damascus.

¹⁶ He recovered all the flocks and herds and also his kinsman Lot with his flocks and herds, together with the women and all his company.

¹⁷ On Abram's return from defeating Kedorlaomer and the allied kings, the king of Sodom came out to meet him in the valley of Shaveh, which is now the King's Valley.

¹⁸ THEN the king of Salem, Melchizedek, brought food and wine. He was priest of God Most High,

¹⁹ and he pronounced this blessing on Abram: Blessed be Abram by God Most High, Creator of the heavens and the earth.

²⁰ And blessed be God Most High, who has delivered your enemies into your hand. Then Abram gave him a tithe of all the booty.

²¹ The king of Sodom said to Abram, Give me the people, and you can take the livestock.

²² But Abram replied, I lift my hand and swear by the LORD, God Most High, Creator of the heavens and the earth:

²³ not a thread or a sandal-thong shall I accept of anything that is yours. You will never say, I made Abram rich.

²⁴ I shall accept nothing but what the young men have eaten and the share of the men who went with me, Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre; they must have their share.

15 ¹ AFTER this the word of the LORD came to Abram in a vision. He said, Do not be afraid, Abram; I am your shield. Your reward will be very great.

² Abram replied, Lord GOD, what can you give me, seeing that I am childless? The heir to my household is Eliezer of Damascus.

³ You have given me no children, and so my heir must be a slave born in my house.

⁴ The word of the LORD came to him: This man will not be your heir; your heir will be a child of your own body.

⁵He brought Abram outside and said, Look up at the sky, and count the stars, if you can. So many will your descendants be.

⁶Abram put his faith in the LORD, who reckoned it to him as righteousness,

⁷and said, I am the LORD who brought you out from Ur of the Chaldees to give you this land as your possession.

⁸Abram asked, Lord GOD, how can I be sure that I shall occupy it?

⁹The LORD answered, Bring me a heifer three years old, a she-goat three years old, a ram three years old, a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon.

¹⁰Abram brought him all these, cut the animals in two, and set the pieces opposite each other, but he did not cut the birds in half.

¹¹Birds of prey swooped down on the carcasses, but he scared them away.

¹²As the sun was going down, Abram fell into a trance and great and fearful darkness came over him.

¹³The LORD said to Abram, Know this for certain: your descendants will be aliens living in a land that is not their

own; they will be enslaved and held in oppression for four hundred years.

¹⁴But I shall punish the nation whose slaves they are, and afterwards they will depart with great possessions.

¹⁵You yourself will join your forefathers in peace and be buried at a ripe old age.

¹⁶But it will be the fourth generation who will return here, for till then the Amorites will not be ripe for punishment.

¹⁷The sun went down and it was dusk, and there appeared a smoking brazier and a flaming torch which passed between the divided pieces.

¹⁸That day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, and said, I give to your descendants this land from the river of Egypt to the Great River, the river Euphrates,

¹⁹the territory of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites,

²⁰Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaim,

²¹Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites, and Jebusites.

16¹ Abram's wife Sarai had borne him no children. She had, however, an Egyptian slave-girl named Hagar,

²and Sarai said to Abram, The LORD has not let me have a child. Take my slave-girl; perhaps through her I shall have a son. Abram heeded what his wife said;

³so Sarai brought her slave-girl, Hagar the Egyptian, to her husband and gave her to Abram as a wife. When this happened Abram had been in Canaan for ten years.

⁴He lay with Hagar and she conceived; and when she knew that she was pregnant, she looked down on her mistress.

⁵Sarai complained to Abram, I am being wronged; you must do something about it. It was I who gave my slave-girl into your arms, but since she has known that she is pregnant, she has despised me. May the LORD see justice done between you and me.

⁶Abram replied, Your slave-girl is in your hands; deal with her as you please. So Sarai ill-treated her and she ran away from her mistress.

⁷The angel of the LORD came upon Hagar by a spring in the wilderness, the spring on the road to Shur,

⁸and he said, Hagar, Sarai's slave-girl, where have you come from and where are you going? She answered, I am running away from Sarai my mistress.

⁹The angel of the LORD said to her, Go back to your mistress and submit to ill-treatment at her hands.

¹⁰He also said, I shall make your descendants too many to be counted.

¹¹The angel of the LORD went on: You are with child and will bear a son. You are to name him Ishmael, because the LORD has heard of your ill-treatment.

¹²He will be like the wild ass; his hand will be against everyone and everyone's hand against him; and he will live at odds with all his kin.

¹³Hagar called the LORD who spoke to her by the name El-roi, for she said, Have I indeed seen God and still live after that vision?

¹⁴That is why the well is called Beer-lahai-roi; it lies between Kadesh and Bered.

¹⁵Hagar bore Abram a son, and he named the child she bore him Ishmael.

¹⁶Abram was eighty-six years old when she bore Ishmael.

17 ¹When Abram was ninety-nine years old, the LORD appeared to him and said, I am God Almighty. Live always in my presence and be blameless, ²so that I may make my covenant with you and give you many descendants.

³Abram bowed low, and God went on, ⁴This is my covenant with you: you are to be the father of many nations.

⁵Your name will no longer be Abram, but Abraham; for I shall make you father of many nations.

⁶I shall make you exceedingly fruitful; I shall make nations out of you, and kings shall spring from you.

⁷I shall maintain my covenant with you and your descendants after you, generation after generation, an everlasting covenant: I shall be your God, yours and your descendants.

⁸As a possession for all time I shall give you and your descendants after you the land in which you now are aliens, the whole of Canaan, and I shall be their God.'

⁹God said to Abraham, For your part, you must keep my covenant, you and

your descendants after you, generation by generation.

¹⁰This is how you are to keep this covenant between myself and you and your descendants after you: circumcise yourselves, every male among you.

¹¹You must circumcise the flesh of your foreskin, and it will be the sign of the covenant between us.

¹²Every male among you in every generation must be circumcised on the eighth day, both those born in your house and any foreigner, not a member of your family but purchased.

¹³Circumcise both those born in your house and those you buy; thus your flesh will be marked with the sign of my everlasting covenant.

¹⁴Every uncircumcised male, everyone who has not had the flesh of his foreskin circumcised, will be cut off from the kin of his father; he has broken my covenant.

¹⁵God said to Abraham, As for Sarai your wife, you are to call her not Sarai, but Sarah.

¹⁶I shall bless her and give you a son by her. I shall bless her and she will be

the mother of nations; from her kings of peoples will spring.

¹⁷ Abraham bowed low, and laughing said to himself, Can a son be born to a man who is a hundred years old? Can Sarah bear a child at ninety?

¹⁸ He said to God, If only Ishmael might enjoy your special favour!

¹⁹ But God replied, No; your wife Sarah will bear you a son, and you are to call him Isaac. With him I shall maintain my covenant as an everlasting covenant for his descendants after him.

²⁰ But I have heard your request about Ishmael; I have blessed him and I shall make him fruitful. I shall give him many descendants; he will be father of twelve princes, and I shall raise a great nation from him.

²¹ But my covenant I shall fulfil with Isaac, whom Sarah will bear to you at this time next year.

²² When he had finished talking with Abraham, God left him.

²³ Then Abraham took Ishmael his son, everyone who had been born in his household and everyone he had bought, every male in his household, and that

same day he circumcised the flesh of their foreskins as God had commanded him.

²⁴ Abraham was ninety-nine years old when he was circumcised.

²⁵ Ishmael was thirteen years old when he was circumcised.

²⁶ Both Abraham and Ishmael were circumcised on the same day.

²⁷ All the men of Abraham's household, born in the house or bought from foreigners, were circumcised with him.

18¹ THE LORD appeared to Abraham by the terebinths of Mamre, as he was sitting at the opening of his tent in the heat of the day.

² He looked up and saw three men standing over against him. On seeing them, he hurried from his tent door to meet them. Bowing low

³ he said, Sirs, if I have deserved your favour, do not go past your servant without a visit.

⁴ Let me send for some water so that you may bathe your feet; and rest under this tree,

⁵ while I fetch a little food so that you may refresh yourselves. Afterwards you

may continue the journey which has brought you my way. They said, Very well, do as you say.

⁶So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah and said, Quick, take three measures of flour, knead it, and make cakes.

⁷He then hastened to the herd, chose a fine, tender calf, and gave it to a servant, who prepared it at once.

⁸He took curds and milk and the calf which was now ready, set it all before them, and there under the tree waited on them himself while they ate.

⁹They asked him where Sarah his wife was, and he replied, She is in the tent.

¹⁰One of them said, About this time next year I shall come back to you, and your wife Sarah will have a son. Now Sarah was listening at the opening of the tent close by him.

¹¹Both Abraham and Sarah were very old, Sarah being well past the age of childbearing.

¹²So she laughed to herself and said, At my time of life I am past bearing children, and my husband is old.

¹³The LORD said to Abraham, Why did Sarah laugh and say, Can I really bear a child now that I am so old?

¹⁴Is anything impossible for the LORD? In due season, at this time next year, I shall come back to you, and Sarah will have a son.

¹⁵Because she was frightened, Sarah lied and denied that she had laughed; but he said, Yes, you did laugh.

¹⁶The men set out and looked down towards Sodom, and Abraham went with them to see them on their way.

¹⁷The LORD had thought to himself, Shall I conceal from Abraham what I am about to do?

¹⁸He will become a great and powerful nation, and all nations on earth will wish to be blessed as he is blessed.

¹⁹I have singled him out so that he may charge his sons and family after him to conform to the way of the LORD and do what is right and just; thus I shall fulfil for him all that I have promised.

²⁰The LORD said, How great is the outcry over Sodom and Gomorrah! How grave their sin must be!

²¹ I shall go down and see whether their deeds warrant the outcry reaching me. I must know the truth.

²² When the men turned and went off towards Sodom, Abraham remained standing before the LORD.

²³ Abraham drew near him and asked, Will you really sweep away innocent and wicked together?

²⁴ Suppose there are fifty innocent in the city; will you really sweep it away, and not pardon the place because of the fifty innocent there?

²⁵ Far be it from you to do such a thing -- to kill innocent and wicked together; for then the innocent would suffer with the wicked. Far be it from you! Should not the judge of all the earth do what is just?

²⁶ The LORD replied, If I find in Sodom fifty innocent, I shall pardon the whole place for their sake.

²⁷ Abraham said, May I make so bold as to speak to the Lord, I who am nothing but dust and ashes:

²⁸ suppose there are five short of fifty innocent? Will you destroy the whole city for the lack of five men? If I find

forty-five there, he replied, I shall not destroy it.

²⁹Abraham spoke again, Suppose forty can be found there? For the sake of the forty I shall not do it, he replied.

³⁰Then Abraham said, Let not my Lord become angry if I speak again: suppose thirty can be found there? He answered, If I find thirty there, I shall not do it.

³¹Abraham continued, May I make so bold as to speak to the Lord: suppose twenty can be found there? He replied, For the sake of the twenty I shall not destroy it.

³²Abraham said, Let not my Lord become angry if I speak just once more: suppose ten can be found there? For the sake of the ten I shall not destroy it, said the Lord.

³³When the LORD had finished talking to Abraham, he went away, and Abraham returned home.

19¹The two angels came to Sodom in the evening while Lot was sitting by the city gate. When he saw them, he rose to meet them and bowing low

² he said, I pray you, sirs, turn aside to your servant's house to spend the night there and bathe your feet. You can continue your journey in the morning. No, they answered, we shall spend the night in the street.

³ But Lot was so insistent that they accompanied him into his house. He prepared a meal for them, baking unleavened bread for them to eat.

⁴ Before they had lain down to sleep, the men of Sodom, both young and old, everyone without exception, surrounded the house.

⁵ They called to Lot: Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so that we may have intercourse with them.

⁶ Lot went out into the doorway to them, and, closing the door behind him,

⁷ said, No, my friends, do not do anything so wicked.

⁸ Look, I have two daughters, virgins both of them; let me bring them out to you, and you can do what you like with them. But do nothing to these men, because they have come under the shelter of my roof.

⁹They said, Out of our way! This fellow has come and settled here as an alien, and does he now take it upon himself to judge us? We will treat you worse than them. They crowded in on Lot and pressed close to break down the door.

¹⁰But the two men inside reached out, pulled Lot into the house, and shut the door.

¹¹Then they struck those in the doorway, both young and old, with blindness so that they could not find the entrance.

¹²The two men said to Lot, Have you anyone here, sons-in-law, sons, or daughters, or anyone else belonging to you in the city? Get them out of this place,

¹³because we are going to destroy it. The LORD is aware of the great outcry against its citizens and has sent us to destroy it.

¹⁴So Lot went out and urged his sons-in-law to get out of the place at once. The LORD is about to destroy the city, he said. But they did not take him seriously.

¹⁵As soon as it was dawn, the angels urged Lot: Quick, take your wife and your two daughters who are here, or you will be destroyed when the city is punished.

¹⁶When he delayed, they grabbed his hand and the hands of his wife and two daughters, because the LORD had spared him, and they led him to safety outside the city.

¹⁷After they had brought them out, one said, Flee for your lives! Do not look back or stop anywhere in the plain. Flee to the hills or you will be destroyed.

¹⁸Lot replied, No, sirs!

¹⁹You have shown your servant favour, and even more by your unfailing care you have saved my life, but I cannot escape to the hills; I shall be overtaken by the disaster, and die.

²⁰Look, here is a town, only a small place, near enough for me to get to quickly. Let me escape to this small place and save my life.

²¹He said to him, I grant your request: I shall not overthrow the town you speak of.

²² But flee there quickly, because I can do nothing until you are there. That is why the place was called Zoar.

²³ The sun had risen over the land as Lot entered Zoar,

²⁴ and the LORD rained down fire and brimstone from the skies on Sodom and Gomorrah.

²⁵ He overthrew those cities and destroyed all the plain, with everyone living there and everything growing in the ground.

²⁶ But Lot's wife looked back, and she turned into a pillar of salt.

²⁷ Early next morning Abraham went to the place where he had stood in the presence of the LORD.

²⁸ As he looked over Sodom and Gomorrah and all the wide extent of the plain, he saw thick smoke rising from the earth like smoke from a kiln.

²⁹ Thus it was, when God destroyed the cities of the plain, he took thought for Abraham by rescuing Lot from the total destruction of the cities where he had been living.

³⁰ Because Lot was afraid to stay in Zoar, he went up from there and

settled with his two daughters in the hill-country, where he lived with them in a cave.

³¹ The elder daughter said to the younger, Our father is old and there is not a man in the country to come to us in the usual way.

³² Come now, let us ply our father with wine and then lie with him and in this way preserve the family through our father.

³³ That night they gave him wine to drink, and the elder daughter came and lay with him, and he did not know when she lay down and when she got up.

³⁴ Next day the elder said to the younger, Last night I lay with my father. Let us ply him with wine again tonight; then you go in and lie with him. So we shall preserve the family through our father.

³⁵ They gave their father wine to drink that night also; and the younger daughter went and lay with him, and he did not know when she lay down and when she got up.

³⁶ In this way both of Lot's daughters came to be pregnant by their father.

³⁷The elder daughter bore a son and called him Moab; he was the ancestor of the present-day Moabites.

³⁸The younger also bore a son, whom she called Ben-ammi; he was the ancestor of the present-day Ammonites.

20¹ABRAHAM journeyed by stages from there into the Negeb, and settled between Kadesh and Shur, living as an alien in Gerar.

²He said of Sarah his wife that she was his sister, and King Abimelech of Gerar had her brought to him.

³But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night and said, You shall die because of this woman whom you have taken; she is a married woman.

⁴Abimelech, who had not gone near her, protested, Lord, will you destroy people who are innocent?

⁵He told me himself that she was his sister, and she also said that he was her brother. It was in good faith and in all innocence that I did this.

⁶Yes, I know that you acted in good faith, God replied in the dream. Indeed, it was I who held you back from

committing a sin against me. That was why I did not let you touch her.

⁷ But now send back the man's wife; he is a prophet and will intercede on your behalf, and you will live. But if you do not give her back, I tell you that you are doomed to die, you and all your household.

⁸ Next morning Abimelech rose early and called together all his court officials; when he told them the whole story, the men were terrified.

⁹ Abimelech then summoned Abraham. Why have you treated us like this? he demanded. What harm have I done you that you should bring this great sin on me and my kingdom? You have done to me something you ought never to have done.

¹⁰ And he asked, What was your purpose in doing this?

¹¹ Abraham answered, I said to myself, There is no fear of God in this place, and I shall be killed for the sake of my wife.

¹² She is in fact my sister, my father's daughter though not by my mother, and she became my wife.

¹³When God set me wandering from my father's house, I said to her, There is a duty towards me which you must loyally fulfil: wherever we go, you must say that I am your brother.

¹⁴Then Abimelech took sheep and cattle and male and female slaves and gave them to Abraham. He returned Sarah to him

¹⁵and said, My country is at your disposal; settle wherever you please.

¹⁶To Sarah he said, I have given your brother a thousand pieces of silver to compensate you for all that has befallen you; you are completely cleared.

¹⁷Then Abraham interceded with God, and he healed Abimelech, his wife, and his slave-girls, so that they could have children;

¹⁸for the LORD had made every woman in Abimelech's household barren on account of Sarah, Abraham's wife.

21 ¹THE LORD showed favour to Sarah as he had promised, and made good what he had said about her.

²She conceived and at the time foretold by God she bore a son to Abraham in his old age.

³The son whom Sarah bore to him Abraham named Isaac,

⁴and when Isaac was eight days old Abraham circumcised him, as decreed by God.

⁵Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born.

⁶Sarah said, God has given me good reason to laugh, and everyone who hears will laugh with me.

⁷She added, Whoever would have told Abraham that Sarah would suckle children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age.

⁸The boy grew and was weaned, and on the day of his weaning Abraham gave a great feast.

⁹Sarah saw the son whom Hagar the Egyptian had borne to Abraham playing with Isaac,

¹⁰and she said to Abraham, Drive out this slave-girl and her son! I will not have this slave's son sharing the inheritance with my son Isaac.

¹¹Abraham was very upset at this because of Ishmael,

¹²but God said to him, Do not be upset for the boy and your slave-girl. Do as

Sarah says, because it is through Isaac's line that your name will be perpetuated.

¹³I shall make a nation of the slave-girl's son, because he also is your child.

¹⁴Early next morning Abraham took some food and a full water-skin and gave them to Hagar. He set the child on her shoulder and sent her away, and she wandered about in the wilderness of Beersheba.

¹⁵When the water in the skin was finished, she thrust the child under a bush,

¹⁶then went and sat down some way off, about a bowshot distant. How can I watch the child die? she said, and sat there, weeping bitterly.

¹⁷God heard the child crying, and the angel of God called from heaven to Hagar, What is the matter, Hagar? Do not be afraid: God has heard the child crying where you laid him.

¹⁸Go, lift the child and hold him in your arms, because I shall make of him a great nation.

¹⁹Then God opened her eyes and she saw a well full of water; she went to it,

filled the water-skin, and gave the child a drink.

²⁰God was with the child as he grew up. He lived in the wilderness of Paran and became an archer;

²¹and his mother got him a wife from Egypt.

²²About that time Abimelech, with Phicol the commander of his army, said to Abraham: God is with you in all that you do.

²³Here and now swear to me in the name of God, that you will not break faith with me or with my children and my descendants. As I have kept faith with you, so must you keep faith with me and with the country where you are living.

²⁴Abraham said, I swear it.

²⁵It happened that Abraham had a complaint to make to Abimelech about a well which Abimelech's men had seized.

²⁶Abimelech said, I do not know who did this. Up to this moment you never mentioned it, nor did I hear of it from anyone else.

²⁷Then Abraham took sheep and cattle and gave them to Abimelech, and the two of them made a pact.

²⁸ Abraham set seven ewe lambs apart,
²⁹ and when Abimelech asked him why he had done so,

³⁰ he said, Accept these seven lambs from me as a testimony on my behalf that I dug this well.

³¹ This is why that place was called Beersheba, because there the two of them swore an oath.

³² When they had made the pact at Beersheba, Abimelech departed with Phicol the commander of his army and returned to the country of the Philistines.

³³ Abraham planted a tamarisk tree at Beersheba, and there he invoked the LORD, the Everlasting God, by name.

³⁴ He lived as an alien in the country of the Philistines for many years.

22¹ SOME time later God put Abraham to the test. Abraham! he called to him, and Abraham replied, Here I am!

² God said, Take your son, your one and only son Isaac whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah. There you shall offer him as a sacrifice on one of the heights which I shall show you.

³Early in the morning Abraham saddled his donkey, and took with him two of his men and his son Isaac; and having split firewood for the sacrifice, he set out for the place of which God had spoken.

⁴On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the shrine in the distance.

⁵He said to his men, Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go on ahead. We shall worship there, and then come back to you.

⁶Abraham took the wood for the sacrifice and put it on his son Isaac's shoulder, while he himself carried the fire and the knife. As the two of them went on together,

⁷Isaac spoke. Father! he said. Abraham answered, What is it, my son? Isaac said, Here are the fire and the wood, but where is the sheep for a sacrifice?

⁸Abraham answered, God will provide himself with a sheep for a sacrifice, my son. The two of them went on together

⁹until they came to the place of which God had spoken. There Abraham built an altar and arranged the wood. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar on top of the wood.

¹⁰He reached out for the knife to slay his son,

¹¹but the angel of the LORD called to him from heaven, Abraham! Abraham! He answered, Here I am!

¹²The angel said, Do not raise your hand against the boy; do not touch him. Now I know that you are a godfearing man. You have not withheld from me your son, your only son.

¹³Abraham looked round, and there in a thicket he saw a ram caught by its horns. He went, seized the ram, and offered it as a sacrifice instead of his son.

¹⁴Abraham named that shrine The LORD will provide; and to this day the saying is: In the mountain of the LORD it was provided.

¹⁵Then the angel of the LORD called from heaven a second time to Abraham

¹⁶and said, This is the word of the LORD: By my own self I swear that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son,

¹⁷I shall bless you abundantly and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky or the grains of sand

on the seashore. Your descendants will possess the cities of their enemies.

¹⁸All nations on earth will wish to be blessed as your descendants are blessed, because you have been obedient to me.

¹⁹Abraham then went back to his men, and together they returned to Beersheba; and there Abraham remained.

²⁰After this Abraham was told, Milcah has borne sons to your brother Nahor:

²¹Uz his firstborn, then his brother Buz, and Kemuel father of Aram,

²²and Kesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and Bethuel;

²³and a daughter, Rebecca, has been born to Bethuel. These eight Milcah bore to Abraham's brother Nahor.

²⁴His concubine, whose name was Reumah, also bore him sons: Tebah, Gaham, Tahash, and Maacah.

23¹ Sarah lived to be a hundred and twenty-seven years old,

²and she died in Kiriath-arba (which is Hebron) in Canaan. Abraham went in to mourn over Sarah and to weep for her.

³When at last he rose and left the presence of his dead one, he approached the Hittites:

⁴I am an alien and a settler among you, he said. Make over to me some ground among you for a burial-place, that I may bury my dead.

⁵The Hittites answered,

⁶Listen to us, sir: you are a mighty prince among us; bury your dead in the best grave we have. There is not one of us who would deny you his grave or hinder you from burying your dead.

⁷Abraham rose and bowing low to the Hittites, the people of that region,

⁸he said to them, If you have a mind to help me about the burial, then listen to me: speak to Ephron son of Zohar on my behalf,

⁹and ask him to grant me the cave that belongs to him at Machpelah, at the far end of his land. In your presence let him make it over to me for the full price, so that I may take possession of it as a burial-place.

¹⁰Ephron was sitting with the other Hittites and in the hearing of all who

had assembled at the city gate he gave Abraham this answer:

¹¹No, sir; hear me: I shall make you a gift of the land and also give you the cave which is on it. In the presence of my people I give it to you; so bury your dead.

¹²Abraham bowed low before the people

¹³and said to Ephron in their hearing, Do you really mean it? But listen to me -- let me give you the price of the land: take it from me, and I shall bury my dead there.

¹⁴Ephron answered,

¹⁵Listen, sir: land worth four hundred shekels of silver, what is that between me and you! You may bury your dead there.

¹⁶Abraham closed the bargain with him and weighed out the amount that Ephron had named in the hearing of the Hittites, four hundred shekels of the standard recognized by merchants.

¹⁷So the plot of land belonging to Ephron at Machpelah to the east of Mamre, the plot, the cave that is on

it, with all the trees in the whole area, became the

¹⁸legal possession of Abraham, in the presence of all the Hittites who had assembled at the city gate.

¹⁹After this Abraham buried his wife Sarah in the cave on the plot of land at Machpelah to the east of Mamre, which is Hebron, in Canaan.

²⁰Thus, by purchase from the Hittites, the plot and the cave on it became Abraham's possession as a burial-place.

24¹ ABRAHAM was by now a very old man, and the LORD had blessed him in all that he did.

²Abraham said to the servant who had been longest in his service and was in charge of all he owned, Give me your solemn oath:

³I want you to swear by the LORD, the God of heaven and earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the women of the Canaanites among whom I am living.

⁴You must go to my own country and to my own kindred to find a wife for my son Isaac.

⁵What if the woman is unwilling to come with me to this country? the servant asked. Must I take your son back to the land you came from?

⁶Abraham said to him, On no account are you to take my son back there.

⁷The LORD the God of heaven who took me from my father's house and the land of my birth, the LORD who swore to me that he would give this land to my descendants -- he will send his angel before you, and you will take a wife from there for my son.

⁸If the woman is unwilling to come with you, then you will be released from your oath to me; only you must not take my son back there.

⁹The servant then put his hand under his master Abraham's thigh and swore that oath.

¹⁰The servant chose ten camels from his master's herds and, with all kinds of gifts from his master, he went to Aram-naharaim, to the town where Nahor lived.

¹¹Towards evening, the time when the women go out to draw water, he

made the camels kneel down by the well outside the town.

¹²LORD God of my master Abraham, he said, give me good fortune this day; keep faith with my master Abraham.

¹³Here I am by the spring, as the women of the town come out to draw water.

¹⁴I shall say to a girl, Please lower your jar so that I may drink; and if she answers, Drink, and I shall water your camels also, let that be the girl whom you intend for your servant Isaac. In this way I shall know that you have kept faith with my master.

¹⁵Before he had finished praying, he saw Rebecca coming out with her water-jar on her shoulder. She was the daughter of Bethuel son of Milcah, the wife of Abraham's brother Nahor.

¹⁶The girl was very beautiful and a virgin guiltless of intercourse with any man. She went down to the spring, filled her jar, and came up again.

¹⁷Abraham's servant hurried to meet her and said, Will you give me a little water from your jar?

¹⁸Please drink, sir, she answered, and at once lowered her jar on to her hand to let him drink.

¹⁹When she had finished giving him a drink, she said, I shall draw water for your camels also until they have had enough.

²⁰She quickly emptied her jar into the water trough, and then hurrying again to the well she drew water and watered all the camels.

²¹The man was watching quietly to see whether or not the LORD had made his journey successful,

²²and when the camels had finished drinking, he took a gold nose-ring weighing half a shekel, and two bracelets for her wrists weighing ten shekels, also of gold.

²³Tell me, please, whose daughter you are, he said. Is there room in your father's house for us to spend the night?

²⁴She answered, I am the daughter of Bethuel son of Nahor and Milcah;

²⁵we have plenty of straw and fodder and also room for you to spend the night.

²⁶ So the man bowed down and prostrated himself before the LORD

²⁷ and said, Blessed be the LORD the God of my master Abraham. His faithfulness to my master has been constant and unfailing, for he has guided me to the house of my master's kinsman.

²⁸ The girl ran to her mother's house and told them what had happened.

²⁹ Rebecca had a brother named Laban, and, when he saw the nose-ring, and also the bracelets on his sister's wrists, and heard his sister Rebecca's account of what the man had said to her, he hurried out to the spring. When he got there he found the man still standing by the camels.

³⁰ (24: 29)

³¹ Come in, he said, you whom the LORD has blessed. Why are you staying out here? I have prepared the house and there is a place for the camels.

³² The man went into the house, while the camels were unloaded and provided with straw and fodder, and water was brought for him and his men to bathe their feet.

³³ But when food was set before him, he protested, I will not eat until I have delivered my message. Laban said, Let us hear it.

³⁴ I am Abraham's servant, he answered.

³⁵ The LORD has greatly blessed my master, and he has become a wealthy man: the LORD has given him flocks and herds, silver and gold, male and female slaves, camels and donkeys.

³⁶ My master's wife Sarah in her old age bore him a son, to whom he has assigned all that he has.

³⁷ My master made me swear an oath, saying, You must not take a wife for my son from the women of the Canaanites in whose land I am living;

³⁸ but go to my father's home, to my family, to get a wife for him.

³⁹ I asked, What if the woman will not come with me?

⁴⁰ He answered, The LORD, in whose presence I have lived, will send his angel with you and make your journey successful. You are to take a wife for my son from my family and from my father's house;

⁴¹ then you will be released from the charge I have laid upon you. But if, when you come to my family, they refuse to give her to you, you will likewise be released from the charge.

⁴² Today when I came to the spring, I prayed, LORD God of my master Abraham, if you will make my journey successful, let it turn out in this way:

⁴³ here I am by the spring; when a young woman comes out to draw water, I shall say to her, Give me a little water from your jar to drink.

⁴⁴ If she answers, Yes, do drink, and I shall draw water for your camels as well, she is the woman whom the LORD intends for my master's son.

⁴⁵ Before I had finished praying, I saw Rebecca coming out with her water-jar on her shoulder. She went down to the spring and drew water, and I said to her, Will you please give me a drink?

⁴⁶ At once she lowered her jar from her shoulder and said, Drink; and I shall also water your camels. So I drank, and she also gave the camels water.

⁴⁷ I asked her whose daughter she was, and she said, I am the daughter of

Bethuel son of Nahor and Milcah. Then I put the ring in her nose and the bracelets on her wrists,

⁴⁸and I bowed low in worship before the LORD. I blessed the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who had led me by the right road to take my master's niece for his son.

⁴⁹Now tell me if you mean to deal loyally and faithfully with my master. If not, say so, and I shall turn elsewhere.'

⁵⁰Laban and Bethuel replied, Since this is from the LORD, we can say nothing for or against it.

⁵¹Here is Rebecca; take her and go. She shall be the wife of your master's son, as the LORD has decreed.

⁵²When Abraham's servant heard what they said, he prostrated himself on the ground before the LORD.

⁵³Then he brought out silver and gold ornaments, and articles of clothing, and gave them to Rebecca, and he gave costly gifts to her brother and her mother.

⁵⁴He and his men then ate and drank and spent the night there. When they rose in the morning, Abraham's servant

said, Give me leave to go back to my master.

⁵⁵ Rebecca's brother and her mother replied, Let the girl stay with us for a few days, say ten days, and then she can go.

⁵⁶ But he said to them, Do not detain me, for it is the LORD who has granted me success. Give me leave to go back to my master.

⁵⁷ They said, Let us call the girl and see what she says.

⁵⁸ They called Rebecca and asked her if she would go with the man, and she answered, Yes, I will go.

⁵⁹ So they let their sister Rebecca and her maid go with Abraham's servant and his men.

⁶⁰ They blessed Rebecca and said to her: You are our sister, may you be the mother of many children; may your sons possess the cities of their enemies.

⁶¹ Rebecca and her companions mounted their camels to follow the man. So the servant took Rebecca and set out.

⁶² Isaac meanwhile had moved on as far as Beer-lahai-roi and was living in the Negeb.

⁶³One evening when he had gone out into the open country hoping to meet them, he looked and saw camels approaching.

⁶⁴When Rebecca saw Isaac, she dismounted from her camel,

⁶⁵saying to the servant, Who is that man walking across the open country towards us? When the servant answered, It is my master, she took her veil and covered herself.

⁶⁶The servant related to Isaac all that had happened.

⁶⁷Isaac conducted her into the tent and took her as his wife. So she became his wife, and he loved her and was consoled for the death of his mother.

25¹ ABRAHAM married another wife, whose name was Keturah.

²She bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah.

³Jokshan became the father of Sheba and Dedan. The descendants of Dedan were the Asshurim, Letushim, and Leummim,

⁴and the sons of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Enoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All these were descendants of Keturah.

⁵ Abraham had assigned all that he possessed to Isaac;

⁶ and he had already in his lifetime made gifts to his sons by his concubines and had sent them away eastwards, to a land of the east, out of his son Isaac's way.

⁷ Abraham had lived for a hundred and seventy-five years

⁸ when he breathed his last. He died at a great age, a full span of years, and was gathered to his forefathers.

⁹ His sons, Isaac and Ishmael, buried him in the cave at Machpelah, on the land of Ephron son of Zohar the Hittite, east of Mamre,

¹⁰ the plot which Abraham had bought from the Hittites. There Abraham was buried with his wife Sarah.

¹¹ After the death of Abraham, God blessed his son Isaac, who settled close by Beer-lahai-roi.

¹² This is the table of the descendants of Abraham's son Ishmael, whom Hagar the Egyptian, Sarah's slave-girl, bore to him.

¹³ These are the names of the sons of Ishmael listed in order of their birth:

Nebaioth, Ishmael's eldest son, then Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam,

¹⁴ Mishma, Dumah, Massa,

¹⁵ Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah.

¹⁶ These are the sons of Ishmael, after whom their hamlets and encampments were named, twelve princes according to their tribes.

¹⁷ Ishmael had lived for a hundred and thirty-seven years when he breathed his last. So he died and was gathered to his forefathers.

¹⁸ Ishmael's sons inhabited the land from Havilah to Shur, which is east of Egypt on the way to Asshur; he himself had settled to the east of his brothers.

¹⁹ This is an account of the descendants of Abraham's son Isaac. Isaac's father was Abraham.

²⁰ When Isaac was forty years old he married Rebecca daughter of Bethuel, the Aramaean from Paddan-aram and sister of Laban the Aramaean.

²¹ Isaac appealed to the LORD on behalf of his wife because she was childless; the LORD gave heed to his entreaty, and Rebecca conceived.

²²The children pressed on each other in her womb, and she said, If all is well, why am I like this? She went to seek guidance of the LORD,

²³who said to her: Two nations are in your womb, two peoples going their own ways from birth. One will be stronger than the other; the elder will be servant to the younger.

²⁴When her time had come, there were indeed twins in her womb.

²⁵The first to come out was reddish and covered with hairs like a cloak, and they named him Esau.

²⁶Immediately afterwards his brother was born with his hand grasping Esau's heel, and he was given the name Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when they were born.

²⁷As the boys grew up, Esau became a skilful hunter, an outdoor man, while Jacob lived quietly among the tents.

²⁸Isaac favoured Esau because he kept him supplied with game, but Rebecca favoured Jacob.

²⁹One day Jacob was preparing broth when Esau came in from the country, exhausted.

³⁰He said to Jacob, I am exhausted; give me a helping of that red broth. This is why he was called Edom.

³¹Jacob retorted, Not till you sell me your rights as the firstborn.

³²Esau replied, Here I am at death's door; what use is a birthright to me?

³³Jacob said, First give me your oath! So he gave him his oath and sold his birthright to Jacob.

³⁴Then Jacob gave Esau bread and some lentil broth, and he ate and drank and went his way. Esau showed by this how little he valued his birthright.

26 ¹THE land was stricken by a famine -- not the earlier famine which happened in Abraham's time -- and Isaac went to Abimelech the Philistine king at Gerar.

²The LORD appeared to Isaac and said, Do not go down to Egypt, but stay in this country as I bid you.

³Stay here and I shall be with you and bless you, for to you and to your descendants I shall give all these lands, so fulfilling the oath which I swore to your father Abraham.

⁴I shall make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the heavens, and give them all these lands. All the nations of the earth will wish to be blessed as they are blessed,

⁵because Abraham obeyed me and kept my charge, my commandments, statutes, and laws.

⁶Isaac settled in Gerar, and,

⁷when the men of the place asked questions about his wife, he told them that she was his sister, for he was afraid to say Rebecca was his wife, in case they murdered him because of her; for she was very beautiful.

⁸But when they had been there some considerable time, Abimelech the Philistine king looked down from his window and there was Isaac caressing his wife Rebecca.

⁹He summoned Isaac and said, So she is your wife! What made you say she was your sister? Isaac answered, I thought I should be put to death because of her.

¹⁰Abimelech said, Why have you treated us like this? One of the people might easily have lain with your wife,

and then you would have made us incur guilt.

¹¹ Abimelech warned all the people that whoever harmed this man or his wife would be put to death.

¹² Isaac sowed seed in that land, and the same year he reaped a hundredfold. The LORD had blessed him,

¹³ and he became more and more wealthy, until he was very prosperous indeed.

¹⁴ He had flocks and herds and many slaves, so that the Philistines were envious of him.

¹⁵ They stopped up and filled with earth all the wells dug by the slaves in the days of Isaac's father Abraham.

¹⁶ Then Abimelech said to him, Go, leave us; you have become too powerful for us.

¹⁷ When Isaac left that place, he encamped in the wadi of Gerar, and stayed there.

¹⁸ Isaac reopened the wells which were dug in the lifetime of his father Abraham and stopped up by the Philistines after his death. He called them by the names which his father had given them.

¹⁹Then Isaac's slaves dug in the wadi and found a spring of running water,

²⁰but the shepherds of Gerar quarrelled with Isaac's shepherds, claiming the water as theirs. He called the well Esek, because they made difficulties for him.

²¹His men then dug another well, but a quarrel arose over that also, so he called it Sitnah.

²²He moved on from there and dug another well; over that there was no dispute, so he called it Rehoboth, saying, Now the LORD has given us room and our people will become more numerous in the land.

²³From there Isaac went up country to Beersheba;

²⁴that same night the LORD appeared to him. I am the God of your father Abraham, he said; I am with you, so do not be afraid. I shall bless you and give you many descendants for the sake of my servant Abraham.

²⁵Isaac built an altar there and invoked the LORD by name. He pitched his tent, and there also his slaves dug a well.

²⁶Abimelech came to him from Gerar with Ahuzzath his friend and Phicol the commander of his army.

²⁷Isaac said to them, Why have you come here to me? You were ill-disposed towards me and sent me away from your midst.

²⁸They answered, We have realized that the LORD is with you, and we propose that the two of us should bind each other by oath and make a pact.

²⁹You are to do us no harm, just as we have in no way molested you. We were always ready to do you a good turn and we let you go away peaceably. Now the LORD has prospered you.

³⁰Isaac then gave a feast for them, and they ate and drank.

³¹Early next morning they exchanged oaths, and after Isaac bade them farewell, they parted from him in peace.

³²The same day Isaac's slaves came and told him about a well they had dug: We have found water, they told him.

³³He named the well Shibah; this is why the city is called Beersheba to this day.

³⁴When Esau was forty years old he married Judith daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath daughter of Elon the Hittite;

³⁵this was a source of bitter grief to Isaac and Rebecca.

27 ¹WHEN Isaac grew old and his eyes had become so dim that he could not see, he called for his elder son Esau. My son! he said. Esau answered, Here I am.

²Isaac said, Listen now: I am old and I do not know when I may die.

³Take your hunting gear, your quiver and bow, and go out into the country and get me some game.

⁴Then make me a savoury dish, the kind I like, and bring it for me to eat so that I may give you my blessing before I die.

⁵Now Rebecca had been listening as Isaac talked to his son Esau. When Esau went off into the country to hunt game for his father,

⁶she said to her son Jacob, I have just overheard your father say to your brother Esau,

⁷ Bring me some game and make a savoury dish for me to eat so that I may bless you in the presence of the LORD before I die.

⁸ Listen now to me, my son, and do what I tell you.

⁹ Go to the flock and pick me out two fine young kids, and I shall make them into a savoury dish for your father, the kind he likes.

¹⁰ Then take it in to your father to eat so that he may bless you before he dies.

¹¹ But my brother Esau is a hairy man, Jacob said to his mother Rebecca, and my skin is smooth.

¹² Suppose my father touches me; he will know that I am playing a trick on him and I shall bring a curse instead of a blessing on myself.

¹³ His mother answered, Let any curse for you fall on me, my son. Do as I say; go and fetch me the kids.

¹⁴ So Jacob went and got them and brought them to his mother, who made them into a savoury dish such as his father liked.

¹⁵ Rebecca then took her elder son's clothes, Esau's best clothes which she

had by her in the house, and put them on Jacob her younger son.

¹⁶She put the goatskins on his hands and on the smooth nape of his neck.

¹⁷Then she handed to her son Jacob the savoury dish and the bread she had made.

¹⁸He went in to his father and said, Father! Isaac answered, Yes, my son; which are you?

¹⁹Jacob answered, I am Esau, your elder son. I have done as you told me. Come, sit up and eat some of the game I have for you and then give me your blessing.

²⁰Isaac said, How did you find it so quickly, my son? Jacob answered, Because the LORD your God put it in my way.

²¹Isaac then said to Jacob, Come close and let me touch you, my son, to make sure that you are my son Esau.

²²When Jacob came close to his father, Isaac felt him and said, The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau.

²³ He did not recognize him, because his hands were hairy like Esau's, and so he blessed him.

²⁴ He asked, Are you really my son Esau? and when he answered, Yes, I am,

²⁵ Isaac said, Bring me some of the game to eat, my son, so that I may give you my blessing. Jacob brought it to him, and he ate; he brought him wine also, and he drank it.

²⁶ Then his father said to him, Come near, my son, and kiss me.

²⁷ So he went near and kissed him, and when Isaac smelt the smell of his clothes, he blessed him and said, The smell of my son is like the smell of open country blessed by the LORD.

²⁸ God give you dew from heaven and the richness of the earth, corn and new wine in plenty!

²⁹ May peoples serve you and nations bow down to you. May you be lord over your brothers, and may your mother's sons bow down to you. A curse on those who curse you, but a blessing on those who bless you!

³⁰ Isaac finished blessing Jacob, who had scarcely left his father's presence

when his brother Esau came in from hunting.

³¹ He too prepared a savoury dish and brought it to his father. He said, Come, father, eat some of the game I have for you, and then give me your blessing.

³² Who are you? his father Isaac asked him. I am Esau, your elder son, he replied.

³³ Then Isaac, greatly agitated, said, Then who was it that hunted game and brought it to me? I ate it just before you came in, and I blessed him, and the blessing will stand.

³⁴ When Esau heard this, he lamented loudly and bitterly. Father, bless me too, he begged.

³⁵ But Isaac said, Your brother came full of deceit and took your blessing.

³⁶ He is not called Jacob for nothing, said Esau. This is the second time he has supplanted me. He took away my right as the firstborn, and now he has taken away my blessing. Have you kept back any blessing for me?

³⁷ Isaac answered, I have made him lord over you and set all his brothers under him. I have bestowed upon him

grain and new wine for his sustenance. What is there left that I can do for you, my son?

³⁸ Esau asked, Had you then only one blessing, father? Bless me, too, my father. Esau wept bitterly,

³⁹ and his father Isaac answered: Your dwelling will be far from the richness of the earth, far from the dew of heaven above.

⁴⁰ By your sword you will live, and you will serve your brother. But the time will come when you grow restive and break his yoke from your neck.

⁴¹ Esau harboured a grudge against Jacob because of the blessing which his father had given him, and he said to himself, The time of mourning for my father will soon be here; then I am going to kill my brother Jacob.

⁴² When Rebecca was told what her elder son Esau was planning, she called Jacob, her younger son, and said to him, Your brother Esau is threatening to kill you.

⁴³ Now, my son, listen to me. Be off at once to my brother Laban in Harran,

⁴⁴ and stay with him for a while until your brother's anger cools.

⁴⁵ When it has died down and he has forgotten what you did to him, I will send and fetch you back. Why should I lose you both in one day?

⁴⁶ Rebecca said to Isaac, I am weary to death of Hittite women! If Jacob marries a Hittite woman like those who live here, my life will not be worth living.

28¹ So Isaac called Jacob, and after blessing him, gave him these instructions: You are not to marry a Canaanite woman.

² Go now to the home of Bethuel, your mother's father, in Paddan-aram, and there find a wife, one of the daughters of Laban, your mother's brother.

³ May God Almighty bless you; may he make you fruitful and increase your descendants until they become a community of nations.

⁴ May he bestow on you and your offspring the blessing given to Abraham, that you may possess the land where you are now living, and which God assigned to Abraham!

⁵Then Isaac sent Jacob away, and he went to Paddan-aram to Laban, son of Bethuel the Aramaean and brother of Rebecca, the mother of Jacob and Esau.

⁶Esau learnt that Isaac had given Jacob his blessing and had sent him away to Paddan-aram to find a wife there, that when he blessed him he had forbidden him to marry a Canaanite woman,

⁷and that Jacob had obeyed his father and mother and gone to Paddan-aram.

⁸Seeing that his father disliked Canaanite women,

⁹Esau went to Ishmael, and, in addition to his other wives, married Mahalath sister of Nebaioth and daughter of Abraham's son Ishmael.

¹⁰Jacob set out from Beersheba and journeyed towards Harran.

¹¹He came to a certain shrine and, because the sun had gone down, he stopped for the night. He took one of the stones there and, using it as a pillow under his head, he lay down to sleep.

¹²In a dream he saw a ladder, which rested on the ground with its top reaching to heaven, and angels of God were going up and down on it.

¹³The LORD was standing beside him saying, I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. This land on which you are lying I shall give to you and your descendants.

¹⁴They will be countless as the specks of dust on the ground, and you will spread far and wide, to west and east, to north and south. All the families of the earth will wish to be blessed as you and your descendants are blessed.

¹⁵I shall be with you to protect you wherever you go, and I shall bring you back to this land. I shall not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.

¹⁶When Jacob woke from his sleep he said, Truly the LORD is in this place, and I did not know it.

¹⁷He was awestruck and said, How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; it is the gateway to heaven.

¹⁸Early in the morning, when Jacob awoke, he took the stone on which his head had rested, and set it up as a sacred pillar, pouring oil over it.

¹⁹He named that place Beth-el; but the earlier name of the town was Luz.

²⁰Jacob made this vow: If God will be with me, if he will protect me on my journey and give me food to eat and clothes to wear,

²¹so that I come back safely to my father's house, then the LORD shall be my God,

²²and this stone which I have set up as a sacred pillar shall be a house of God. And of all that you give me, I shall allot a tenth part to you.

29¹JACOB, continuing his journey, came to the land of the eastern tribes.

²There he saw a well in the open country with three flocks of sheep lying beside it, because flocks were watered from that well. Over its mouth was a huge stone,

³and all the herdsmen used to gather there and roll it off the mouth of the well and water the flocks; then they would replace the stone over the well.

⁴Jacob said to them, Where are you from, my friends? We are from Harran, they replied.

⁵ He asked them if they knew Laban the grandson of Nahor. They answered, Yes, we do.

⁶ Is he well? Jacob asked; and they answered, Yes, he is well, and there is his daughter Rachel coming with the flock.

⁷ Jacob said, It is still broad daylight, and not yet time for penning the sheep. Water the flocks and then go and let them graze.

⁸ But they replied, We cannot, until all the herdsmen have assembled and the stone has been rolled away from the mouth of the well; then we can water our flocks.

⁹ While he was talking to them, Rachel arrived with her father's flock, for she was a shepherdess.

¹⁰ Immediately Jacob saw Rachel, the daughter of Laban his mother's brother, with Laban's flock, he went forward, rolled the stone off the mouth of the well and watered Laban's sheep.

¹¹ He kissed Rachel, and was moved to tears.

¹²When he told her that he was her father's kinsman, Rebecca's son, she ran and told her father.

¹³No sooner had Laban heard the news of his sister's son Jacob, than he hurried to meet him, embraced and kissed him, and welcomed him to his home. Jacob told Laban all that had happened,

¹⁴and Laban said, Yes, you are my own flesh and blood. After Jacob had stayed with him for a whole month,

¹⁵Laban said to him, Why should you work for me for nothing simply because you are my kinsman? Tell me what wage you would settle for.

¹⁶Now Laban had two daughters: the elder was called Leah, and the younger Rachel.

¹⁷Leah was dull-eyed, but Rachel was beautiful in both face and figure, and

¹⁸Jacob had fallen in love with her. He said, For your younger daughter Rachel I would work seven years.

¹⁹Laban replied, It is better that I should give her to you than to anyone else; stay with me.

²⁰When Jacob had worked seven years for Rachel, and they seemed like a few days because he loved her,

²¹he said to Laban, I have served my time. Give me my wife that I may lie with her.

²²Laban brought all the people of the place together and held a wedding feast.

²³In the evening he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob, and he lay with her.

²⁴At the same time Laban gave his slave-girl Zilpah to his daughter Leah.

²⁵But when morning came, there was Leah! Jacob said to Laban, What is this you have done to me? It was for Rachel I worked. Why have you played this trick on me?

²⁶Laban answered, It is against the custom of our country to marry off the younger sister before the elder.

²⁷Go through with the seven days' feast for the elder, and the younger shall be given you in return for a further seven years work.'

²⁸Jacob agreed, and completed the seven days for Leah. Then Laban gave Jacob his daughter Rachel to be his wife;

²⁹ and to serve Rachel he gave his slave-girl Bilhah.

³⁰ Jacob lay with Rachel also; he loved her rather than Leah, and he worked for Laban for a further seven years.

³¹ When the LORD saw that Leah was unloved, he granted her a child, but Rachel remained childless.

³² Leah conceived and gave birth to a son; and she called him Reuben, for she said, The LORD has seen my humiliation, but now my husband will love me.

³³ Again she conceived and had a son and said, The LORD, hearing that I am unloved, has given me this child also; and she called him Simeon.

³⁴ She conceived again and had a son and said, Now that I have borne him three sons my husband will surely be attached to me. So she called him Levi.

³⁵ Once more she conceived and had a son, and said, Now I shall praise the LORD; therefore she named him Judah. Then for a while she bore no more children.

30¹ When Rachel found that she bore Jacob no children, she became

jealous of her sister and complained to Jacob, Give me sons, or I shall die!

²Jacob said angrily to Rachel, Can I take the place of God, who has denied you children?

³Here is my slave-girl Bilhah, she replied. Lie with her, so that she may bear sons to be laid upon my knees, and through her I too may build up a family.

⁴When she gave him her slave-girl Bilhah as a wife, Jacob lay with her,

⁵and she conceived and bore him a son.

⁶Then Rachel said, God has given judgement for me; he has indeed heard me and given me a son; so she named him Dan.

⁷Rachel's slave-girl Bilhah conceived again and bore Jacob another son.

⁸Rachel said, I have devised a fine trick against my sister, and it has succeeded; so she named him Naphtali.

⁹When Leah found that she had stopped bearing children, she took her slave-girl Zilpah and gave her to Jacob as a wife,

¹⁰and Zilpah, Leah's slave-girl, bore Jacob a son.

¹¹ Leah said, Good fortune has come, and she named him Gad.

¹² Zilpah bore Jacob another son,

¹³ and Leah said, Happiness has come, for women will call me happy; so she named him Asher.

¹⁴ Once at the time of the wheat harvest when Reuben was out in the open country he found some mandrakes and brought them to Leah his mother. Rachel asked Leah for some of her son's mandrakes,

¹⁵ but Leah said, Is it not enough to have taken away my husband, that you should take these mandrakes as well? Rachel said, Very well, in exchange for your son's mandrakes let Jacob sleep with you tonight.

¹⁶ In the evening, when Jacob came in from the country Leah went out to meet him. You are to sleep with me tonight, she told him. I have hired you with my son's mandrakes. He slept with her that night,

¹⁷ and God heard Leah's prayer, so that she conceived and bore a fifth son to Jacob.

¹⁸Leah said, God has rewarded me, because I gave my slave-girl to my husband; so she named him Issachar.

¹⁹Leah conceived again and bore a sixth son.

²⁰She said, God has endowed me with a noble dowry. Now my husband will honour me like a princess, because I have borne him six sons; so she named him Zebulun.

²¹Later she bore a daughter whom she named Dinah.

²²Then God took thought for Rachel; he heard her prayer and gave her a child.

²³After she conceived and bore a son, she said, God has taken away my humiliation.

²⁴She named him Joseph, saying, May the Lord add another son to me!

²⁵After Rachel had given birth to Joseph, Jacob said to Laban, Send me on my way, for I want to return to my own home and country.

²⁶Give me my wives and children for whom I have served you, and I shall go; you know what service I have rendered you.

²⁷ Laban answered, I should like to say this -- I have become prosperous and the LORD has blessed me through you.

²⁸ So now tell me what wages I owe you, and I shall give you them.

²⁹ You know how I have served you, replied Jacob, and how your herds have prospered under my care.

³⁰ The few you had when I came have increased beyond measure, and wherever I went the LORD brought you blessings. But is it not time for me to make provision for my family?

³¹ Laban said, Then what shall I give you? Nothing at all, answered Jacob; I will tend your flocks and be in charge of them as before, if you will do what I suggest.

³² I shall go through your flocks today and pick out from them every black lamb, and all the brindled and the spotted goats, and they will be my wages.

³³ This is a fair offer, and it will be to my own disadvantage later on, when we come to settling my wages: any goat amongst mine that is not spotted or

brindled and any lamb that is not black will have been stolen.

³⁴ Laban agreed: Let it be as you say.

³⁵ But that same day Laban removed the he-goats that were striped and brindled and all the spotted and brindled she-goats, all that had any white on them, and every ram that was black, and he handed them over to his sons.

³⁶ Then he put a distance of three days' journey between himself and Jacob, while Jacob was tending the rest of Laban's flocks.

³⁷ So Jacob took fresh rods of poplar, almond, and plane trees, and peeled off strips of bark, exposing the white of the rods.

³⁸ He fixed the peeled rods upright in the troughs at the watering-places where the flocks came to drink, so that they were facing the she-goats that were in heat when they came to drink.

³⁹ They mated beside the rods and gave birth to young that were striped and spotted and brindled.

⁴⁰ The rams Jacob separated, and let the ewes run only with such of the rams in Laban's flocks as were striped and

black; and thus he built up flocks for himself, which he did not add to Laban's sheep.

⁴¹ As for the goats, whenever the more vigorous were in heat, he set the rods in front of them at the troughs so that they mated beside the rods.

⁴² He did not put them there for the weaker goats, and in this way the weaker came to be Laban's and the stronger Jacob's.

⁴³ So Jacob's wealth increased more and more until he possessed great flocks, as well as male and female slaves, camels, and donkeys.

31 ¹ JACOB learnt that Laban's sons were saying, Jacob has taken everything that our father had, and all his wealth has come from our father's property.

² He noticed also that Laban was not so well disposed to him as he had once been.

³ The LORD said to Jacob, Go back to the land of your fathers and to your kindred; I shall be with you,

⁴ and Jacob sent word to Rachel and Leah to come out to where his flocks were in the country.

⁵ He said to them, I have been noticing that your father is not so friendly to me as once he was. But the God of my father has been with me.

⁶ You yourselves know I have served your father to the best of my ability,

⁷ yet he has cheated me and changed my wages ten times over. But God did not let him do me any harm.

⁸ If your father said, The spotted ones are to be your wages, then all the flock bore spotted young; and if he said, The striped ones are to be your wages, then all the flock bore striped young.

⁹ It is God who has taken away your father's livestock and given them to me.

¹⁰ In the season when the flocks were in heat, I had a dream in which I saw that the he-goats which were mating were striped and spotted and dappled.

¹¹ The angel of God called to me in the dream, Jacob! and I replied, Here I am!

¹² He said, See what is happening: all the he-goats mating are striped and

spotted and dappled, for I have seen all that Laban has been doing to you.

¹³I am the God of Bethel where you anointed a sacred pillar and made a vow to me. Now leave this country at once and return to your native land.

¹⁴Rachel and Leah answered him, We no longer have any share in our father's house.

¹⁵Does he not look on us as strangers, now that he has sold us and used the money paid for us?

¹⁶All the wealth which God has saved from our father's clutches is surely ours and our children's. Now do whatever God has told you to do.

¹⁷At once Jacob put his sons and his wives on camels,

¹⁸and he drove off all the cattle and other livestock which he had acquired in Paddan-aram, to go to his father Isaac in Canaan.

¹⁹When Laban had gone to shear his sheep, Rachel stole the household gods belonging to her father.

²⁰Jacob hoodwinked Laban the Aramaean and kept his departure secret;

²¹ he fled with all that he possessed, and soon was over the Euphrates and on the way to the hill-country of Gilead.

²² Three days later, when Laban heard that Jacob had fled,

²³ he took his kinsmen with him and pursued Jacob for seven days until he caught up with him in the hill-country of Gilead.

²⁴ But God came to Laban the Aramaean in a dream by night and said to him, Be careful to say nothing to Jacob, not a word.

²⁵ When Laban caught up with him, Jacob had pitched his tent in the hill-country of Gilead, and Laban encamped with his kinsmen in the same hill-country.

²⁶ Laban said to Jacob, What have you done? You have deceived me and carried off my daughters as though they were captives taken in war.

²⁷ Why did you slip away secretly without telling me? I would have set you on your way with songs and the music of tambourines and harps.

²⁸You did not even let me kiss my daughters and their children. In this you behaved foolishly.

²⁹I have it in my power to harm all of you, but last night the God of your father spoke to me; he told me to be careful to say nothing to you, not one word.

³⁰I expect that really you went away because you were homesick and pining for your father's house; but why did you steal my gods?

³¹Jacob answered, I was afraid; I thought you would take your daughters from me by force.

³²Whoever is found in possession of your gods shall die for it. In the presence of our kinsmen as witnesses, identify anything I have that is yours, and take it back. Jacob did not know that Rachel had stolen the gods.

³³Laban went into Jacob's tent and Leah's tent and that of the two slave-girls, but he found nothing. After coming from Leah's tent he went into Rachel's.

³⁴In the mean time Rachel had taken the household gods and put them in the camel-bag and was sitting on them.

Laban went through the whole tent but found nothing.

³⁵Rachel said, Do not take it amiss, father, that I cannot rise in your presence: the common lot of woman is upon me. So for all his searching, Laban did not find the household gods.

³⁶Jacob heatedly took Laban to task. What have I done wrong? he exclaimed. What is my offence, that you have come after me in hot pursuit

³⁷and have gone through all my belongings? Have you found a single article belonging to your household? If so, set it here in front of my kinsmen and yours, and let them decide between the two of us.

³⁸In all the twenty years I have been with you, your ewes and she-goats have never miscarried. I have never eaten rams from your flocks.

³⁹I have never brought to you the carcass of any animal mangled by wild beasts, but I bore the loss myself. You demanded that I should pay compensation for anything stolen by day or by night.

⁴⁰This was the way of it: the heat wore me down by day and the frost by night; I got no sleep.

⁴¹For twenty years I have been in your household. I worked fourteen years for you to win your two daughters and six years for your flocks, and you changed my wages ten times over.

⁴²If the God of my father, the God of Abraham and the Fear of Isaac, had not been with me, you would now have sent me away empty-handed. But God saw my labour and my hardships, and last night he delivered his verdict.

⁴³Laban answered Jacob, The daughters are my daughters, the children are my children, the flocks are my flocks; all you see is mine. But what am I to do now about my daughters and the children they have borne?

⁴⁴Come, let us make a pact, you and I, and let there be a witness between us.

⁴⁵So Jacob chose a great stone and set it up as a sacred pillar.

⁴⁶Then he told his kinsmen to gather stones, and they took them and built a cairn, and there beside the cairn they ate together.

⁴⁷ Laban called it Jegar-sahadutha, and Jacob called it Gal-ed.

⁴⁸ This cairn, said Laban, is a witness today between you and me. That was why it was named Gal-ed;

⁴⁹ it was also named Mizpah, for Laban said, May the LORD watch between you and me when we are absent from one another.

⁵⁰ If you ill-treat my daughters or take other wives besides them, then though no one is there as a witness, God will be the witness between us.

⁵¹ Laban said to Jacob, Here is this cairn, and here the pillar which I have set up between us.

⁵² Both cairn and pillar are witnesses that I am not to pass beyond this cairn to your side with evil intent, and you must not pass beyond this cairn and this pillar to my side with evil intent.

⁵³ May the God of Abraham and the God of Nahor judge between us. Jacob swore this oath in the name of the Fear of Isaac, the God of his father.

⁵⁴ He slaughtered an animal for sacrifice there in the hill-country, and summoned

his kinsmen to the feast. They ate together and spent the night there.

⁵⁵ Laban rose early in the morning, kissed his daughters and their children, gave them his blessing, and then returned to his home.

32¹ As Jacob continued his journey he was met by angels of God.

² When he saw them, Jacob exclaimed, This is the company of God, and he called that place Mahanaim.

³ Jacob sent messengers ahead of him to his brother Esau to the district of Seir in Edomite territory,

⁴ instructing them to say to Esau, My lord, your servant Jacob sends this message: I have been living with Laban and have stayed there till now.

⁵ I have acquired oxen, donkeys, and sheep, as well as male and female slaves, and I am sending to tell you this, my lord, so that I may win your favour.

⁶ The messengers returned to Jacob and said, We went to your brother Esau and he is already on the way to meet you with four hundred men.

⁷ Jacob, much afraid and distressed, divided the people with him, as well as

the sheep, cattle, and camels, into two companies.

⁸He reasoned that, if Esau should come upon one company and destroy it, the other might still survive.

⁹Jacob prayed, God of my father Abraham, God of my father Isaac, LORD at whose bidding I came back to my own country and to my kindred, and who promised me prosperity,

¹⁰I am not worthy of all the true and steadfast love which you have shown to me your servant. The last time I crossed the Jordan, I owned nothing but the staff in my hand; now I have two camps.

¹¹Save me, I pray, from my brother Esau, for I am afraid that he may come and destroy me; he will spare neither mother nor child.

¹²But you said, I shall make you prosper and your descendants will be like the sand of the sea, beyond all counting.

¹³After spending the night there Jacob chose a gift for his brother Esau from the herds he had with him:

¹⁴two hundred she-goats, twenty he-goats, two hundred ewes and twenty rams,

¹⁵ thirty milch-camels with their young, forty cows and ten young bulls, twenty she-donkeys and ten donkeys.

¹⁶ He put each drove into the charge of a servant and said, Go on ahead of me, and leave gaps between one drove and the next.

¹⁷ To the first servant he gave these instructions: When my brother Esau meets you and asks who your master is and where you are going and who owns these animals you are driving,

¹⁸ you are to say, They belong to your servant Jacob, who sends them as a gift to my lord Esau; he himself is coming behind us.

¹⁹ He gave the same instructions to the second, to the third, and to all the drovers, telling each to say the same thing to Esau when they met him.

²⁰ And they were to add, Your servant Jacob is coming behind us. Jacob thought, I shall appease him with the gift that I have sent on ahead, and afterwards, when we come face to face, perhaps he will receive me kindly.

²¹ So Jacob's gift went on ahead of him, while he himself stayed that night at Mahaneh.

²² During the night Jacob rose, and taking his two wives, his two slave-girls, and his eleven sons, he crossed the ford of Jabbok.

²³ After he had sent them across the wadi with all that he had,

²⁴ Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him there till daybreak.

²⁵ When the man saw that he could not get the better of Jacob, he struck him in the hollow of his thigh, so that Jacob's hip was dislocated as they wrestled.

²⁶ The man said, Let me go, for day is breaking, but Jacob replied, I will not let you go unless you bless me.

²⁷ The man asked, What is your name? Jacob, he answered.

²⁸ The man said, Your name shall no longer be Jacob but Israel, because you have striven with God and with mortals, and have prevailed.

²⁹ Jacob said, Tell me your name, I pray. He replied, Why do you ask my name? but he gave him his blessing there.

³⁰ Jacob called the place Peniel, because, he said, I have seen God face to face yet my life is spared.

³¹ The sun rose as Jacob passed through Penuel, limping because of his hip.

³² That is why to this day the Israelites do not eat the sinew that is on the hollow of the thigh, because the man had struck Jacob on that sinew.

33 ¹ Jacob looked up and there was Esau coming with four hundred men. He divided the children between Leah and Rachel and the two slave-girls.

² He put the slave-girls and their children in front, Leah with her children next, and Rachel and Joseph in the rear.

³ He himself went on ahead of them, bowing low to the ground seven times as he approached his brother.

⁴ Esau ran to meet him and embraced him; he threw his arms round him and kissed him, and they both wept.

⁵ When Esau caught sight of the women and children, he asked, Who are these with you? Jacob replied, The children whom God has graciously given to your servant.

⁶The slave-girls came near, each with her children, and they bowed low;

⁷then Leah with her children came near and bowed low, and lastly Joseph and Rachel came and bowed low also.

⁸Esau asked, What was all that company of yours that I met? It was meant to win favour with you, my lord, was the answer.

⁹Esau said, I have more than enough. Keep what you have, my brother.

¹⁰But Jacob replied, No, please! If I have won your favour, then accept, I pray, this gift from me; for, as you see, I come into your presence as into that of a god, and yet you receive me favourably.

¹¹Accept this gift which I bring you; for God has been gracious to me, and I have all I want. Thus urged, Esau accepted it.

¹²Esau said, Let us set out, and I shall go at your pace.

¹³But Jacob answered him, You must know, my lord, that the children are small; the flocks and herds are suckling their young and I am concerned for them, and if they are overdriven for a single day, my beasts will all die.

¹⁴I beg you, my lord, to go on ahead, and I shall move by easy stages at the pace of the livestock I am driving and the pace of the children, until I come to my lord in Seir.

¹⁵Esau said, Let me detail some of my men to escort you, but he replied, There is no reason why my lord should be so kind.

¹⁶That day Esau turned back towards Seir,

¹⁷while Jacob set out for Succoth; there he built himself a house and made shelters for his cattle. Therefore he named that place Succoth.

¹⁸So having journeyed from Paddan-aram, Jacob arrived safely at the town of Shechem in Canaan and pitched his tent to the east of it.

¹⁹The piece of land where he had pitched his tent he bought from the sons of Hamor, Shechem's father, for a hundred sheep.

²⁰He erected an altar there and called it El-elohey-israel.

34¹ Dinah, the daughter whom Leah had borne to Jacob, went out to visit women of the district,

²and Shechem, son of Hamor the Hivite, the local prince, saw her. He took her, lay with her, and violated her.

³But Shechem was deeply attached to Jacob's daughter Dinah; he loved the girl and sought to win her affection.

⁴Shechem said to Hamor his father, You must get me this girl as my wife.

⁵When Jacob learnt that his daughter Dinah had been dishonoured, his sons were with the herds in the open country, so he held his peace until they came home.

⁶Meanwhile Shechem's father Hamor came out to Jacob to talk the matter over with him.

⁷When they heard the news Jacob's sons came home from the country; they were distressed and very angry, because in lying with Jacob's daughter Shechem had done what the Israelites hold to be an intolerable outrage.

⁸Hamor appealed to them: My son Shechem is in love with this girl; I beg you to let him have her as his wife.

⁹Let us ally ourselves in marriage; you give us your daughters, and you take ours.

¹⁰If you settle among us, the country is open before you; make your home in it, move about freely, and acquire land of your own.

¹¹Shechem said to the girl's father and brothers, I am eager to win your favour and I shall give whatever you ask.

¹²Fix the bride-price and the gift as high as you like, and I shall give whatever you ask; only, give me the girl in marriage.

¹³Jacob's sons replied to Shechem and his father Hamor deceitfully, because Shechem had violated their sister Dinah:

¹⁴We cannot do this, they said; we cannot give our sister to a man who is uncircumcised, for we look on that as a disgrace.

¹⁵Only on one condition can we give our consent: if you follow our example and have every male among you circumcised,

¹⁶we shall give you our daughters and take yours for ourselves. We will then live among you, and become one people with you.

¹⁷But if you refuse to listen to us and be circumcised, we shall take the girl and go.

¹⁸Their proposal appeared satisfactory to Hamor and his son Shechem;

¹⁹and the young man, who was held in respect above anyone in his father's house, did not hesitate to do what they had said, because his heart had been captured by Jacob's daughter.

²⁰Hamor and Shechem went to the gate of their town and addressed their fellow-townsmen:

²¹These men are friendly towards us, they said; let them live in our country and move freely in it. The land has room enough for them. Let us marry their daughters and give them ours.

²²But on this condition only will these men agree to live with us as one people: every male among us must be circumcised as they are.

²³Their herds, their livestock, and all their chattels will then be ours. We need only agree to their condition, and then they are free to live with us.

²⁴All the able-bodied men agreed with Hamor and his son Shechem, and every able-bodied male among them was circumcised.

²⁵ Then two days later, while they were still in pain, two of Jacob's sons, Simeon and Levi, full brothers to Dinah, after arming themselves with swords, boldly entered the town and killed every male.

²⁶ They cut down Hamor and his son Shechem and took Dinah from Shechem's house and went off.

²⁷ Jacob's other sons came in over the dead bodies and plundered the town which had brought dishonour on their sister.

²⁸ They seized flocks, cattle, donkeys, whatever was inside the town and outside in the open country;

²⁹ they carried off all the wealth, the women, and the children, and looted everything in the houses.

³⁰ Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, You have brought trouble on me; you have brought my name into bad odour among the people of the country, the Canaanites and the Perizzites. My numbers are few; if they combine against me and attack, I shall be destroyed, I and my household with me.

³¹ They answered, Is our sister to be treated as a common whore?

35 ¹ GOD said to Jacob, Go up now to Bethel and, when you have settled there, erect an altar to the God who appeared to you when you fled from your brother Esau.

² Jacob said to his household and to all who were with him, Get rid of the foreign gods which you have; then purify yourselves, and put on fresh clothes.

³ We are to set off for Bethel, so that I can erect an altar there to the God who answered me when I was in distress; he has been with me wherever I have gone.

⁴ They handed over to Jacob all the foreign gods in their possession and the ear-rings they were wearing, and he buried them under the terebinth tree near Shechem.

⁵ As they moved off, the towns round about were panic-stricken, so that they were unable to pursue Jacob's sons.

⁶ Jacob and all the people with him came to Luz, that is Bethel, in Canaan.

⁷ There he built an altar, and called the place El-bethel, because it was there that God had revealed himself to him when he was fleeing from his brother.

⁸Rebecca's nurse Deborah died and was buried under the oak below Bethel, and Jacob called it Allon-bakuth.

⁹God appeared again to Jacob after his return from Paddan-aram and blessed him.

¹⁰God said: Jacob is now your name, but it is going to be Jacob no longer: your name is to be Israel. So Jacob was called Israel.

¹¹God said to him: I am God Almighty. Be fruitful and increase: a nation, a host of nations will come from you; kings also will descend from you.

¹²The land I gave to Abraham and Isaac I give to you; and to your descendants also I shall give this land.

¹³When God left him,

¹⁴Jacob raised a sacred pillar of stone in the place where God had spoken with him, and he offered a drink-offering on it and poured oil over it.

¹⁵Jacob called the place where God had spoken with him Bethel.

¹⁶They moved from Bethel, and when there was still some distance to go to Ephrathah, Rachel went into labour and her pains were severe.

¹⁷ While they were on her, the midwife said, Do not be afraid, for this is another son for you.

¹⁸ Then with her last breath, as she was dying, she named him Ben-oni, but his father called him Benjamin.

¹⁹ So Rachel died and was buried by the side of the road to Ephrathah, that is Bethlehem.

²⁰ Over her grave Jacob set up a sacred pillar; and to this day it is known as the Pillar of Rachel's Grave.

²¹ Then continuing his journey Israel pitched his tent on the other side of Migdal-eder.

²² While Israel was living in that district, Reuben lay with his father's concubine Bilhah; and Israel came to hear of it. The sons of Jacob were twelve.

²³ The sons of Leah: Jacob's firstborn Reuben, then Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun.

²⁴ The sons of Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin.

²⁵ The sons of Rachel's slave-girl Bilhah: Dan and Naphtali.

²⁶The sons of Leah's slave-girl Zilpah: Gad and Asher. These were Jacob's sons, born to him in Paddan-aram.

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

²⁸Isaac was a hundred and eighty years old when he breathed his last.

²⁹He died and was gathered to his father's kin at this very great age, and his sons Esau and Jacob buried him.

36¹THIS is an account of the descendants of Esau, that is Edom.

²Esau took Canaanite women in marriage: Adah daughter of Elon the Hittite and Oholibamah daughter of Anah son of Zibeon the Horite,

³and Basemath, Ishmael's daughter, sister of Nebaioth.

⁴Adah bore Eliphaz to Esau; Basemath bore Reuel,

⁵and Oholibamah bore Jeush, Jaalam, and Korah. These were Esau's sons, born to him in Canaan.

⁶Esau took his wives, his sons and daughters and all the members of his household, his livestock, all the animals,

and all the possessions he had acquired in Canaan, and went to the district of Seir out of the way of his brother Jacob,⁷ because they had so much stock that they could not live together. The region where they were staying could not support them because of the numbers of their livestock.

⁸So Esau lived in the hill-country of Seir. (Esau is Edom.)

⁹This is an account of the descendants of Esau father of the Edomites in the hill-country of Seir.

¹⁰These are the names of the sons of Esau: Eliphaz was the son of Esau's wife Adah. Reuel was the son of Esau's wife Basemath.

¹¹The sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam, and Kenaz.

¹²Timna was the concubine of Esau's son Eliphaz, and she bore Amalek to him. These are the descendants of Esau's wife Adah.

¹³These are the sons of Reuel: Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah. These were the descendants of Esau's wife Basemath.

¹⁴These were the sons of Esau's wife Oholibamah daughter of Anah son of Zibeon: she bore him Jeush, Jaalam, and Korah.

¹⁵These are the chiefs descended from Esau. The sons of Esau's eldest son Eliphaz: Teman, Omar, Zepho, Kenaz,

¹⁶Korah, Gatam, Amalek. These are the chiefs descended from Eliphaz in Edom. These are the descendants of Adah.

¹⁷These are the sons of Esau's son Reuel who were chiefs: Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, Mizzah. These are the chiefs descended from Reuel in Edom. These are the descendants of Esau's wife Basemath.

¹⁸These are the sons of Esau's wife Oholibamah: chief Jeush, chief Jaalam, chief Korah. These are the chiefs born to Oholibamah daughter of Anah and wife of Esau.

¹⁹These are the sons of Esau, that is Edom, and these are their chiefs.

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

²¹ Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. These are the chiefs of the Horites, the sons of Seir in Edom.

²² The sons of Lotan were Hori and Hemam, and Lotan had a sister named Timna.

²³ These are the sons of Shobal: Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, Shepho, and Onam.

²⁴ These are the sons of Zibeon: Aiah and Anah. He is the Anah who found hot springs in the wilderness while he was tending the donkeys of his father Zibeon.

²⁵ These are the children of Anah: Dishon and Oholibamah daughter of Anah.

²⁶ These are the children of Dishon: Hemdan, Eshban, Ithran, and Cheran.

²⁷ These are the sons of Ezer: Bilhan, Zavan, and Akan.

²⁸ These are the sons of Dishan: Uz and Aran.

²⁹ These are the chiefs descended from the Horites: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah,

³⁰ Dishon, Ezer, Dishan. These are the chiefs that were descended from the Horites according to their clans in the district of Seir.

³¹ These are the kings who ruled over Edom before there were kings in Israel:

³² Bela son of Beor became king in Edom, and his city was named Dinhabah;

³³ when he died, he was succeeded by Jobab son of Zerah of Bozrah.

³⁴ When Jobab died, he was succeeded by Husham the Temanite.

³⁵ When Husham died, he was succeeded by Hadad son of Bedad, who defeated Midian in Moabite country. His city was named Avith.

³⁶ When Hadad died, he was succeeded by Samlah of Masrekah.

³⁷ When Samlah died, he was succeeded by Saul of Rehoboth-on-the-Euphrates.

³⁸ When Saul died, he was succeeded by Baal-hanan son of Akbor.

³⁹ When Baal-hanan died, he was succeeded by Hadar. His city was named Pau; his wife's name was Mehetabel daughter of Matred a woman of Me-zahab.

⁴⁰ These are the names of the chiefs descended from Esau, according to their families and places: Timna, Alvah, Jetheth,

⁴¹ Oholibamah, Elah, Pinon,

⁴²Kenaz, Teman, Mibzar,

⁴³Magdiel, and Iram: all chiefs of Edom according to their settlements in the land which they possessed. (Esau is the father of the Edomites.)

37 ¹JACOB settled in Canaan, the country in which his father had made his home,

²and this is an account of Jacob's descendants. When Joseph was a youth of seventeen, he used to accompany his brothers, the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives, when they were in charge of the flock, and he told tales about them to their father.

³Because Joseph was a child of his old age, Israel loved him best of all his sons, and he made him a long robe with sleeves.

⁴When his brothers saw that their father loved him best, it aroused their hatred and they had nothing but harsh words for him.

⁵Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers, their hatred of him became still greater.

⁶He said to them, Listen to this dream I had.

⁷We were out in the field binding sheaves, when all at once my sheaf rose and stood upright, and your sheaves gathered round and bowed in homage before my sheaf.

⁸His brothers retorted, Do you think that you will indeed be king over us and rule us? and they hated him still more because of his dreams and what he had said.

⁹Then he had another dream, which he related to his father and his brothers. Listen! he said. I have had another dream, and in it the sun, the moon, and eleven stars were bowing down to me.

¹⁰When he told his father and his brothers, his father took him to task: What do you mean by this dream of yours? he asked. Are we to come and bow to the ground before you, I and your mother and your brothers?

¹¹His brothers were jealous of him, but his father did not forget the incident.

¹²Joseph's brothers had gone to herd their father's flocks at Shechem.

¹³Israel said to him, Your brothers are herding the flocks at Shechem; I

am going to send you to them. Joseph answered, I am ready to go.

¹⁴Israel told him to go and see if all was well with his brothers and the flocks, and to bring back word to him. So Joseph was sent off from the vale of Hebron and came to Shechem, where

¹⁵a man met him wandering in the open country and asked him what he was looking for.

¹⁶I am looking for my brothers, he replied. Can you tell me where they are herding the flocks?

¹⁷The man said, They have moved from here; I heard them speak of going to Dothan. Joseph went after his brothers and came up with them at Dothan.

¹⁸They saw him in the distance, and before he reached them, they plotted to kill him.

¹⁹Here comes that dreamer, they said to one another.

²⁰Now is our chance; let us kill him and throw him into one of these cisterns; we can say that a wild beast has devoured him. Then we shall see what becomes of his dreams.

²¹ When Reuben heard, he came to his rescue, urging them not to take his life.

²² Let us have no bloodshed, he said. Throw him into this cistern in the wilderness, but do him no injury. Reuben meant to rescue him from their clutches in order to restore him to his father.

²³ When Joseph reached his brothers, they stripped him of the long robe with sleeves which he was wearing,

²⁴ picked him up, and threw him into the cistern. It was empty, with no water in it.

²⁵ They had sat down to eat when, looking up, they saw an Ishmaelite caravan coming from Gilead on the way down to Egypt, with camels carrying gum tragacanth and balm and myrrh.

²⁶ Judah said to his brothers, What do we gain by killing our brother and concealing his death?

²⁷ Why not sell him to these Ishmaelites? Let us do him no harm, for after all, he is our brother, our own flesh and blood; his brothers agreed.

²⁸ Meanwhile some passing Midianite merchants drew Joseph up out of the cistern and sold him for twenty pieces of

silver to the Ishmaelites; they brought Joseph to Egypt.

²⁹When Reuben came back to the cistern, he found Joseph had gone. He tore his clothes

³⁰and going to his brothers he said, The boy is not there. Whatever shall I do?

³¹Joseph's brothers took the long robe with sleeves, and dipped it in the blood of a goat which they had killed.

³²After tearing the robe, they brought it to their father and said, Look what we have found. Do you recognize it? Is this your son's robe or not?

³³Jacob recognized it. It is my son's, he said. A wild beast has devoured him. Joseph has been torn to pieces.

³⁴Jacob tore his clothes; he put on sackcloth and for many days he mourned his son.

³⁵Though his sons and daughters all tried to comfort him, he refused to be comforted. He said, No, I shall go to Sheol mourning for my son. Thus Joseph's father wept for him.

³⁶The Midianites meanwhile had sold Joseph in Egypt to Potiphar, one of

Pharaoh's court officials, the captain of the guard.

38¹ ABOUT that time Judah parted from his brothers, and heading south he pitched his tent in company with an Adullamite named Hirah.

² There he saw Bathshua the daughter of a Canaanite and married her. He lay with her,

³ and she conceived and bore a son, whom she called Er.

⁴ She conceived again and bore a son, whom she called Onan.

⁵ Once more she conceived and bore a son whom she called Shelah, and she was at Kezib when she bore him.

⁶ Judah found a wife for his eldest son Er; her name was Tamar.

⁷ But Judah's eldest son Er was wicked in the LORD's sight, and the LORD took away his life.

⁸ Then Judah told Onan to sleep with his brother's wife, to do his duty as the husband's brother and raise up offspring for his brother.

⁹ But Onan knew that the offspring would not count as his; so whenever he lay with his brother's wife, he spilled his

seed on the ground so as not to raise up offspring for his brother.

¹⁰What he did was wicked in the LORD's sight, and the LORD took away his life also.

¹¹Judah said to his daughter-in-law Tamar, Remain as a widow in your father's house until my son Shelah grows up; for he was afraid that Shelah too might die like his brothers. So Tamar went and stayed in her father's house.

¹²Time passed, and Judah's wife Bathshua died. When he had finished mourning, he and his friend Hirah the Adullamite went up to Timnath at sheep-shearing.

¹³When Tamar was told that her father-in-law was on his way to shear his sheep at Timnath,

¹⁴she took off her widow's clothes, covered her face with a veil, and then sat where the road forks on the way to Timnath. She did this because she saw that although Shelah was now grown up she had not been given to him as a wife.

¹⁵When Judah saw her he thought she was a prostitute, for she had veiled her face.

¹⁶He turned to her where she sat by the roadside and said, Let me lie with you, not realizing she was his daughter-in-law. She said, What will you give to lie with me?

¹⁷He answered, I shall send you a young goat from my flock. She said, I agree, if you will give me a pledge until you send it.

¹⁸He asked what pledge he should give her, and she replied, Your seal and its cord, and the staff which you are holding. He handed them over to her and lay with her, and she became pregnant.

¹⁹She then rose and went home, where she took off her veil and put on her widow's clothes again.

²⁰Judah sent the goat by his friend the Adullamite in order to recover the pledge from the woman, but he could not find her.

²¹When he enquired of the people of that place, Where is that temple-prostitute, the one who was sitting where the road forks? they answered, There has been no temple-prostitute here.

²²So he went back to Judah and reported that he had failed to find her

and that the men of the place had said there was no such prostitute there.

²³ Judah said, Let her keep the pledge, or we shall be a laughing-stock. After all, I did send the kid, even though you could not find her.

²⁴ About three months later Judah was told that his daughter-in-law Tamar had played the prostitute and got herself pregnant. Bring her out, ordered Judah, so that she may be burnt.

²⁵ But as she was being brought out, she sent word to her father-in-law. The father of my child is the man to whom these things belong, she said. See if you recognize whose they are, this seal, the pattern of the cord, and the staff.

²⁶ Judah identified them and said, She is more in the right than I am, because I did not give her to my son Shelah. He did not have intercourse with her again.

²⁷ When her time was come, she was found to have twins in her womb,

²⁸ and while she was in labour one of them put out a hand. The midwife took a scarlet thread and fastened it round the wrist, saying, This one appeared first.

²⁹No sooner had he drawn back his hand, than his brother came out and the midwife said, What! You have broken out first! So he was named Perez.

³⁰Soon afterwards his brother was born with the scarlet thread on his wrist, and he was named Zerah.

39¹WHEN Joseph was taken down to Egypt by the Ishmaelites, he was bought from them by an Egyptian, Potiphar, one of Pharaoh's court officials, the captain of the guard.

²Joseph prospered, for the LORD was with him. He lived in the house of his Egyptian master,

³who saw that the LORD was with him and was giving him success in all that he undertook.

⁴Thus Joseph won his master's favour, and became his attendant. Indeed, his master put him in charge of his household, and entrusted him with everything he had.

⁵From the time that he put Joseph in charge of his household and all his property, the LORD blessed the household through Joseph; the LORD's

blessing was on all that was his in house and field.

⁶Potiphar left it all in Joseph's care, and concerned himself with nothing but the food he ate. Now Joseph was handsome in both face and figure,

⁷and after a time his master's wife became infatuated with him. Come, make love to me, she said.

⁸But Joseph refused. Think of my master, he said; he leaves the management of his whole house to me; he has trusted me with all he has.

⁹I am as important in this house as he is, and he has withheld nothing from me except you, because you are his wife. How can I do such a wicked thing? It is a sin against God.

¹⁰Though she kept on at Joseph day after day, he refused to lie with her or be in her company.

¹¹One day when he came into the house to see to his duties, and none of the household servants was there indoors,

¹²she caught him by his loincloth, saying, Come, make love to me, but he

left the loincloth in her hand and ran from the house.

¹³When she saw that he had left his loincloth and run out of the house,

¹⁴she called to her servants, Look at this! My husband has brought in a Hebrew to bring insult on us. He came in here to rape me, but I gave a loud scream.

¹⁵When he heard me scream and call for help, he ran out, leaving his loincloth behind.

¹⁶She kept it by her until his master came home,

¹⁷and then she repeated her tale: That Hebrew slave you brought in came to my room to make me an object of insult.

¹⁸But when I screamed for help, he ran out of the house, leaving his loincloth behind.

¹⁹Joseph's master was furious when he heard his wife's account of what his slave had done to her.

²⁰He had Joseph seized and thrown into the guardhouse, where the king's prisoners were kept; and there he was confined.

²¹ But the LORD was with Joseph and kept faith with him, so that he won the favour of the governor of the guardhouse.

²² Joseph was put in charge of the prisoners, and he directed all their work.

²³ The governor ceased to concern himself with anything entrusted to Joseph, because the LORD was with him and gave him success in all that he did.

40¹ Some time after these events it happened that the king's cupbearer and the royal baker gave offence to their lord, the king of Egypt.

² Pharaoh was displeased with his two officials, his chief cupbearer and chief baker,

³ and put them in custody in the house of the captain of the guard, in the guardhouse where Joseph was imprisoned.

⁴ The captain appointed Joseph as their attendant, and he waited on them. They had been in prison in the guardhouse for some time,

⁵ when one night the king's cupbearer and his baker both had dreams, each with a meaning of its own.

⁶Coming to them in the morning, Joseph saw that they looked dispirited,
⁷and asked these officials in custody with him in his master's house, why they were so downcast that day.

⁸They replied, We have each had a dream, but there is no one to interpret them. Joseph said to them, All interpretation belongs to God. Why not tell me your dreams?

⁹So the chief cupbearer told Joseph his dream: In my dream, he said, there was a vine in front of me.

¹⁰On the vine there were three branches, and as soon as it budded, it blossomed and its clusters ripened into grapes.

¹¹I plucked the grapes and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup which I was holding, and then put the cup into Pharaoh's hand.

¹²Joseph said to him, This is the interpretation. The three branches are three days:

¹³within three days Pharaoh will raise your head and restore you to your post; then you will put the cup into Pharaoh's

hand as you used to do when you were his cupbearer.

¹⁴When things go well with you, remember me and do me the kindness of bringing my case to Pharaoh's notice; help me to get out of this prison.

¹⁵I was carried off by force from the land of the Hebrews, and here I have done nothing to deserve being put into this dungeon.

¹⁶When the chief baker saw that the interpretation given by Joseph had been favourable, he said to him, I too had a dream, and in my dream there were three baskets of white bread on my head.

¹⁷In the top basket there was every kind of food such as a baker might prepare for Pharaoh, but the birds were eating out of the top basket on my head.

¹⁸Joseph answered, This is the interpretation. The three baskets are three days:

¹⁹within three days Pharaoh will raise your head off your shoulders and hang you on a tree, and the birds of the air will devour the flesh off your bones.

²⁰The third day was Pharaoh's birthday and he gave a banquet for all his officials. He had the chief cupbearer and the chief baker brought up where they were all assembled.

²¹The cupbearer was restored to his position, and he put the cup into Pharaoh's hand;

²²but the baker was hanged. All went as Joseph had said in interpreting the dreams for them.

²³The cupbearer, however, did not bear Joseph in mind; he forgot him.

41 ¹Two years later Pharaoh had a dream: he was standing by the Nile,

²when there came up from the river seven cows, sleek and fat, and they grazed among the reeds.

³Presently seven other cows, gaunt and lean, came up from the river, and stood beside the cows on the river bank.

⁴The cows that were gaunt and lean devoured the seven cows that were sleek and fat. Then Pharaoh woke up.

⁵He fell asleep again and had a second dream: he saw seven ears of grain, full and ripe, growing on a single stalk.

⁶Springing up after them were seven other ears, thin and shrivelled by the east wind.

⁷The thin ears swallowed up the seven ears that were full and plump. Then Pharaoh woke up and found it was a dream.

⁸In the morning Pharaoh's mind was so troubled that he summoned all the dream-interpreters and wise men of Egypt, and told them his dreams; but there was no one who could interpret them for him.

⁹Then Pharaoh's chief cupbearer spoke up. Now I must mention my offences, he said:

¹⁰Pharaoh was angry with his servants, and imprisoned me and the chief baker in the house of the captain of the guard.

¹¹One night we both had dreams, each requiring its own interpretation.

¹²We had with us there a young Hebrew, a slave of the captain of the guard, and when we told him our dreams he interpreted them for us, giving each dream its own interpretation.

¹³Things turned out exactly as the dreams had been interpreted to us: I

was restored to my post, the other was hanged.

¹⁴Pharaoh thereupon sent for Joseph, and they hurriedly brought him out of the dungeon. After he had shaved and changed his clothes, he came in before Pharaoh,

¹⁵who said to him, I have had a dream which no one can interpret. I have heard that you can interpret any dream you hear.

¹⁶Joseph answered, Not I, but God, can give an answer which will reassure Pharaoh.

¹⁷Then Pharaoh said to him: In my dream I was standing on the bank of the Nile,

¹⁸when there came up from the river seven cows, fat and sleek, and they grazed among the reeds.

¹⁹After them seven other cows came up that were in poor condition, very gaunt and lean; in all Egypt I have never seen such gaunt creatures.

²⁰These lean, gaunt cows devoured the first cows, the seven fat ones.

²¹They were swallowed up, but no one could have told they were in the bellies

of the others, which looked just as gaunt as before. Then I woke up.

²²In another dream I saw seven ears of grain, full and ripe, growing on a single stalk.

²³Springing up after them were seven other ears, blighted, thin, and shrivelled by the east wind.

²⁴The thin ears swallowed up the seven ripe ears. When I spoke to the dream-interpreters, no one could tell me the meaning.

²⁵Joseph said to Pharaoh, Pharaoh's dreams are both the same; God has told Pharaoh what he is about to do.

²⁶The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good ears of grain are seven years -- it is all one dream.

²⁷The seven lean and gaunt cows that came up after them are seven years, and so also are the seven empty ears of grain blighted by the east wind; there are going to be seven years of famine.

²⁸It is as I have told Pharaoh: God has let Pharaoh see what he is about to do.

²⁹There are to be seven years of bumper harvests throughout Egypt.

³⁰After them will come seven years of famine; so that the great harvests in Egypt will all be forgotten, and famine will ruin the country.

³¹The good years will leave no trace in the land because of the famine that follows, for it will be very severe.

³²That Pharaoh has dreamed this twice means God is firmly resolved on this plan, and very soon he will put it into effect.

³³Let Pharaoh now look for a man of vision and wisdom and put him in charge of the country.

³⁴Pharaoh should take steps to appoint commissioners over the land to take one fifth of the produce of Egypt during the seven years of plenty.

³⁵They should collect all food produced in the good years that are coming and put the grain under Pharaoh's control as a store of food to be kept in the towns.

³⁶This food will be a reserve for the country against the seven years of famine which will come on Egypt, and so the country will not be devastated by the famine.

³⁷ The plan commended itself both to Pharaoh and to all his officials,

³⁸ and Pharaoh asked them, Could we find another man like this, one so endowed with the spirit of God?

³⁹ To Joseph he said, Since God has made all this known to you, no one has your vision and wisdom.

⁴⁰ You shall be in charge of my household, and all my people will respect your every word. Only in regard to the throne shall I rank higher than you.

⁴¹ Pharaoh went on, I hereby give you authority over the whole land of Egypt.

⁴² He took off his signet ring and put it on Joseph's finger; he had him dressed in robes of fine linen, and hung a gold chain round his neck.

⁴³ He mounted him in his viceroy's chariot and men cried Make way! before him. Thus Pharaoh made him ruler over all Egypt

⁴⁴ and said to him, I am the Pharaoh, yet without your consent no one will lift hand or foot throughout Egypt.

⁴⁵ Pharaoh named him Zaphenath-paneah, and he gave him as his wife Asenath daughter of Potiphera priest of

On. Joseph's authority extended over the whole of Egypt.

⁴⁶ Joseph was thirty years old at the time he entered the service of Pharaoh king of Egypt. When he left the royal presence, he made a tour of inspection through the land.

⁴⁷ During the seven years of plenty when there were abundant harvests,

⁴⁸ Joseph gathered all the food produced in Egypt then and stored it in the towns, putting in each the food from the surrounding country.

⁴⁹ He stored the grain in huge quantities; it was like the sand of the sea, so much that he stopped measuring: it was beyond all measure.

⁵⁰ Before the years of famine came, two sons were born to Joseph by Asenath daughter of Potiphera priest of On.

⁵¹ He named the elder Manasseh, for, he said, God has made me forget all my troubles and my father's family.

⁵² He named the second Ephraim, for, he said, God has made me fruitful in the land of my hardships.

⁵³ When the seven years of plenty in Egypt came to an end,

⁵⁴ the seven years of famine began, as Joseph had predicted. There was famine in every country, but there was food throughout Egypt.

⁵⁵ When the famine came to be felt through all Egypt, the people appealed to Pharaoh for food and he ordered them to go to Joseph and do whatever he told them.

⁵⁶ When the whole land was in the grip of famine, Joseph opened all the granaries and sold grain to the Egyptians, for the famine was severe.

⁵⁷ The whole world came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph, so severe was the famine everywhere.

42¹ WHEN Jacob learnt that there was grain in Egypt, he said to his sons, Why do you stand staring at each other?

² I hear there is grain in Egypt. Go down there, and buy some for us to keep us alive and save us from starving to death.

³ So ten of Joseph's brothers went down to buy grain from Egypt,

⁴ but Jacob did not let Joseph's brother Benjamin go with them, for fear that he might come to harm.

⁵Thus the sons of Israel went with everyone else to buy grain because of the famine in Canaan.

⁶Now Joseph was governor of the land, and it was he who sold the grain to all its people. Joseph's brothers came and bowed to the ground before him,

⁷and when he saw his brothers he recognized them but, pretending not to know them, he greeted them harshly. Where do you come from? he demanded. From Canaan to buy food, they answered.

⁸Although Joseph had recognized his brothers, they did not recognize him.

⁹He remembered the dreams he had had about them and said, You are spies; you have come to spy out the weak points in our defences.

¹⁰No, my lord, they answered; your servants have come to buy food.

¹¹We are all sons of one man. We are honest men; your servants are not spies.

¹²No, he maintained, it is to spy out our weaknesses that you have come.

¹³They said, There were twelve of us, my lord, all brothers, sons of one man

back in Canaan; the youngest is still with our father, and one is lost.

¹⁴But Joseph insisted, As I have already said to you: you are spies.

¹⁵This is how you will be put to the test: unless your youngest brother comes here, I swear by the life of Pharaoh you shall not leave this place.

¹⁶Send one of your number to fetch your brother; the rest of you will remain in prison. Thus your story will be tested to see whether you are telling the truth. If not, then by the life of Pharaoh you must be spies.

¹⁷With that he kept them in prison for three days.

¹⁸On the third day Joseph said to them, Do what I say and your lives will be spared, for I am a godfearing man:

¹⁹if you are honest men, only one of you brothers shall be kept in prison, while the rest of you may go and take grain for your starving households;

²⁰but you must bring your youngest brother to me. In this way your words will be proved true, and you will not die.

²¹They consented, and among themselves they said, No doubt we are

being punished because of our brother. We saw his distress when he pleaded with us and we refused to listen. That is why this distress has come on us.

²²Reuben said, Did I not warn you not to do wrong to the boy? But you would not listen, and now his blood is on our heads, and we must pay.

²³They did not know that Joseph understood, since he had used an interpreter.

²⁴Joseph turned away from them and wept. Then he went back to speak to them, and took Simeon from among them and had him bound before their eyes.

²⁵He gave orders to fill their bags with grain, to put each man's silver back into his sack again, and to give them provisions for the journey. After this had been done,

²⁶they loaded their grain on their donkeys and set off.

²⁷When they stopped for the night, one of them opened his sack to give feed to his donkey, and there at the top was the silver.

²⁸He said to his brothers, My silver has been returned; here it is in my pack. Bewildered and trembling, they asked one another, What is this that God has done to us?

²⁹When they came to their father Jacob in Canaan, they gave him an account of all that had happened to them. They said:

³⁰The man who is lord of the country spoke harshly to us and made out that we were spies.

³¹But we said to him, We are honest men, we are not spies.

³²There were twelve of us, all brothers, sons of the same father. One has disappeared, and the youngest is with our father in Canaan.

³³Then the man, the lord of the country, said to us, This is how I shall discover if you are honest men: leave one of your brothers with me, take food for your starving households and go;

³⁴bring your youngest brother to me, and I shall know that you are honest men and not spies. Then I shall restore your brother to you, and you can move around the country freely.

³⁵ But on emptying their sacks, each of them found his silver inside, and when they and their father saw the bundles of silver, they were afraid.

³⁶ Their father Jacob said to them, You have robbed me of my children. Joseph is lost; Simeon is lost; and now you would take Benjamin. Everything is against me.

³⁷ Reuben said to his father, You may put both my sons to death if I do not bring him back to you. Entrust him to me, and I shall bring him back.

³⁸ But Jacob said, My son must not go with you, for his brother is dead and he alone is left. Should he come to any harm on the journey, you will bring down my grey hairs in sorrow to the grave.

43¹ The famine was still severe in the land.

² When the grain they had brought from Egypt was all used up, their father said to them, Go again and buy some more grain for us to eat.

³ Judah replied, But the man warned us that we must not go into his presence unless our brother was with us.

⁴If you let our brother go with us, we will go down and buy you food.

⁵But if you will not let him, we cannot go, for the man declared, You shall not come into my presence unless your brother is with you.

⁶Israel said, Why have you treated me so badly by telling the man that you had another brother?

⁷They answered, The man questioned us closely about ourselves and our family: Is your father still alive? he asked, Have you a brother? and we answered his questions. How were we to know he would tell us to bring our brother down?

⁸Judah said to Israel his father, Send the boy with me; then we can start at once, and save everyone's life, ours, yours, and those of our children.

⁹I shall go surety for him, and you may hold me responsible. If I do not bring him back and restore him to you, you can blame me for it all my life.

¹⁰If we had not wasted all this time, we could have made the journey twice by now.

¹¹ Their father Israel said to them, If it must be so, then do this: in your baggage take, as a gift for the man, some of the produce for which our country is famous: a little balm and honey, with gum tragacanth, myrrh, pistachio nuts, and almonds.

¹² Take double the amount of silver with you and give back what was returned to you in your packs; perhaps there was some mistake.

¹³ Take your brother with you and go straight back to the man.

¹⁴ May God Almighty make him kindly disposed to you, and may he send back the one whom you left behind, and Benjamin too. As for me, if I am bereaved, I am bereaved.

¹⁵ So they took the gift and double the amount of silver, and accompanied by Benjamin they started at once for Egypt, where they presented themselves to Joseph.

¹⁶ When Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he said to his steward, Bring these men indoors; then kill a beast and prepare a meal, for they are to eat with me at midday.

¹⁷ He brought the men into Joseph's house as he had been ordered.

¹⁸ They were afraid because they had been brought there; they thought, We have been brought in here because of that affair of the silver which was replaced in our packs the first time. He means to make some charge against us, to inflict punishment on us, seize our donkeys, and make us his slaves.

¹⁹ So they approached Joseph's steward and spoke to him at the door of the house.

²⁰ Please listen, my lord, they said. After our first visit to buy food,

²¹ when we reached the place where we were to spend the night, we opened our packs and each of us found his silver, the full amount of it, at the top of his pack. We have brought it back with us,

²² and we have more silver to buy food. We do not know who put the silver in our packs.

²³ He answered, Calm yourselves; do not be afraid. It must have been your God, the God of your father, who hid treasure for you in your packs. I did

receive the silver. Then he brought Simeon out to them.

²⁴The steward conducted them into Joseph's house and gave them water to bathe their feet, and provided feed for their donkeys.

²⁵They had their gifts ready against Joseph's arrival at midday, for they had heard that they were to eat there.

²⁶When he came into the house, they presented him with the gifts which they had brought, bowing to the ground before him.

²⁷He asked them how they were and said, Is your father well, the old man of whom you spoke? Is he still alive?

²⁸Yes, my lord, our father is still alive and well, they answered, bowing low in obeisance.

²⁹When Joseph looked around he saw his own mother's son, his brother Benjamin, and asked, Is this your youngest brother, of whom you told me? and to Benjamin he said, May God be gracious to you, my son!

³⁰Joseph, suddenly overcome by his feelings for his brother, was almost in

tears, and he went into the inner room and wept.

³¹ Then, having bathed his face, he came out and, with his feelings now under control, he ordered the meal to be served.

³² He was served by himself, and the brothers by themselves; the Egyptians who were at the meal were also served separately, for to Egyptians it is abhorrent to eat with Hebrews.

³³ When at his direction the brothers were seated, the eldest first and so on down to the youngest, they looked at one another in astonishment.

³⁴ Joseph sent them each a portion from what was before him, but Benjamin's portion was five times larger than any of the others. So they feasted and drank with him.

44¹ Joseph gave the steward these instructions: Fill the men's packs with food, as much as they can carry, and put each man's silver at the top of his pack.

² And put my goblet, the silver one, at the top of the youngest brother's pack

along with the silver for the grain. He did as Joseph had told him.

³At first light the brothers were allowed to take their donkeys and set off;

⁴but before they had gone very far from the city, Joseph said to his steward, Go after those men at once, and when you catch up with them, say, Why have you repaid good with evil?

⁵Why have you stolen the silver goblet? It is the one my lord drinks from, and which he uses for divination. This is a wicked thing you have done.

⁶When the steward overtook them, he reported his master's words.

⁷But they replied, My lord, how can you say such things? Heaven forbid that we should do such a thing!

⁸Look! The silver we found at the top of our packs we brought back to you from Canaan. Why, then, should we steal silver or gold from your master's house?

⁹If any one of us is found with the goblet, he shall die; and, what is more, my lord, the rest of us shall become your slaves.

¹⁰He said, Very well; I accept what you say. Only the one in whose possession it

is found will become my slave; the rest will go free.

¹¹ Each quickly lowered his pack to the ground and opened it,

¹² and when the steward searched, beginning with the eldest and finishing with the youngest, the goblet was found in Benjamin's pack.

¹³ At this they tore their clothes; then one and all they loaded their donkeys and returned to the city.

¹⁴ Joseph was still in the house when Judah and his brothers arrived, and they threw themselves on the ground before him.

¹⁵ Joseph said, What is this you have done? You might have known that a man such as I am uses divination.

¹⁶ Judah said, What can we say, my lord? What can we plead, or how can we clear ourselves? God has uncovered our crime. Here we are, my lord, ready to be made your slaves, we ourselves as well as the one who was found with the goblet.

¹⁷ Heaven forbid that I should do such a thing! answered Joseph. Only the one who was found with the goblet shall

become my slave; the rest of you can go home to your father safe and sound.

¹⁸Then Judah went up to him and said, Please listen, my lord, and let your servant speak a word, I beg. Do not be angry with me, for you are as great as Pharaoh himself.

¹⁹My lord, you asked us whether we had a father or a brother.

²⁰We answered, We have an aged father, and he has a young son born in his old age; this boy's full brother is dead, and since he alone is left of his mother's children, his father loves him.

²¹You said to us, your servants, Bring him down to me so that I may set eyes on him.

²²We told you, my lord, that the boy could not leave his father; his father would die if he left him.

²³But you said, Unless your youngest brother comes down with you, you shall not enter my presence again.

²⁴We went back to your servant my father, and reported to him what your lordship had said,

²⁵so when our father told us to go again and buy food,

²⁶we answered, We cannot go down; for without our youngest brother we cannot enter the man's presence; but if our brother is with us, we will go.

²⁷Then your servant my father said to us, You know that my wife bore me two sons.

²⁸One left me, and I said, He must have been torn to pieces. I have not seen him since.

²⁹If you take this one from me as well, and he comes to any harm, then you will bring down my grey hairs in misery to the grave.

³⁰Now, my lord, if I return to my father without the boy -- and remember, his life is bound up with the boy's --

³¹what will happen is this: he will see that the boy is not with us and he will die, and your servants will have brought down our father's grey hairs in sorrow to the grave.

³²Indeed, my lord, it was I who went surety for the boy to my father. I said, If I do not bring him back to you, then you can blame me for it all my life.

³³ Now, my lord, let me remain in place of the boy as my lord's slave, and let him go with his brothers.

³⁴ How can I return to my father without the boy? I could not bear to see the misery which my father would suffer.'

45 ¹ Joseph was no longer able to control his feelings in front of all his attendants, and he called, Let everyone leave my presence! There was nobody present when Joseph made himself known to his brothers,

² but he wept so loudly that the Egyptians heard him, and news of it got to Pharaoh's household.

³ Joseph said to his brothers, I am Joseph! Can my father be still alive? They were so dumbfounded at finding themselves face to face with Joseph that they could not answer.

⁴ Joseph said to them, Come closer to me, and when they did so, he said, I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt.

⁵ Now do not be distressed or blame yourselves for selling me into slavery here; it was to save lives that God sent me ahead of you.

⁶For there have now been two years of famine in the land, and there will be another five years with neither ploughing nor harvest.

⁷God sent me on ahead of you to ensure that you will have descendants on earth, and to preserve for you a host of survivors.

⁸It is clear that it was not you who sent me here, but God, and he has made me Pharaoh's chief counsellor, lord over his whole household and ruler of all Egypt.

⁹Hurry back to my father and give him this message from his son Joseph: God has made me lord of all Egypt. Come down to me without delay.

¹⁰You will live in the land of Goshen and be near me, you, your children and grandchildren, your flocks and herds, and all that you have.

¹¹I shall provide for you there and see that you and your household and all that you have are not reduced to want; for there are still five years of famine to come.

¹²You can see for yourselves, and so can my brother Benjamin, that it is really Joseph himself who is speaking to you.

¹³Tell my father of all the honour which I enjoy in Egypt, tell him all you have seen, and bring him down here with all speed.

¹⁴He threw his arms round his brother Benjamin and wept, and Benjamin too embraced him weeping.

¹⁵He then kissed each of his brothers and wept over them; after that his brothers were able to talk with him.

¹⁶When the report reached the royal palace that Joseph's brothers had come, Pharaoh and his officials were pleased.

¹⁷Pharaoh told Joseph to say to his brothers: This is what you must do. Load your beasts and go straight back to Canaan.

¹⁸Fetch your father and your households and come to me. I shall give you the best region there is in Egypt, and you will enjoy the fat of the land.

¹⁹He was also to tell them: Take wagons from Egypt for your dependants and your wives and fetch your father back here.

²⁰Have no regrets at leaving your possessions, for all the best there is in the whole of Egypt is yours.

²¹ Israel's sons followed these instructions, and Joseph supplied them with wagons, as Pharaoh had ordered, and provisions for the journey.

²² To each of them he gave new clothes, but to Benjamin he gave three hundred pieces of silver and five sets of clothes.

²³ Moreover he sent his father ten donkeys carrying the finest products of Egypt, and ten she-donkeys laden with grain, bread, and other provisions for the journey.

²⁴ He sent his brothers on their way, warning them not to quarrel among themselves on the road.

²⁵ They set off, and went up from Egypt to their father Jacob in Canaan.

²⁶ When they told him that Joseph was still alive and was ruler of the whole of Egypt, he was stunned at the news and did not believe them.

²⁷ However when they reported to him all that Joseph had said to them, and when he saw the wagons which Joseph had provided to fetch him, his spirit revived.

²⁸ Israel said, It is enough! Joseph my son is still alive; I shall go and see him before I die.

46 ¹ ISRAEL set out with all that he had and came to Beersheba, where he offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac.

² God called to Israel in a vision by night, Jacob! Jacob! and he answered, I am here.

³ God said, I am God, the God of your father. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for there I shall make you a great nation.

⁴ I shall go down to Egypt with you, and I myself shall bring you back again without fail; and Joseph's will be the hands that close your eyes.

⁵ So Jacob set out from Beersheba. Israel's sons conveyed their father Jacob along with their wives and children in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to bring him.

⁶ They took their herds and the goods they had acquired in Canaan and came to Egypt, Jacob and all his family with him;

⁷ his sons and their sons, his daughters and his sons' daughters, he brought them all to Egypt.

⁸ These are the names of the Israelites, Jacob and his sons, who entered Egypt: Reuben, Jacob's eldest son,

⁹ and the sons of Reuben: Enoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi.

¹⁰ The sons of Simeon: Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Saul, who was the son of a Canaanite woman.

¹¹ The sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

¹² The sons of Judah: Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez, and Zerah; of these Er and Onan died in Canaan. The sons of Perez were Hezron and Hamul.

¹³ The sons of Issachar: Tola, Pua, Iob, and Shimron.

¹⁴ The sons of Zebulun: Sered, Elon, and Jahleel.

¹⁵ These are the sons of Leah whom she bore to Jacob in Paddan-aram, and there was also his daughter Dinah. His sons and daughters numbered thirty-three in all.

¹⁶ The sons of Gad: Ziphion, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi, and Areli.

¹⁷The sons of Asher: Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, Beriah, and their sister Serah. The sons of Beriah: Heber and Malchiel.

¹⁸These are the descendants of Zilpah whom Laban gave to his daughter Leah, sixteen in all, born to Jacob.

¹⁹The sons of Jacob's wife Rachel: Joseph and Benjamin.

²⁰Manasseh and Ephraim were born to Joseph in Egypt; Asenath daughter of Potiphera priest of On bore them to him.

²¹The sons of Benjamin: Bela, Becher, and Ashbel; and the sons of Bela: Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim, and Ard.

²²These are the descendants of Rachel, fourteen in all, born to Jacob.

²³The son of Dan: Hushim.

²⁴The sons of Naphtali: Jahzeel, Guni, Jezer, and Shillem.

²⁵These are the descendants of Bilhah whom Laban had given to his daughter Rachel, seven in all, born to Jacob.

²⁶All the persons who came to Egypt with Jacob, his direct descendants, not including the wives of his sons, were sixty-six in all.

²⁷ Two sons were born to Joseph in Egypt. Thus the whole house of Jacob numbered seventy when it entered Egypt.

²⁸ Jacob sent Judah ahead to Joseph to advise him that he was on his way to Goshen. They entered Goshen,

²⁹ and Joseph had his chariot yoked to go up there to meet Israel his father. When they met, Joseph threw his arms round him and wept on his shoulder for a long time.

³⁰ Israel said to Joseph, I have seen for myself that you are still alive. Now I am ready to die.

³¹ Joseph said to his brothers and to his father's household, I shall go up and inform Pharaoh; I shall tell him, My brothers and my father's household who were in Canaan have come to me.

³² The men are shepherds with their own flocks and herds, and they have brought with them these flocks and herds and everything they possess.

³³ So when Pharaoh summons you and asks what your occupation is,

³⁴ you must answer, My lord, we have herded flocks all our lives, as our fathers

did before us. You must say this if you are to settle in Goshen, because shepherds are regarded as unclean by Egyptians.

47 ¹ Joseph came and reported to Pharaoh, My father and my brothers have arrived from Canaan, with their flocks and herds and everything they possess, and they are now in Goshen.

² He had chosen five of his brothers, and he brought them into Pharaoh's presence.

³ When he asked them what their occupation was, they answered, We are shepherds like our fathers before us,

⁴ and we have come to stay in this country, because owing to the severe famine in Canaan there is no pasture there for our flocks. We ask your majesty's leave to settle now in Goshen.

⁵ Pharaoh said to Joseph, As to your father and your brothers who have come to you,

⁶ the land of Egypt is at your disposal; settle them in the best part of it. Let them live in Goshen, and if you know of any among them with the skill, make

them chief herdsmen in charge of my cattle.

⁷ Then Joseph brought his father in and presented him to Pharaoh. Jacob blessed Pharaoh,

⁸ who asked him his age,

⁹ and he answered, The years of my life on earth are one hundred and thirty; few and hard have they been -- fewer than the years my fathers lived.

¹⁰ Jacob then blessed Pharaoh and withdrew from his presence.

¹¹ As Pharaoh had ordered, Joseph settled his father and his brothers, and allotted land to them in Egypt, in the best part of the country, the district of Rameses.

¹² He supported his father, his brothers, and his father's whole household with the food they needed.

¹³ There was no food anywhere, so very severe was the famine; Egypt and Canaan were laid low by it.

¹⁴ Joseph gathered in all the money in Egypt and Canaan in exchange for the grain which the people bought, and put it in Pharaoh's treasury.

¹⁵When the money in Egypt and Canaan had come to an end, the Egyptians all came to Joseph. Give us food, they said, or we shall perish before your very eyes. Our money is all gone.

¹⁶Joseph replied, If your money is all gone, hand over your livestock and I shall give you food in return.

¹⁷So they brought their livestock to Joseph, who gave them food in exchange for their horses, their flocks of sheep, their herds of cattle, and their donkeys. He supported them that year with food in exchange for all their herds.

¹⁸The year came to an end, and in the following year they came to him and said, My lord, we cannot conceal from you that with our money finished and our herds of cattle made over to you, there is nothing left for your lordship but our bodies and our lands.

¹⁹Why should we perish before your eyes, we and our land as well? Take us and our land in payment for food, and we and our land alike will be in bondage to Pharaoh. Give us seed-corn to keep us alive, or we shall die and our land will become desert.

²⁰ So Joseph acquired for Pharaoh all the land in Egypt: because the Egyptians, hard-pressed by the famine, sold all their fields, and the land became Pharaoh's.

²¹ Joseph moved the people into the towns throughout the whole territory of Egypt.

²² Only the land which belonged to the priests Joseph did not buy; they had a fixed allowance from Pharaoh and lived on this, so that they did not have to sell their land.

²³ Joseph said to the people, Listen; I have now bought you and your land for Pharaoh. Here is seed-corn for you. Sow the land,

²⁴ but at harvest give one fifth of the crop to Pharaoh. Four fifths shall be yours to provide seed for your fields and food for yourselves, your households, and your dependants.

²⁵ You have saved our lives, the people said. If it please your lordship, we shall be Pharaoh's slaves.

²⁶ Joseph established it as a law in Egypt that one fifth of the produce should belong to Pharaoh, and so it has

been from that day to this. It was only the priests' land that did not pass into Pharaoh's hands.

²⁷ Thus Israel settled in Egypt, in Goshen, where they acquired land, and were fruitful, and increased greatly.

²⁸ Jacob lived in Egypt for seventeen years and died at the age of a hundred and forty-seven.

²⁹ When the hour of his death drew near, he summoned his son Joseph and said to him, I have a favour to ask: give me your solemn oath that you will deal loyally and faithfully with me; do not bury me in Egypt.

³⁰ So that I may lie with my forefathers, you are to take me up from Egypt and bury me in their grave. He answered, I shall do as you say.

³¹ Swear that you will, said Jacob. So he gave him his oath, and Israel bowed in worship by the head of his bed.

48¹ Some time later Joseph was informed that his father was ill, so he took his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim, with him and came to Jacob.

²When Jacob heard that his son Joseph had come to him, he gathered his strength and sat up in bed.

³Jacob said to Joseph, God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in Canaan and blessed me;

⁴he said to me, I shall make you fruitful and increase your descendants until they become a host of nations. I shall give this land to them after you as a possession for all time.

⁵Now, Jacob went on, your two sons, who were born in Egypt before I came to join you here, will be counted as my sons; Ephraim and Manasseh will be mine as Reuben and Simeon are.

⁶But the children born to you after them will be counted as yours; in respect of their tribal territory they will be reckoned under their elder brothers names.

⁷In Canaan on my return from Paddan-aram and while we were still some distance from Ephrath, your mother Rachel died on the way, and I buried her there by the road to Ephrath' (that is Bethlehem).

⁸When Israel saw Joseph's sons, he said, Who are these?

⁹They are my sons, replied Joseph, whom God has given me here. Israel said, Then bring them to me, that I may bless them.

¹⁰Now Israel's eyes were dim with age, and he could hardly see. Joseph brought the boys close to his father, and he kissed them and embraced them.

¹¹He said to Joseph, I had not expected to see your face again, and now God has let me see your sons as well.

¹²Joseph removed them from his father's knees and bowed to the ground.

¹³Then he took the two of them and brought them close to Israel: Ephraim on the right, that is Israel's left; and Manasseh on the left, that is Israel's right.

¹⁴But Israel, crossing his hands, stretched out his right hand and laid it on Ephraim's head, although he was the younger, and laid his left hand on Manasseh's head, even though he was the firstborn.

¹⁵He blessed Joseph and said: The God in whose presence my forefathers lived, my forefathers Abraham and Isaac, the

God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day,

¹⁶ the angel who rescued me from all misfortune, may he bless these boys; they will be called by my name, and by the names of my forefathers, Abraham and Isaac; may they grow into a great people on earth.

¹⁷ When Joseph saw his father laying his right hand on Ephraim's head, he was displeased and took hold of his father's hand to move it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's.

¹⁸ He said, That is not right, father. This is the firstborn; lay your right hand on his head.

¹⁹ But his father refused; he said, I know, my son, I know. He too will become a people, and he too will become great. Yet his younger brother will be greater than he, and his descendants will be a whole nation in themselves.

²⁰ So he blessed them that day and said: When a blessing is pronounced in Israel, men shall use your names and say, May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh. So he set Ephraim before Manasseh.

²¹ Then Israel said to Joseph, I am about to die, but God will be with you and bring you back to the land of your fathers,

²² where I assign you one ridge of land more than your brothers; I took it from the Amorites with sword and bow.

49 ¹ JACOB summoned his sons. Come near, he said, and I shall tell you what is to happen to you in days to come.

² Gather round me and listen, you sons of Jacob; listen to Israel your father.

³ Reuben, you are my firstborn, my strength and the first fruit of my vigour, excelling in pride, excelling in might.

⁴ Uncontrollable as a flood, you will excel no more, because you climbed into your father's bed, and defiled his concubine's couch.

⁵ Simeon and Levi are brothers, weapons of violence are their counsels.

⁶ My soul will not enter their council, my heart will not join their assembly; for in anger they killed men, wantonly they hamstrung oxen.

⁷ A curse be on their anger, for it was fierce; a curse on their wrath, for it was

ruthless! I shall scatter them in Jacob, I shall disperse them in Israel.

⁸Judah, your brothers will praise you; your hand will be on the neck of your enemies. Your father's sons will bow to you in homage.

⁹Judah, a lion's whelp, you have returned from the kill, my son; you crouch and stretch like a lion, like a lion no one dares rouse.

¹⁰The sceptre will not pass from Judah, nor the staff from between his feet, until he receives what is his due and the obedience of the nations is his.

¹¹He tethers his donkey to the vine, and its colt to the red vine; he washes his cloak in wine, his robe in the blood of grapes.

¹²Darker than wine are his eyes, whiter than milk his teeth.

¹³Zebulun lives by the seashore; his coast is a haven for ships, and his frontier touches Sidon.

¹⁴Issachar, a gelded donkey lying down in the cattle pens,

¹⁵saw that a settled home was good and that the land was pleasant, so

he bent his back to the burden and submitted to forced labour.

¹⁶Dan -- his people will be strong as any tribe in Israel!

¹⁷Let Dan be a viper on the road, a horned snake on the path, that bites the horse's fetlock so that the rider is thrown off backwards.

¹⁸I wait in hope for salvation from you, LORD.

¹⁹Gad is raided by raiders, and he will raid them from the rear.

²⁰Asher will feast every day, and provide dishes fit for a king.

²¹Naphtali is a spreading terebinth putting forth lovely boughs.

²²Joseph is a fruitful tree by a spring, whose branches climb over the wall.

²³The archers savagely attacked him, shooting and assailing him fiercely,

²⁴but Joseph's bow remained unailing and his arms were tireless by the power of the Strong One of Jacob, by the name of the Shepherd of Israel,

²⁵by the God of your father -- so may he help you! By God Almighty -- so may he bless you with the blessings of heaven above, and the blessings of the

deep that lies below! The blessings of breast and womb

²⁶and the blessings of your father are stronger than the blessings of the eternal mountains and the bounty of the everlasting hills. May they rest on the head of Joseph, on the brow of him who was prince among his brothers.

²⁷Benjamin is a ravening wolf: in the morning he devours the prey, in the evening he snatches a share of the spoil.

²⁸These are the tribes of Israel, twelve in all, and this was what their father said to them, when he blessed them each in turn.

²⁹Then he gave them his last charge and said, I am about to be gathered to my ancestors; bury me with my forefathers in the cave on the plot of land which belonged to Ephron the Hittite,

³⁰that is the cave on the plot of land at Machpelah east of Mamre in Canaan, the field which Abraham bought from Ephron the Hittite for a burial-place.

³¹There Abraham was buried with his wife Sarah; there Isaac and his wife Rebecca were buried; and that is where I buried Leah.

³²The land and the cave there were bought from the Hittites.

³³When Jacob had finished giving these instructions to his sons, he drew up his feet on to the bed, breathed his last, and was gathered to his ancestors.

50¹ Then Joseph threw himself upon his father, weeping over him and kissing him.

²He gave orders to the physicians in his service to embalm his father, and they did so,

³finishing the task in forty days, the usual time required for embalming.

⁴The Egyptians mourned Israel for seventy days.

⁵When the period of mourning was over, Joseph spoke to members of Pharaoh's household: May I ask a favour -- please speak for me to Pharaoh. Tell him that my father on his deathbed made me swear that I would bury him in the grave that he had bought for himself in Canaan. Ask Pharaoh to let me go up and bury my father; and afterwards I shall return.

⁶Pharaoh's reply was: Go and bury your father in accordance with your oath.

⁷ So Joseph went up to bury his father, and with him went all Pharaoh's officials, the elders of his household, and all the elders of Egypt,

⁸ as well as all Joseph's own household, his brothers, and his father's household; only their children, with the flocks and herds, were left in Goshen.

⁹ Chariots as well as horsemen went up with him, a very great company.

¹⁰ When they came to the threshing-floor of Atad beside the river Jordan, they raised a loud and bitter lamentation; and Joseph observed seven days' mourning for his father.

¹¹ When the Canaanites who lived there saw this mourning at the threshing-floor of Atad, they said, How bitterly the Egyptians are mourning! So they named the place beside the Jordan Abel-mizraim.

¹² Thus Jacob's sons did to him as he had instructed them:

¹³ they took him to Canaan and buried him in the cave on the plot of land at Machpelah, the land which Abraham had bought as a burial-place from Ephron the Hittite, to the east of Mamre.

¹⁴After burying his father, Joseph returned to Egypt with his brothers and all who had gone up with him for the burial.

¹⁵Now that their father was dead, Joseph's brothers were afraid, for they said, What if Joseph should bear a grudge against us and pay us back for all the harm we did to him?

¹⁶They therefore sent a messenger to Joseph to say, In his last words to us before he died, your father gave us this message:

¹⁷Say this to Joseph: I ask you to forgive your brothers crime and wickedness; I know they did you harm. So now we beg you: forgive our crime, for we are servants of your father's God. Joseph was moved to tears by their words.

¹⁸His brothers approached and bowed to the ground before him. We are your slaves, they said.

¹⁹But Joseph replied, Do not be afraid. Am I in the place of God?

²⁰You meant to do me harm; but God meant to bring good out of it by

preserving the lives of many people, as we see today.

²¹ Do not be afraid. I shall provide for you and your dependants. Thus he comforted them and set their minds at rest.

²² Joseph remained in Egypt, he and his father's household. He lived to be a hundred and ten years old,

²³ and saw Ephraim's children to the third generation; he also recognized as his the children of Manasseh's son Machir.

²⁴ He said to his brothers, I am about to die; but God will not fail to come to your aid and take you from here to the land which he promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

²⁵ He made the sons of Israel solemnly swear that when God came to their aid, they would carry his bones up with them from there.

²⁶ So Joseph died in Egypt at the age of a hundred and ten, and he was embalmed and laid in a coffin.

Exodus

1 ¹ THESE are the names of the sons of Israel who, along with their households, accompanied Jacob to Egypt:

² Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah;

³ Issachar, Zebulun, and Benjamin;

⁴ Dan and Naphtali, Gad and Asher.

⁵ All told there were seventy direct descendants of Jacob. Joseph was already in Egypt.

⁶ In course of time Joseph and all his brothers and that entire generation died.

⁷ The Israelites were prolific and increased greatly, becoming so numerous and strong that the land was full of them.

⁸ When a new king ascended the throne of Egypt, one who did not know about Joseph,

⁹ he said to his people, These Israelites have become too many and too strong for us.

¹⁰ We must take steps to ensure that they increase no further; otherwise we

shall find that, if war comes, they will side with the enemy, fight against us, and become masters of the country.

¹¹ So taskmasters were appointed over them to oppress them with forced labour. This is how Pharaoh's store cities, Pithom and Rameses, were built.

¹² But the more oppressive the treatment of the Israelites, the more they increased and spread, until the Egyptians came to loathe them.

¹³ They ground down their Israelite slaves,

¹⁴ and made life bitter for them with their harsh demands, setting them to make mortar and bricks and to do all sorts of tasks in the fields. In every kind of labour they made ruthless use of them.

¹⁵ The king of Egypt issued instructions to the Hebrew midwives, of whom one was called Shiphrah, the other Puah.

¹⁶ When you are attending the Hebrew women in childbirth, he told them, check as the child is delivered: if it is a boy, kill him; if it is a girl, however, let her live.

¹⁷ But the midwives were godfearing women, and did not heed the king's words; they let the male children live.

¹⁸ Pharaoh summoned the midwives and, when he asked them why they had done this and let the male children live,

¹⁹ they answered, Hebrew women are not like Egyptian women; they go into labour and give birth before the midwife arrives.

²⁰ God made the midwives prosper, and the people increased in numbers and strength;

²¹ and because the midwives feared God he gave them families of their own.

²² Pharaoh then issued an order to all the Egyptians that every new-born Hebrew boy was to be thrown into the Nile, but all the girls were to be allowed to live.

2¹ A CERTAIN man, a descendant of Levi, married a Levite woman.

² She conceived and bore a son, and when she saw what a fine child he was, she kept him hidden for three months.

³ Unable to conceal him any longer, she got a rush basket for him, made it watertight with pitch and tar, laid him in

it, and placed it among the reeds by the bank of the Nile.

⁴The child's sister stood some distance away to see what would happen to him.

⁵Pharaoh's daughter came down to bathe in the river, while her ladies-in-waiting walked on the bank. She noticed the basket among the reeds and sent her slave-girl to bring it.

⁶When she opened it, there was the baby; it was crying, and she was moved with pity for it. This must be one of the Hebrew children, she said.

⁷At this the sister approached Pharaoh's daughter: Shall I go and fetch you one of the Hebrew women to act as a wet-nurse for the child?

⁸When Pharaoh's daughter told her to do so, she went and called the baby's mother.

⁹Pharaoh's daughter said to her, Take the child, nurse him for me, and I shall pay you for it. She took the child and nursed him at her breast.

¹⁰Then, when he was old enough, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, who adopted him and called him Moses,

because, said she, I drew him out of the water.

¹¹ ONE day after Moses was grown up, he went out to his own kinsmen and observed their labours. When he saw an Egyptian strike one of his fellow-Hebrews,

¹² he looked this way and that, and, seeing no one about, he struck the Egyptian down and hid his body in the sand.

¹³ Next day when he went out, he came across two Hebrews fighting. He asked the one who was in the wrong, Why are you striking your fellow-countryman?

¹⁴ The man replied, Who set you up as an official and judge over us? Do you mean to murder me as you murdered the Egyptian? Moses was alarmed and said to himself, The affair must have become known.

¹⁵ When it came to Pharaoh's ears, he tried to have Moses put to death, but Moses fled from his presence and went and settled in Midian. As Moses sat by a well one day,

¹⁶ the seven daughters of a priest of Midian came to draw water, and when

they had filled the troughs to water their father's sheep,

¹⁷ some shepherds came and drove them away. But Moses came to the help of the girls and watered the sheep.

¹⁸ When they returned to Reuel, their father, he said, How is it that you are back so quickly today?

¹⁹ An Egyptian rescued us from the shepherds, they answered; he even drew water for us and watered the sheep.

²⁰ Then where is he? their father asked. Why did you leave him there? Go and invite him to eat with us.

²¹ So it came about that Moses agreed to stay with the man, and he gave Moses his daughter Zipporah in marriage.

²² She bore him a son, and Moses called him Gershom, because, he said, I have become an alien in a foreign land.

²³ YEARS passed, during which time the king of Egypt died, but the Israelites still groaned in slavery. They cried out, and their plea for rescue from slavery ascended to God.

²⁴ He heard their groaning and called to mind his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob;

²⁵ he observed the plight of Israel and took heed of it.

3¹ While tending the sheep of his father-in-law Jethro, priest of Midian, Moses led the flock along the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God.

² There an angel of the LORD appeared to him as a fire blazing out from a bush. Although the bush was on fire, it was not being burnt up,

³ and Moses said to himself, I must go across and see this remarkable sight. Why ever does the bush not burn away?

⁴ When the LORD saw that Moses had turned aside to look, he called to him out of the bush, Moses, Moses! He answered, Here I am!

⁵ God said, Do not come near! Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground.

⁶ Then he said, I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.

⁷ The LORD said, I have witnessed the misery of my people in Egypt and have heard them crying out because of

their oppressors. I know what they are suffering

⁸and have come down to rescue them from the power of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that country into a fine, broad land, a land flowing with milk and honey, the territory of Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites.

⁹Now the Israelites cry has reached me, and I have also seen how hard the Egyptians oppress them.

¹⁰Come, I shall send you to Pharaoh, and you are to bring my people Israel out of Egypt.'

¹¹But who am I, Moses said to God, that I should approach Pharaoh and that I should bring the Israelites out of Egypt?

¹²God answered, I am with you. This will be your proof that it is I who have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will all worship God here at this mountain.

¹³Moses said to God, If I come to the Israelites and tell them that the God of their forefathers has sent me to them,

and they ask me his name, what am I to say to them?

¹⁴God answered, I AM that I am. Tell them that I AM has sent you to them.

¹⁵He continued, You are to tell the Israelites that it is the LORD, the God of their forefathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who has sent you to them. This is my name for ever; this is my title in every generation.

¹⁶Go and assemble the elders of Israel; tell them that the LORD, the God of their forefathers, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, has appeared to you and said, I have watched over you and have seen what has been done to you in Egypt,

¹⁷and I have resolved to bring you up out of the misery of Egypt into the country of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, a land flowing with milk and honey.

¹⁸The elders will attend to what you say, and then you must go along with them to the king of Egypt and say to him, The LORD the God of the Hebrews has encountered us. Now, we request

you to give us leave to go a three days' journey into the wilderness to offer sacrifice to the LORD our God.

¹⁹I know well that the king of Egypt will not allow you to go unless he is compelled.

²⁰I shall then stretch out my hand and assail the Egyptians with all the miracles I shall work among them. After that he will send you away.

²¹What is more, I shall bring this people into such favour with the Egyptians that, when you go, you will not go empty-handed.

²²Every woman must ask her neighbour or any woman living in her house for silver and gold jewellery and for clothing; put them on your sons and daughters, and plunder the Egyptians.

4¹ But they will never believe me or listen to what I say, Moses protested; they will say that it is untrue that the LORD appeared to me.

²The LORD said, What is that in your hand? A staff, replied Moses.

³The LORD said, Throw it on the ground. He did so, and it turned into a snake. Moses drew back hastily,

⁴but the LORD said, Put your hand out and seize it by the tail. When he took hold of it, it turned back into a staff in his hand.

⁵This, said the LORD, is to convince the people that the LORD the God of their forefathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, did appear to you.

⁶Then the LORD said to him, Put your hand inside the fold of your cloak. He did so, and when he drew his hand out the skin was white as snow with disease.

⁷The LORD said, Put your hand in again; he did so, and when he drew it out this time it was as healthy as the rest of his body.

⁸Now, said the LORD, if they do not believe you and do not accept the evidence of the first sign, they may be persuaded by the second.

⁹But if they are not convinced even by these two signs and will not accept what you say, then fetch some water from the Nile and pour it out on the dry land, and the water from the Nile will turn to blood on the ground.

¹⁰But, LORD, Moses protested, I have never been a man of ready speech,

never in my life, not even now that you have spoken to me; I am slow and hesitant.

¹¹The LORD said to him, Who is it that gives man speech? Who makes him dumb or deaf? Who makes him keen-sighted or blind? Is it not I, the LORD?

¹²Go now; I shall help you to speak and show you what to say.

¹³Moses said, Lord, send anyone else you like.

¹⁴At this the LORD became angry with Moses: Do you not have a brother, Aaron the Levite? He, I know, will do all the speaking. He is already on his way out to meet you, and he will be overjoyed when he sees you.

¹⁵You are to speak to him and put the words in his mouth; I shall help both of you to speak and tell you both what to do.

¹⁶He will do all the speaking to the people for you; he will be the mouthpiece, and you will be the god he speaks for.

¹⁷And take this staff in your hand; with it you are to work the signs.

¹⁸ Moses then went back to Jethro his father-in-law and said, Let me return to Egypt and see whether my kinsfolk are still alive. Jethro said, Go, and may you have a safe journey.

¹⁹ THE LORD spoke to Moses in Midian. Go back to Egypt, he said, for all those who wanted to kill you are now dead.

²⁰ Moses took his wife and children, mounted them on a donkey, and set out for Egypt with the staff of God in his hand.

²¹ The LORD said to Moses, While you are on your way back to Egypt, keep in mind all the portents I have given you power to show. You are to display these before Pharaoh, but I shall make him obstinate and he will not let the people go.

²² Then tell Pharaoh that these are the words of the LORD: Israel is my firstborn son.

²³ I tell you, let my son go to worship me. Should you refuse to let him go, I shall kill your firstborn son.

²⁴ On the journey, while they were encamped for the night, the LORD met Moses and would have killed him,

²⁵ but Zipporah picked up a sharp flint, cut off her son's foreskin, and touched Moses' genitals with it, saying, You are my blood-bridegroom.

²⁶ So the LORD let Moses alone. It was on that occasion she said, Blood-bridegroom by circumcision.

²⁷ Meanwhile the LORD had ordered Aaron to go and meet Moses in the wilderness. Aaron did so; he met him at the mountain of God and kissed him.

²⁸ Moses told Aaron everything, the words the LORD had sent him to say and the signs he had commanded him to perform.

²⁹ Moses and Aaron then went and assembled all the elders of Israel.

³⁰ Aaron repeated to them everything that the LORD had said to Moses; he performed the signs before the people,

³¹ and they were convinced. When they heard that the LORD had shown his concern for the Israelites and seen their misery, they bowed to the ground in worship.

5¹ After this, Moses and Aaron came to Pharaoh and told him, These are the words of the LORD the God of Israel:

Let my people go so that they may keep a pilgrim-feast in my honour in the wilderness.

²Who is the LORD, said Pharaoh, that I should listen to him and let Israel go? I do not acknowledge the LORD: and I tell you I will not let Israel go.

³They replied, The God of the Hebrews confronted us. Now we request leave to go three days' journey into the wilderness to offer sacrifice to the LORD our God, or else he may attack us with pestilence or sword.

⁴But the Egyptian king answered, What do you mean, Moses and Aaron, by distracting the people from their work? Back to your labours!

⁵Your people already outnumber the native Egyptians; yet you would have them stop working!

⁶Pharaoh issued orders that same day to the people's slave-masters and their foremen

⁷not to supply the people with the straw used in making bricks, as they had done hitherto. Let them go and collect their own straw,

⁸but see that they produce the same tally of bricks as before; on no account reduce it. They are lazy, and that is why they are clamouring to go and offer sacrifice to their God.

⁹Keep these men hard at work; let them attend to that. Take no notice of their lies.

¹⁰The slave-masters and foremen went out and said to the people, Pharaoh's orders are that no more straw is to be supplied.

¹¹Go and get it for yourselves wherever you can find it; but there is to be no reduction in your daily task.

¹²So the people scattered all over Egypt to gather stubble for the straw they needed,

¹³while the slave-masters kept urging them on, demanding that they should complete, day after day, the same quantity as when straw had been supplied.

¹⁴The Israelite foremen were flogged because they were held responsible by Pharaoh's slave-masters, who demanded, Why did you not complete

the usual number of bricks yesterday or today?

¹⁵The foremen came and appealed to Pharaoh: Why does your majesty treat us like this? they said.

¹⁶We are given no straw, yet they keep telling us to make bricks. Here are we being flogged, but the fault lies with your people.

¹⁷The king replied, You are lazy, bone lazy! That is why you keep on about going to offer sacrifice to the LORD.

¹⁸Now get on with your work. You will not be given straw, but you must produce the full tally of bricks.

¹⁹When they were told that they must not let the daily number of bricks fall short, the Israelite foremen realized the trouble they were in.

²⁰As they came from Pharaoh's presence they found Moses and Aaron waiting to meet them,

²¹and said, May this bring the LORD's judgement down on you! You have made us stink in the nostrils of Pharaoh and his subjects; you have put a sword in their hands to slay us.

²² Moses went back to the LORD and said, Lord, why have you brought trouble on this people? And why did you ever send me?

²³ Since I first went to Pharaoh to speak in your name he has treated your people cruelly, and you have done nothing at all to rescue them.

6¹ The LORD answered, Now you will see what I shall do to Pharaoh: he will be compelled to let them go, he will be forced to drive them from his country.

² God said to Moses, I am the LORD.

³ I appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as God Almighty; but I did not let myself be known to them by my name, the LORD.

⁴ I also established my covenant with them to give them Canaan, the land where for a time they settled as foreigners.

⁵ And now I have heard the groaning of the Israelites, enslaved by the Egyptians, and I am mindful of my covenant.

⁶ Therefore say to the Israelites, I am the LORD. I shall free you from your labours in Egypt and deliver you from slavery. I shall rescue you with

outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgement.

⁷I shall adopt you as my people, and I shall be your God. You will know that I, the LORD, am your God, the God who frees you from your labours in Egypt.

⁸I shall lead you to the land which I swore with uplifted hand to give to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. I shall give it you for your possession. I am the LORD.

⁹But when Moses repeated those words to the Israelites, they would not listen to him; because of their cruel slavery, they had reached the depths of despair.

¹⁰Then the LORD said to Moses,

¹¹Go and bid Pharaoh king of Egypt let the Israelites leave his country.

¹²Moses protested to the LORD, If the Israelites do not listen to me, how will Pharaoh listen to such a halting speaker as me?

¹³The LORD then spoke to both Moses and Aaron and gave them their commission concerning the Israelites and Pharaoh, which was that they should bring the Israelites out of Egypt.

¹⁴THESE were the heads of families. Sons of Reuben, Israel's eldest son: Enoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi; these were the families of Reuben.

¹⁵Sons of Simeon: Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Saul, who was the son of a Canaanite woman; these were the families of Simeon.

¹⁶These were the names of the sons of Levi in order of seniority: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. Levi lived to be a hundred and thirty-seven.

¹⁷Sons of Gershon, family by family: Libni and Shimei.

¹⁸Sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. Kohath lived to be a hundred and thirty-three.

¹⁹Sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. These were the families of Levi in order of seniority.

²⁰Amram married his father's sister Jochebed, and she bore him Aaron and Moses. Amram lived to be a hundred and thirty-seven.

²¹Sons of Izhar: Korah, Nepheg, and Zichri.

²²Sons of Uzziel: Mishael, Elzaphan, and Sithri.

²³ Aaron married Elisheba, who was the daughter of Amminadab and the sister of Nahshon, and she bore him Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.

²⁴ Sons of Korah: Assir, Elkanah, and Abiasaph; these were the Korahite families.

²⁵ Eleazar son of Aaron married one of the daughters of Putiel, and she bore him Phinehas. These were the heads of the Levite families, family by family.

²⁶ It was this Aaron, together with Moses, to whom the LORD said, Bring the Israelites out of Egypt, mustered in their tribal hosts.

²⁷ These were the men, this same Moses and Aaron, who told Pharaoh king of Egypt to let the Israelites leave Egypt.

²⁸ WHEN the LORD spoke to Moses in Egypt he said,

²⁹ I am the LORD. Report to Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I say to you.

³⁰ Moses protested to the LORD, I am a halting speaker; how will Pharaoh listen to me?

7 ¹ The LORD answered, See now, I have made you like a god for

Pharaoh, with your brother Aaron as your spokesman.

²Tell Aaron all I command you to say, and he will tell Pharaoh to let the Israelites leave his country.

³But I shall make him stubborn, and though I show sign after sign and portent after portent in the land of Egypt,

⁴Pharaoh will not listen to you. Then I shall assert my power in Egypt, and with mighty acts of judgement I shall bring my people, the Israelites, out of Egypt in their tribal hosts.

⁵When I exert my power against Egypt and bring the Israelites out from there, then the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD.

⁶Moses and Aaron did exactly as the LORD had commanded.

⁷At the time when they spoke to Pharaoh, Moses was eighty years old and Aaron eighty-three.

⁸The LORD said to Moses and Aaron,

⁹If Pharaoh demands some portent from you, then you, Moses, must say to Aaron, Take your staff and throw it down in front of Pharaoh, and it will turn into a serpent.

¹⁰When Moses and Aaron came to Pharaoh, they did as the LORD had told them; Aaron threw down his staff in front of Pharaoh and his courtiers, and it turned into a serpent.

¹¹At this, Pharaoh summoned the wise men and the sorcerers, and the Egyptian magicians did the same thing by their spells:

¹²every man threw his staff down, and each staff turned into a serpent. But Aaron's staff swallowed up theirs.

¹³Pharaoh, however, was obstinate; as the LORD had foretold, he would not listen to Moses and Aaron.

¹⁴The LORD said to Moses, Pharaoh has been obdurate: he has refused to let the people go.

¹⁵In the morning go to him on his way out to the river. Stand on the bank of the Nile to meet him, and take with you the staff that turned into a snake.

¹⁶Say to him: The LORD the God of the Hebrews sent me with this message for you: Let my people go in order to worship me in the wilderness. So far you have not listened.

¹⁷ Now the LORD says: By this you will know that I am the LORD. With this rod I hold in my hand, I shall strike the water of the Nile and it will be changed into blood.

¹⁸ The fish will die and the river will stink, and the Egyptians will be unable to drink water from the Nile.

¹⁹ The LORD told Moses to say to Aaron, Take your staff and stretch your hand out over the waters of Egypt, its rivers and its canals, and over every pool and cistern, to turn them into blood. There will be blood throughout the whole of Egypt, blood even in their wooden bowls and stone jars.

²⁰ Moses and Aaron did as the LORD had commanded. In the sight of Pharaoh and his courtiers Aaron lifted his staff and struck the water of the Nile, and all the water was changed to blood.

²¹ The fish died and the river stank, so that the Egyptians could not drink water from the Nile. There was blood everywhere in Egypt.

²² But the Egyptian magicians did the same thing by their spells. So Pharaoh still remained obstinate, as the LORD

had foretold, and he did not listen to Moses and Aaron.

²³He turned and went into his palace, dismissing the matter from his mind.

²⁴The Egyptians all dug for drinking water round about the river, because they could not drink from the waters of the Nile itself.

²⁵This lasted for seven days from the time when the LORD struck the Nile.

8¹The LORD then told Moses to go to Pharaoh and say, These are the words of the LORD: Let my people go in order to worship me.

²If you refuse, I shall bring a plague of frogs over the whole of your territory.

³The Nile will swarm with them. They will come up from the river into your palace, into your bedroom and onto your bed, into the houses of your courtiers and your people, into your ovens and your kneading troughs.

⁴The frogs will clamber over you, your people, and all your courtiers.

⁵The LORD told Moses to say to Aaron, Take your staff in your hand and stretch it out over the rivers, canals, and pools, to bring up frogs on the land of Egypt.

⁶When Aaron stretched his hand over the waters of Egypt, the frogs came up and covered the land.

⁷But the magicians did the same thing by their spells: they too brought up frogs on the land of Egypt.

⁸Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron. Pray to the LORD, he said, to remove the frogs from me and my people, and I shall let the people go to sacrifice to the LORD.

⁹Moses said, I give your majesty the choice of a time for me to intercede for you, your courtiers, and your people, to rid you and your houses of the frogs; none will be left except in the Nile.

¹⁰Tomorrow, said Pharaoh. It will be as you say, replied Moses, so that you may know there is no one like our God, the LORD.

¹¹The frogs will leave you, your houses, courtiers, and people: none will be left except in the Nile.

¹²Moses and Aaron left Pharaoh's presence, and Moses asked the LORD to remove the frogs which he had brought on Pharaoh.

¹³The LORD granted the request, and in house, farmyard, and field all the frogs perished.

¹⁴They were piled into countless heaps and the land stank.

¹⁵But when Pharaoh found that he was given relief he became obdurate; as the LORD had foretold, he would not listen to Moses and Aaron.

¹⁶The LORD told Moses to say to Aaron, Stretch out your staff and strike the dust on the ground, and it will turn into maggots throughout the whole of Egypt.

¹⁷They obeyed, and when Aaron stretched out his hand with his staff in it and struck the dust, it turned into maggots on man and beast. Throughout Egypt all the dust turned into maggots.

¹⁸The magicians tried to produce maggots in the same way by their spells, but they failed. The maggots were everywhere, on man and beast.

¹⁹It is the hand of God, said the magicians to Pharaoh, but Pharaoh remained obstinate; as the LORD had foretold, he would not listen.

²⁰The LORD told Moses to rise early in the morning and stand in Pharaoh's path

as he went out to the river, and to say to him, These are the words of the LORD: Let my people go in order to worship me.

²¹ If you refuse, I shall send swarms of flies on you, your courtiers, your people, and your houses; the houses of the Egyptians will be filled with the swarms and so will all the land they live in.

²² But on that day I shall make an exception of Goshen, the land where my people live: there will be no swarms there. Thus you will know that I, the LORD, am here in the land.

²³ I shall make a distinction between my people and yours. Tomorrow this sign will appear.

²⁴ The LORD did this; dense swarms of flies infested Pharaoh's palace and the houses of his courtiers; throughout Egypt the land was threatened with ruin by the swarms.

²⁵ Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron and said to them, Go and sacrifice to your God, but in this country.

²⁶ That is impossible, replied Moses, because the victim we are to sacrifice to the LORD our God is an abomination to the Egyptians. If the Egyptians see

us offer such an animal, they will surely stone us to death.

²⁷ We must go a three days' journey into the wilderness to sacrifice to the LORD our God, as he commands us.

²⁸ I shall let you go, said Pharaoh, and you may sacrifice to your God in the wilderness; only do not go far. Now intercede for me.

²⁹ Moses answered, As soon as I leave you I shall intercede with the LORD. Tomorrow the swarms will depart from Pharaoh, his courtiers, and his people. Only your majesty must not trifle any more with the people by preventing them from going to sacrifice to the LORD.

³⁰ Then Moses left Pharaoh and interceded with the LORD.

³¹ The LORD did as Moses had promised; he removed the swarms from Pharaoh, his courtiers, and his people; not one was left.

³² But once again Pharaoh became obdurate and would not let the people go.

9¹ The LORD said to Moses, Go in to Pharaoh and tell him, The LORD the

God of the Hebrews says: Let my people go in order to worship me.

²If you refuse to let them go, if you still keep them in subjection,

³the LORD will strike your livestock out in the country, the horses and donkeys, camels, cattle, and sheep with a devastating pestilence.

⁴But the LORD will make a distinction between Israel's livestock and the livestock of the Egyptians. Of all that belong to Israel not a single one will die.

⁵The LORD fixed a time and said, Tomorrow I shall do this throughout the land.

⁶The next day the LORD struck. All the livestock of Egypt died, but from Israel's livestock not one single beast died.

⁷Pharaoh made enquiries and was told that from Israel's livestock not an animal had died; and yet he remained obdurate and would not let the people go.

⁸The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, Take handfuls of soot from a kiln, and when Moses tosses it into the air in Pharaoh's sight,

⁹it will turn into a fine dust over the whole of Egypt. Throughout the land it

will produce festering boils on man and beast.

¹⁰They took the soot from the kiln and when they stood before Pharaoh, Moses tossed it into the air, and it produced festering boils on man and beast.

¹¹The magicians were no match for Moses because of the boils, which attacked them and all the Egyptians.

¹²But the LORD made Pharaoh obstinate; as the LORD had foretold to Moses, he would not listen to Moses and Aaron.

¹³The LORD then told Moses to rise early and confront Pharaoh, saying to him, The LORD the God of the Hebrews has said: Let my people go in order to worship me.

¹⁴This time I shall strike home with all my plagues against you yourself, your courtiers, and your people, so that you may know that there is none like me in all the world.

¹⁵By now I could have stretched out my hand, and struck you and your people with pestilence, and you would have vanished from the earth.

¹⁶I have let you live only to show you my power and to spread my fame all over the world.

¹⁷Since you still obstruct my people and will not let them go,

¹⁸tomorrow at this time I shall cause a violent hailstorm to come, such as has never been in Egypt from its first beginnings until now.

¹⁹Send now and bring your herds under cover, and everything you have out in the open field. Anything which happens to be left out in the open, whether man or beast, will die when the hail falls on it.

²⁰Those of Pharaoh's subjects who feared the warning of the LORD hurried their slaves and livestock into shelter;

²¹but those who did not take it to heart left them in the open.

²²The LORD said to Moses, Stretch your hand towards the sky to bring down hail on the whole land of Egypt, on man and beast and every growing thing throughout the land.

²³As Moses stretched his staff towards the sky, the LORD sent thunder and hail, with fire flashing to the ground. The

LORD rained down hail on the land of Egypt,

²⁴ hail and fiery flashes through the hail, so heavy that there had been nothing like it in all Egypt from the time that Egypt became a nation.

²⁵ Throughout Egypt the hail struck down everything in the fields, both man and beast; it beat down every growing thing and shattered every tree.

²⁶ Only in the land of Goshen, where the Israelites lived, was there no hail.

²⁷ Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron. This time I have sinned, he said; the LORD is in the right; I and my people are in the wrong.

²⁸ Intercede with the LORD, for we can bear no more of this thunder and hail. I shall let you go; you need stay no longer.

²⁹ Moses said, As soon as I leave the city I shall spread out my hands in prayer to the LORD. The thunder will cease, and there will be no more hail, so that you may know that the earth is the LORD's.

³⁰ But you and your subjects, I know, do not yet fear the LORD God.

³¹ (The flax and barley were destroyed because the barley was in the ear and the flax in bud,

³² but the wheat and vetches were not destroyed because they come later.)

³³ Moses left Pharaoh's presence and went out of the city, where he lifted up his hands to the LORD in prayer: the thunder and hail ceased, and no more rain fell.

³⁴ When Pharaoh saw that the downpour, the hail, and the thunder had ceased, he went back to his sinful obduracy, he and his courtiers.

³⁵ Pharaoh remained obstinate; as the LORD had foretold through Moses, he would not let the people go.

10¹ The LORD said to Moses, Go in to Pharaoh. I have made him and his courtiers obdurate, so that I may show these signs among them,

² and so that you can tell your children and grandchildren the story: how I toyed with the Egyptians, and what signs I showed among them. Thus you will know that I am the LORD.

³ Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said to him, The LORD the God of the

Hebrews has said: How long will you refuse to humble yourself before me? Let my people go in order to worship me.

⁴If you refuse to let them go, tomorrow I am going to bring locusts into your country.

⁵They will cover the face of the land so that it cannot be seen. They will eat up the last remnant left you by the hail. They will devour every tree that grows in your countryside.

⁶Your houses and your courtiers houses, every house in Egypt, will be full of them; your fathers never saw the like, nor their fathers before them; such a thing has not happened from their time until now. With that he turned and left Pharaoh's presence.

⁷Pharaoh's courtiers said to him, How long must we be caught in this man's toils? Let their menfolk go and worship the LORD their God. Do you not know by now that Egypt is ruined?

⁸So Moses and Aaron were brought back to Pharaoh, and he said to them, Go, worship the LORD your God; but who exactly is to go?

⁹Everyone, said Moses, young and old, boys and girls, sheep and cattle; for we have to keep the LORD's pilgrim-feast.

¹⁰Pharaoh replied, The LORD be with you if I let you and your dependants go! You have some sinister purpose in mind.

¹¹No, your menfolk may go and worship the LORD, for that is what you were asking for. And they were driven from Pharaoh's presence.

¹²The LORD said to Moses, Stretch out your hand over Egypt so that locusts may come and invade the land and devour all the vegetation in it, whatever the hail has left.

¹³When Moses stretched out his staff over the land of Egypt, the LORD sent a wind roaring in from the east all that day and all that night; and when morning came the east wind had brought the locusts.

¹⁴They invaded the whole land of Egypt, and settled on all its territory in swarms so dense that the like of them had never been seen before, nor ever will be again.

¹⁵They covered the surface of the whole land till it was black with them;

they devoured all the vegetation and all the fruit of the trees that the hail had spared; there was no green left on tree or plant throughout all Egypt.

¹⁶Pharaoh hastily summoned Moses and Aaron. I have sinned against the LORD your God and against you, he said.

¹⁷Forgive my sin, I pray, just this once, and intercede with the LORD your God to remove this deadly plague from me.

¹⁸When Moses left Pharaoh and interceded with the LORD,

¹⁹the wind was changed by the LORD into a westerly gale, which carried the locusts away and swept them into the Red Sea. Not one locust was left within the borders of Egypt.

²⁰But the LORD made Pharaoh obstinate, and he would not let the Israelites go.

²¹Then the LORD said to Moses, Stretch out your hand towards the sky so that over the land of Egypt there may be a darkness so dense that it can be felt.

²²Moses stretched out his hand towards the sky, and for three days pitch darkness covered the whole land of Egypt.

²³ People could not see one another, and for three days no one stirred from where he was. But where the Israelites were living there was no darkness.

²⁴ Pharaoh summoned Moses. Go, worship the LORD, he said. Your dependants may go with you; but your flocks and herds must remain here.

²⁵ But Moses said, No, you yourself must supply us with animals for sacrifice and whole-offering to the LORD our God;

²⁶ and our own livestock must go with us too -- not a hoof must be left behind. We may need animals from our own flocks to worship the LORD our God; we ourselves cannot tell until we are there how we are to worship the LORD.

²⁷ The LORD made Pharaoh obstinate, and he refused to let them go.

²⁸ Be off! Leave me! he said to Moses. Mind you do not see my face again, for on the day you do, you die.

²⁹ You are right, said Moses; I shall not see your face again.

11 ¹ The LORD said to Moses, One last plague I shall bring on Pharaoh and Egypt. When he finally lets

you go, he will drive you out forcibly as a man might dismiss a rejected bride.

²Tell the people that everyone, men and women, should ask their neighbours for silver and gold jewellery.

³The LORD made the Egyptians well disposed towards them and, moreover, in Egypt Moses was a very great man in the eyes of Pharaoh's courtiers and of the people.

⁴Moses said, The LORD said: At midnight I shall go out among the Egyptians.

⁵All the firstborn in Egypt shall die, from the firstborn of Pharaoh on his throne to the firstborn of the slave-girl at the handmill, besides the firstborn of the cattle.

⁶From all over Egypt there will go up a great cry, the like of which has never been heard before, nor ever will be again.

⁷But throughout all Israel no sound will be heard from man or beast, not even a dog's bark. Thus you will know that the LORD distinguishes between Egypt and Israel.

⁸All these courtiers of yours will come down to me, prostrate themselves, and cry, Go away, you and all the people who follow at your heels. When that time comes I shall go. In hot anger, Moses left Pharaoh's presence.

⁹The LORD said to Moses, Pharaoh will not listen to you; I shall therefore show still more portents in the land of Egypt.

¹⁰Moses and Aaron had shown all these portents in the presence of Pharaoh, and yet the LORD made him obstinate, and he would not let the Israelites leave his country.

12¹THE LORD said to Moses and Aaron in Egypt:

²This month is to be for you the first of the months; you are to make it the first month of the year.

³Say to the whole community of Israel: On the tenth day of this month let each man procure a lamb or kid for his family, one for each household,

⁴but if a household is too small for one lamb or kid, then, taking into account the number of persons, the man and his nearest neighbour may take one between them. They are to share the

cost according to the amount each person eats.

⁵Your animal, taken either from the sheep or the goats, must be without blemish, a yearling male.

⁶Have it in safe keeping until the fourteenth day of this month, and then all the assembled community of Israel must slaughter the victims between dusk and dark.

⁷They must take some of the blood and smear it on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses in which they eat the victims.

⁸On that night they must eat the flesh roasted on the fire; they must eat it with unleavened bread and bitter herbs.

⁹You are not to eat any of it raw or even boiled in water, but roasted: head, shins, and entrails.

¹⁰You are not to leave any of it till morning; anything left over until morning must be destroyed by fire.

¹¹This is the way in which you are to eat it: have your belt fastened, sandals on your feet, and your staff in your hand, and you must eat in urgent haste. It is the LORD's Passover.

¹²On that night I shall pass through the land of Egypt and kill every firstborn of man and beast. Thus I shall execute judgement, I the LORD, against all the gods of Egypt.

¹³As for you, the blood will be a sign on the houses in which you are: when I see the blood I shall pass over you; when I strike Egypt, the mortal blow will not touch you.

¹⁴You are to keep this day as a day of remembrance, and make it a pilgrim-feast, a festival of the LORD; generation after generation you are to observe it as a statute for all time.

¹⁵For seven days you are to eat unleavened bread. On the very first day you must rid your houses of leaven; from the first day to the seventh anyone who eats leavened bread is to be expelled from Israel.

¹⁶On the first day there is to be a sacred assembly and on the seventh day a sacred assembly: on these days no work is to be done, except what must be done to provide food for everyone; only that will be allowed.

¹⁷You are to observe the feast of Unleavened Bread because it was on this very day that I brought you out of Egypt in your tribal hosts. Observe this day from generation to generation as a statute for all time.

¹⁸You are to eat unleavened bread in the first month from the evening which begins the fourteenth day until the evening which begins the twenty-first day.

¹⁹For seven days no leaven must be found in your houses; anyone who eats anything fermented is to be expelled from the community of Israel, be he foreigner or native.

²⁰You must eat nothing fermented; wherever you live, you must eat unleavened bread.

²¹Moses summoned all the elders of Israel and said, Go at once, procure lambs for your families, and slaughter the Passover.

²²Then take a bunch of marjoram, dip it in the blood in the basin, and smear some blood from the basin on the lintel and the two doorposts. Nobody may go

out through the door of his house till morning.

²³The LORD will go throughout Egypt and strike it, but when he sees the blood on the lintel and the two doorposts, he will pass over that door and not let the destroyer enter to strike you.

²⁴You are to observe this as a statute for you and your children for all time;

²⁵when you enter the land which the LORD will give you as he promised, you are to observe this rite.

²⁶When your children ask you, What is the meaning of this rite?

²⁷you must say, It is the LORD's Passover, for he passed over the houses of the Israelites in Egypt when he struck the Egyptians and spared our houses. The people bowed low in worship.

²⁸The Israelites went and did exactly as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron;

²⁹and by midnight the LORD had struck down all the firstborn in Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh on his throne to the firstborn of the prisoner in the dungeon, besides the firstborn of cattle.

³⁰ Before night was over Pharaoh rose, he and all his courtiers and all the Egyptians, and there was great wailing, for not a house in Egypt was without its dead.

³¹ Pharaoh summoned Moses and Aaron while it was still night and said, Up with you! Be off, and leave my people, you and the Israelites. Go and worship the LORD, as you request;

³² take your sheep and cattle, and go; and ask God's blessing on me also.

³³ The Egyptians urged on the people and hurried them out of the country, or else, they said, we shall all be dead.

³⁴ The people picked up their dough before it was leavened, wrapped their kneading troughs in their cloaks, and slung them on their shoulders.

³⁵ Meanwhile, as Moses had told them, the Israelites had asked the Egyptians for silver and gold jewellery and for clothing.

³⁶ Because the LORD had made the Egyptians well disposed towards them, they let the Israelites have whatever they asked; in this way the Egyptians were plundered.

³⁷ THE Israelites set out from Rameses on the way to Succoth, about six hundred thousand men on foot, as well as women and children.

³⁸ With them too went a large company of others, and animals in great numbers, both flocks and herds.

³⁹ The dough they had brought from Egypt they baked into unleavened loaves of bread, because there was no leaven; for they had been driven out of Egypt and had had no time even to get food ready for themselves.

⁴⁰ The Israelites had been settled in Egypt for four hundred and thirty years.

⁴¹ At the end of the four hundred and thirty years to the very day, all the tribes of the LORD came out of Egypt.

⁴² This was the night when the LORD kept vigil to bring them out of Egypt. It is the LORD's night, a vigil for all Israelites generation after generation.

⁴³ The LORD said to Moses and Aaron: This is the statute for the Passover: No foreigner may partake of it;

⁴⁴ any bought slave may partake provided you have circumcised him;

⁴⁵ no visitor or hired man may partake of it.

⁴⁶ Each Passover victim must be eaten inside one house, and you must not take any of the flesh outside. You must not break any of its bones.

⁴⁷ The whole community of Israel is to keep this feast.

⁴⁸ If aliens settled among you keep the Passover to the LORD, every male among them must first be circumcised, and then he can take part; he will rank as native-born. No male who is uncircumcised may eat of it.

⁴⁹ The same law will apply both to the native-born and to the alien who is living among you.

⁵⁰ All the Israelites did exactly as the LORD had commanded Moses and Aaron;

⁵¹ and on that very day the LORD brought the Israelites out of Egypt mustered in their tribal hosts.

13¹ The LORD spoke to Moses. He said,

² Every firstborn, the first birth of every womb among the Israelites, you must dedicate to me, both man and beast; it belongs to me.

³Then Moses said to the people, Remember this day, the day on which you have come out of Egypt, the land of slavery, because the LORD by the strength of his hand has brought you out. Nothing leavened may be eaten this day,

⁴for today, in the month of Abib, is the day of your exodus.

⁵When the LORD has brought you into the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Hivites, and Jebusites, the land which he swore to your forefathers to give you, a land flowing with milk and honey, then in this same month you must observe this rite:

⁶for seven days you are to eat unleavened bread, and on the seventh day there is to be a pilgrim-feast of the LORD.

⁷Only unleavened bread is to be eaten during the seven days; nothing fermented or leavened must be seen throughout your territory.

⁸On that day you are to tell your son, This is because of what the LORD did for me when I came out of Egypt.

⁹You must have the record of it as a sign upon your hand, and as a reminder on your forehead to make sure that the law of the LORD is always on your lips, because the LORD with a strong hand brought you out of Egypt.

¹⁰This is a statute to be kept by you at the appointed time from year to year.

¹¹After the LORD has brought you into the land of the Canaanites and given it to you, as he swore to you and to your forefathers,

¹²you are to make over to the LORD the first birth of every womb; and of all firstborn offspring of your animals the males belong to the LORD.

¹³Every firstborn male donkey you may redeem with a kid or lamb, but if you do not redeem it, you must break its neck. Every firstborn among your sons you must redeem.

¹⁴When in time to come your son asks you what this means, say to him, By the strength of his hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

¹⁵Pharaoh stubbornly refused to let us go, and the LORD killed all the firstborn

in Egypt, both man and beast. That is why I sacrifice to the LORD the first birth of every womb if it is a male, and why I redeem every firstborn of my sons.

¹⁶You must have the record of it as a sign on your hand, and as a phylactery on your forehead, because by the strength of his hand the LORD brought us out of Egypt.

¹⁷WHEN Pharaoh let the people go, God did not guide them by the road leading towards the Philistines, although that was the shortest way; for he said, The people may change their minds when war confronts them, and they may turn back to Egypt.

¹⁸So God made them go round by way of the wilderness towards the Red Sea. Thus the fifth generation of Israelites departed from Egypt.

¹⁹Moses took the bones of Joseph with him, because Joseph had exacted an oath from the Israelites: Some day, he said, God will show his care for you, and then, as you leave, you must take my bones with you.

²⁰They set out from Succoth and encamped at Etham on the edge of the wilderness.

²¹And all the time the LORD went before them, by day a pillar of cloud to guide them on their journey, by night a pillar of fire to give them light; so they could travel both by day and by night.

²²The pillar of cloud never left its place in front of the people by day, nor did the pillar of fire by night.

14 ¹The LORD spoke to Moses.
²Tell the Israelites, he said, they are to turn back and encamp before Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea to the east of Baal-zephon; your camp shall be opposite, by the sea.

³Pharaoh will then think that the Israelites are finding themselves in difficult country, and are hemmed in by the wilderness.

⁴I shall make Pharaoh obstinate, and he will pursue them, so that I may win glory for myself at the expense of Pharaoh and all his army; and the Egyptians will know that I am the LORD. The Israelites did as they were ordered.

⁵When it was reported to the Egyptian king that the Israelites had gone, he and his courtiers had a change of heart and said, What is this we have done? We have let our Israelite slaves go free!

⁶Pharaoh had his chariot yoked, and took his troops with him,

⁷six hundred picked chariots and all the other chariots of Egypt, with a commander in each.

⁸Then, made obstinate by the LORD, Pharaoh king of Egypt pursued the Israelites as they marched defiantly away.

⁹The Egyptians, all Pharaoh's chariots and horses, cavalry and infantry, went in pursuit, and overtook them encamped beside the sea by Pi-hahiroth to the east of Baal-zephon.

¹⁰Pharaoh was almost upon them when the Israelites looked up and saw the Egyptians close behind, and in terror they clamoured to the LORD for help.

¹¹They said to Moses, Were there no graves in Egypt, that you have brought us here to perish in the wilderness? See what you have done to us by bringing us out of Egypt!

¹²Is this not just what we meant when we said in Egypt, Leave us alone; let us be slaves to the Egyptians? Better for us to serve as slaves to the Egyptians than to perish in the wilderness.

¹³But Moses answered, Have no fear; stand firm and see the deliverance that the LORD will bring you this day; for as sure as you see the Egyptians now, you will never see them again.

¹⁴The LORD will fight for you; so say no more.

¹⁵The LORD said to Moses, What is the meaning of this clamour? Tell the Israelites to strike camp,

¹⁶and you are to raise high your staff and hold your hand out over the sea to divide it asunder, so that the Israelites can pass through the sea on dry ground.

¹⁷For my part I shall make the Egyptians obstinate and they will come after you; thus I shall win glory for myself at the expense of Pharaoh and his army, chariots and cavalry all together.

¹⁸The Egyptians will know that I am the LORD when I win glory for myself at the expense of their Pharaoh, his chariots and horsemen.

¹⁹The angel of God, who had travelled in front of the Israelites, now moved away to the rear. The pillar of cloud moved from the front and took up its position behind them,

²⁰thus coming between the Egyptians and the Israelites. The cloud brought on darkness and early nightfall, so that contact was lost throughout the night.

²¹Then Moses held out his hand over the sea, and the LORD drove the sea away with a strong east wind all night long, and turned the seabed into dry land. The waters were divided asunder,

²²and the Israelites went through the sea on the dry ground, while the waters formed a wall to right and left of them.

²³The Egyptians, all Pharaoh's horse, his chariots and cavalry, followed in pursuit into the sea.

²⁴In the morning watch the LORD looked down on the Egyptian army through the pillar of fire and cloud, and he threw them into a panic.

²⁵He clogged their chariot wheels and made them drag along heavily, so that the Egyptians said, It is the LORD

fighting for Israel against Egypt; let us flee.

²⁶Then the LORD said to Moses, Hold your hand out over the sea, so that the water may flow back on the Egyptians, their chariots and horsemen.

²⁷Moses held his hand out over the sea, and at daybreak the water returned to its usual place and the Egyptians fled before its advance, but the LORD swept them into the sea.

²⁸As the water came back it covered all Pharaoh's army, the chariots and cavalry, which had pressed the pursuit into the sea. Not one survived.

²⁹Meanwhile the Israelites had passed along the dry ground through the sea, with the water forming a wall for them to right and to left.

³⁰That day the LORD saved Israel from the power of Egypt. When the Israelites saw the Egyptians lying dead on the seashore,

³¹and saw the great power which the LORD had put forth against Egypt, the people were in awe of the LORD and put their faith in him and in Moses his servant.

15¹ Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the LORD: I shall sing to the LORD, for he has risen up in triumph; horse and rider he has hurled into the sea.

² The LORD is my refuge and my defence; he has shown himself my deliverer. He is my God, and I shall glorify him; my father's God, and I shall exalt him.

³ The LORD is a warrior; the LORD is his name.

⁴ Pharaoh's chariots and his army he has cast into the sea; the flower of his officers are engulfed in the Red Sea.

⁵ The watery abyss has covered them; they sank to the depths like a stone.

⁶ Your right hand, LORD, is majestic in strength; your right hand, LORD, shattered the enemy.

⁷ In the fullness of your triumph you overthrew those who opposed you: you let loose your fury; it consumed them like stubble.

⁸ At the blast of your anger the sea piled up; the water stood up like a bank; out at sea the great deep congealed.

⁹The enemy boasted, I shall pursue, I shall overtake; I shall divide the spoil, I shall glut my appetite on them; I shall draw my sword, I shall rid myself of them.

¹⁰You blew with your blast; the sea covered them; they sank like lead in the swelling waves.

¹¹LORD, who is like you among the gods? Who is like you, majestic in holiness, worthy of awe and praise, worker of wonders?

¹²You stretched out your right hand; the earth engulfed them.

¹³In your constant love you led the people whom you had redeemed: you guided them by your strength to your holy dwelling-place.

¹⁴Nations heard and trembled; anguish seized the dwellers in Philistia.

¹⁵The chieftains of Edom were then dismayed, trembling seized the leaders of Moab, the inhabitants of Canaan were all panic-stricken;

¹⁶terror and dread fell upon them: through the might of your arm they stayed stone-still while your people

passed, LORD, while the people whom you made your own passed by.

¹⁷You will bring them in and plant them in the mount that is your possession, the dwelling-place, LORD, of your own making, the sanctuary, LORD, which your own hands established.

¹⁸The LORD will reign for ever and for ever.

¹⁹When Pharaoh's horse, both chariots and cavalry, went into the sea, the LORD brought back the waters over them; but Israel had passed through the sea on dry ground.

²⁰The prophetess Miriam, Aaron's sister, took up her tambourine, and all the women followed her, dancing to the sound of tambourines;

²¹and Miriam sang them this refrain: Sing to the LORD, for he has risen up in triumph: horse and rider he has hurled into the sea.

²²MOSES led Israel from the Red Sea out into the wilderness of Shur, where for three days they travelled through the wilderness without finding water.

²³When they came to Marah, they could not drink the water there because it was

bitter; that is why the place was called Marah.

²⁴The people complained to Moses, asking, What are we to drink?

²⁵Moses cried to the LORD, who showed him a log which, when thrown into the water, made the water sweet. It was there that the LORD laid down a statute and rule of life; there he put the people to the test.

²⁶He said, If only you will obey the LORD your God, if you will do what is right in his eyes, if you will listen to his commands and keep all his statutes, then I shall never bring on you any of the sufferings which I brought on the Egyptians; for I the LORD am your healer.

²⁷They came to Elim, where there were twelve springs and seventy palm trees, and there they encamped beside the water.

16¹The whole Israelite community, setting out from Elim, arrived at the wilderness of Sin, which lies between Elim and Sinai. This was on the fifteenth day of the second month after they left Egypt.

²The Israelites all complained to Moses and Aaron in the wilderness.

³They said, If only we had died at the LORD's hand in Egypt, where we sat by the fleshpots and had plenty of bread! But you have brought us out into this wilderness to let this whole assembly starve to death.

⁴The LORD said to Moses, I shall rain down bread from heaven for you. Each day the people are to go out and gather a day's supply, so that I can put them to the test and see whether they follow my instructions or not.

⁵But on the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it should be twice as much as they gather on other days.

⁶Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites, In the evening you will know that it was the LORD who brought you out of Egypt,

⁷and in the morning you will see the glory of the LORD, because he has listened to your complaints against him. Who are we that you should bring complaints against us?

⁸You will know this, Moses said, when in answer to your complaints the LORD gives you flesh to eat in the evening, and in the morning bread in plenty. What are we? It is against the LORD that you bring your complaints, not against us.

⁹Moses told Aaron to say to the whole community of Israel, Come into the presence of the LORD, for he has listened to your complaints.

¹⁰While Aaron was addressing the whole Israelite community, they looked towards the wilderness, and there was the glory of the LORD appearing in the cloud.

¹¹The LORD spoke to Moses:

¹²I have heard the complaints of the Israelites. Say to them: Between dusk and dark you will have flesh to eat and in the morning bread in plenty. You will know that I the LORD am your God.

¹³That evening a flock of quails flew in and settled over the whole camp; in the morning a fall of dew lay all around it.

¹⁴When the dew was gone, there over the surface of the wilderness fine flakes appeared, fine as hoar-frost on the ground.

¹⁵When the Israelites saw it, they said one to another, What is that? because they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, That is the bread which the LORD has given you to eat.

¹⁶Here is the command the LORD has given: Each of you is to gather as much as he can eat: let every man take an omer apiece for every person in his tent.

¹⁷The Israelites did this, and they gathered, some more, some less,

¹⁸but when they measured it by the omer, those who had gathered more had not too much, and those who had gathered less had not too little. Each had just as much as he could eat.

¹⁹Moses said, No one is to keep any of it till morning.

²⁰Some, however, did not listen to him; they kept part of it till morning, and it became full of maggots and stank, and Moses was angry with them.

²¹Each morning every man gathered as much as he needed; it melted away when the sun grew hot.

²²On the sixth day they gathered twice as much food, two omers each, and

when the chiefs of the community all came and told Moses,

²³This, he answered, is what the LORD has said: Tomorrow is a day of sacred rest, a sabbath holy to the LORD. So bake what you want to bake now, and boil what you want to boil; what remains over put aside to be kept till morning.

²⁴So they put it aside till morning as Moses had commanded, and it neither stank nor became infested with maggots.

²⁵Eat it today, said Moses, because today is a sabbath of the LORD. Today you will find none outside.

²⁶For six days you may gather it, but on the seventh day, the sabbath, there will be none.

²⁷Some of the people did go out to gather it on the seventh day, but they found nothing.

²⁸The LORD said to Moses, How long will you Israelites refuse to obey my commands and instructions?

²⁹You are aware the LORD has given you the sabbath, and so he gives you two days' food every sixth day. Let everyone stay where he is; no one may stir from his home on the seventh.

³⁰ So the people kept the sabbath on the seventh day.

³¹ Israel called the food manna; it was like coriander seed, but white, and it tasted like a wafer made with honey.

³² This, said Moses, is the command which the LORD has given: Take a full omer of it to be kept for future generations, so that they may see the bread with which I fed you in the wilderness when I brought you out of Egypt.

³³ Moses said to Aaron, Take a jar and fill it with an omer of manna, and store it in the presence of the LORD to be kept for future generations.

³⁴ Aaron did as the LORD had commanded Moses, and stored it before the Testimony for safe keeping.

³⁵ The Israelites ate the manna for forty years until they came to a land where they could settle; they ate it until they came to the border of Canaan.

³⁶ (An omer is one tenth of an ephah.)

17 ¹ The whole community of Israel set out from the wilderness of Sin and travelled by stages as the LORD directed. They encamped at Rephidim,

but there was no water for the people to drink,

²and a dispute arose between them and Moses. When they said, Give us water to drink, Moses said, Why do you dispute with me? Why do you challenge the LORD?

³The people became so thirsty there that they raised an outcry against Moses: Why have you brought us out of Egypt with our children and our herds to let us die of thirst?

⁴Moses appealed to the LORD, What shall I do with these people? In a moment they will be stoning me.

⁵The LORD answered, Go forward ahead of the people; take with you some of the elders of Israel and bring along the staff with which you struck the Nile. Go,

⁶you will find me waiting for you there, by a rock in Horeb. Strike the rock; water will pour out of it for the people to drink. Moses did this in the sight of the elders of Israel.

⁷He named the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites had disputed with him and put the LORD to

the test with their question, Is the LORD in our midst or not?

⁸The Amalekites came and attacked Israel at Rephidim.

⁹Moses said to Joshua, Pick men for us, and march out tomorrow to fight against Amalek; and I shall stand on the hilltop with the staff of God in my hand.

¹⁰Joshua did as Moses commanded and fought against Amalek, while Moses, Aaron, and Hur climbed to the top of the hill.

¹¹Whenever Moses raised his hands Israel had the advantage, and when he lowered his hands the advantage passed to Amalek.

¹²When his arms grew heavy they took a stone and put it under him and, as he sat, Aaron and Hur held up his hands, one on each side, so that his hands remained steady till sunset.

¹³Thus Joshua defeated Amalek and put its people to the sword.

¹⁴The LORD said to Moses, Record this in writing, and tell it to Joshua in these words: I am resolved to blot out all memory of Amalek from under heaven.

¹⁵ Moses built an altar, and named it The LORD is my Banner and said,

¹⁶ My oath upon it: the LORD is at war with Amalek generation after generation.

18 ¹ JETHRO priest of Midian, father-in-law of Moses, heard all that God had done for Moses and for Israel his people, and how the LORD had brought Israel out of Egypt.

² When Moses had sent away his wife Zipporah, Jethro his father-in-law had received her

³ and her two sons. The name of the one was Gershom, for, said Moses, I have become an alien living in a foreign land;

⁴ the other's name was Eliezer, for, he said, the God of my father was my help and saved me from Pharaoh's sword.

⁵ Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, now came to him with his sons and his wife, to the wilderness where he was encamped at the mountain of God.

⁶ Moses was told, Here is Jethro, your father-in-law, coming to you with your wife and her two sons.

⁷ Moses went out to meet his father-in-law, bowed low to him, and kissed him.

After they had greeted one another and come into the tent,

⁸Moses told him all that the LORD had done to Pharaoh and to Egypt for Israel's sake, and about all their hardships on the journey, and how the LORD had saved them.

⁹Jethro rejoiced at all the good the LORD had done for Israel in saving them from the power of Egypt.

¹⁰He said, Blessed be the LORD who has delivered you from the power of Egypt and of Pharaoh. Now I know that the LORD is the greatest of all gods, because he has delivered the people from the Egyptians who dealt so arrogantly with them.

¹¹ (18: 10)

¹²Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, brought a whole-offering and sacrifices for God; and Aaron and all the elders of Israel came and shared the meal with Jethro in the presence of God.

¹³The next day Moses took his seat to settle disputes among the people, and he was surrounded from morning till evening.

¹⁴At the sight of all that he was doing for the people, Jethro asked, What is this you are doing for the people? Why do you sit alone with all of them standing round you from morning till evening?

¹⁵The people come to me to seek God's guidance, Moses answered.

¹⁶Whenever there is a dispute among them, they come to me, and I decide between one party and the other. I make known the statutes and laws of God.

¹⁷His father-in-law said to him, This is not the best way to do it.

¹⁸You will only wear yourself out and wear out the people who are here. The task is too heavy for you; you cannot do it alone.

¹⁹Now listen to me: take my advice, and God be with you. It is for you to be the people's representative before God, and bring their disputes to him,

²⁰to instruct them in the statutes and laws, and teach them how they must behave and what they must do.

²¹But you should search for capable, godfearing men among all the people, honest and incorruptible men, and appoint them over the people as officers

over units of a thousand, of a hundred, of fifty, or of ten.

²²They can act as judges for the people at all times; difficult cases they should refer to you, but decide simple cases themselves. In this way your burden will be lightened, as they will be sharing it with you.

²³If you do this, then God will direct you and you will be able to go on. And, moreover, this whole people will arrive at its destination in harmony.

²⁴Moses heeded his father-in-law and did all he had suggested.

²⁵He chose capable men from all Israel and appointed them leaders of the people, officers over units of a thousand, of a hundred, of fifty, or of ten.

²⁶They sat as a permanent court, bringing the difficult cases to Moses but deciding simple cases themselves.

²⁷When his father-in-law went back to his own country, Moses set him on his way.

19¹ IN the third month after Israel had left Egypt, they came to the wilderness of Sinai.

²They set out from Rephidim and, entering the wilderness of Sinai, they encamped there, pitching their tents in front of the mountain.

³Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain and said, This is what you are to say to the house of Jacob and tell the sons of Israel:

⁴You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt, and how I have carried you on eagles wings and brought you here to me.

⁵If only you will now listen to me and keep my covenant, then out of all peoples you will become my special possession; for the whole earth is mine.

⁶You will be to me a kingdom of priests, my holy nation. Those are the words you are to speak to the Israelites.'

⁷Moses went down, and summoning the elders of the people he set before them all these commands which the LORD had laid on him.

⁸As one the people answered, Whatever the LORD has said we shall do. When Moses brought this answer back to the LORD,

⁹ the LORD said to him, I am coming to you in a thick cloud, so that I may speak to you in the hearing of the people, and so their faith in you may never fail. When Moses reported to the LORD the pledge given by the people,

¹⁰ the LORD said to him, Go to the people and hallow them today and tomorrow and have them wash their clothes.

¹¹ They must be ready by the third day, because on that day the LORD will descend on Mount Sinai in the sight of all the people.

¹² You must set bounds for the people, saying, Take care not to go up the mountain or even to touch its base. Anyone who touches the mountain shall be put to death.

¹³ No hand may touch him; he is to be stoned to death or shot: neither man nor beast may live. But when the ram's horn sounds, they may go up the mountain.

¹⁴ Moses came down from the mountain to the people. He hallowed them and they washed their clothes.

¹⁵ He said, Be ready by the third day; do not go near a woman.

¹⁶At dawn on the third day there were peals of thunder and flashes of lightning, dense cloud on the mountain, and a loud trumpet-blast; all the people in the camp trembled.

¹⁷Moses brought the people out from the camp to meet God, and they took their stand at the foot of the mountain.

¹⁸Mount Sinai was enveloped in smoke because the LORD had come down on it in fire; the smoke rose like the smoke from a kiln; all the people trembled violently,

¹⁹and the sound of the trumpet grew ever louder. Whenever Moses spoke, God answered him in a peal of thunder.

²⁰The LORD came down on the top of Mount Sinai and summoned Moses up to the mountaintop.

²¹The LORD said to him, Go down; warn the people solemnly that they must not force their way through to the LORD to see him, or many of them will perish.

²²Even the priests, who may approach the LORD, must hallow themselves, for fear that the LORD may break out against them.

²³ Moses answered the LORD, The people cannot come up Mount Sinai, because you solemnly warned us to set bounds to the mountain and keep it holy.

²⁴ The LORD said, Go down; then come back, bringing Aaron with you, but let neither priests nor people force their way up to the LORD, for fear that he may break out against them.

²⁵ So Moses went down to the people and spoke to them.

20 ¹ God spoke all these words:
² I am the LORD your God who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.

³ You must have no other god besides me.

⁴ You must not make a carved image for yourself, nor the likeness of anything in the heavens above, or on the earth below, or in the waters under the earth.

⁵ You must not bow down to them in worship; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sins of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who reject me.

⁶But I keep faith with thousands, those who love me and keep my commandments.

⁷You must not make wrong use of the name of the LORD your God; the LORD will not leave unpunished anyone who misuses his name.

⁸Remember to keep the sabbath day holy.

⁹You have six days to labour and do all your work;

¹⁰but the seventh day is a sabbath of the LORD your God; that day you must not do any work, neither you, nor your son or your daughter, your slave or your slave-girl, your cattle, or the alien residing among you;

¹¹for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and on the seventh day he rested. Therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and declared it holy.

¹²Honour your father and your mother, so that you may enjoy long life in the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

¹³Do not commit murder.

¹⁴Do not commit adultery.

¹⁵ Do not steal.

¹⁶ Do not give false evidence against your neighbour.

¹⁷ Do not covet your neighbour's household: you must not covet your neighbour's wife, his slave, his slave-girl, his ox, his donkey, or anything that belongs to him.

¹⁸ WHEN all the people saw how it thundered and the lightning flashed, when they heard the trumpet sound and saw the mountain in smoke, they were afraid and trembled. They stood at a distance

¹⁹ and said to Moses, Speak to us yourself and we will listen; but do not let God speak to us or we shall die.

²⁰ Moses answered, Do not be afraid. God has come only to test you, so that the fear of him may remain with you and preserve you from sinning.

²¹ So the people kept their distance, while Moses approached the dark cloud where God was.

²² THE LORD said to Moses, Say this to the Israelites: You know now that I have spoken from heaven to you.

²³You must not make gods of silver to be worshipped besides me, nor may you make yourselves gods of gold.

²⁴The altar you make for me is to be of earth, and you are to sacrifice on it both your whole-offerings and your shared-offerings, your sheep and goats and your cattle. Wherever I cause my name to be invoked, I will come to you and bless you.

²⁵If you make an altar of stones for me, you must not build it of hewn stones, for if you use a tool on them, you profane them.

²⁶You must not mount up to my altar by steps, in case your private parts are exposed over against it.

21 ¹These are the laws you are to set before them:

²When you purchase a Hebrew as a slave, he will be your slave for six years; in the seventh year he is to go free without paying anything.

³If he comes to you alone, he is to go away alone; but if he is already a married man, his wife is to go away with him.

⁴ If his master gives him a wife, and she bears him sons or daughters, the woman with her children belongs to her master, and the man must go away alone.

⁵ But if the slave should say, I am devoted to my master and my wife and children; I do not wish to go free,

⁶ then his master must bring him to God: he is to be brought to the door or the doorpost, and his master will pierce his ear with an awl; the man will then be his slave for life.

⁷ When a man sells his daughter into slavery, she is not to go free as male slaves may.

⁸ If she proves displeasing to her master who had designated her for himself, he must let her be redeemed; he has treated her unfairly, and therefore he has no right to sell her to foreigners.

⁹ If he assigns her to his son, he must allow her the rights of a daughter.

¹⁰ If he takes another woman, he must not deprive the first of meat, clothes, and conjugal rights;

¹¹ if he does not provide her with these three things, she is to go free without payment.

¹²Whoever strikes another man and kills him must be put to death.

¹³But if he did not act with intent, but it came about by act of God, the slayer may flee to a place which I shall appoint for you.

¹⁴But if a man wilfully kills another by treachery, you are to take him even from my altar to be put to death.

¹⁵Whoever strikes his father or mother must be put to death.

¹⁶Whoever kidnaps an Israelite must be put to death, whether he has sold him, or the man is found in his possession.

¹⁷Whoever reviles his father or mother must be put to death.

¹⁸When men quarrel and one hits another with a stone or with his fist, and the man is not killed but takes to his bed,

¹⁹and if he recovers so as to walk about outside with his staff, then the one who struck him has no liability, except that he must pay compensation for the other's loss of time and see that his recovery is complete.

²⁰When a man strikes his slave or his slave-girl with a stick and the slave dies on the spot, he must be punished.

²¹But he is not to be punished if the slave survives for one day or two, because the slave is his property.

²²When, in the course of a brawl, a man knocks against a pregnant woman so that she has a miscarriage but suffers no further injury, then the offender must pay whatever fine the woman's husband demands after assessment.

²³But where injury ensues, you are to give life for life,

²⁴eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot,

²⁵burn for burn, bruise for bruise, wound for wound.

²⁶When a man strikes his slave or slave-girl in the eye and destroys it, he must let the slave go free in compensation for the eye.

²⁷When he knocks out the tooth of a slave or a slave-girl, he must let the slave go free in compensation for the tooth.

²⁸When an ox gores a man or a woman to death, the ox must be put to death by

stoning, and its flesh is not to be eaten; the owner of the ox will be free from liability.

²⁹If, however, the ox has for some time past been a vicious animal, and the owner has been duly warned but has not kept it under control, and the ox kills a man or a woman, then the ox must be stoned to death, and the owner put to death as well.

³⁰If, however, the penalty is commuted for a money payment, he must pay in redemption of his life whatever is imposed upon him.

³¹If the ox gores a son or a daughter, the same ruling applies.

³²If the ox gores a slave or slave-girl, its owner must pay thirty shekels of silver to their master, and the ox must be stoned to death.

³³When a man removes the cover of a cistern or digs a cistern and leaves it uncovered, then if an ox or a donkey falls into it,

³⁴the owner of the cistern must make good the loss; he must pay the owner the price of the animal, and the dead beast will be his.

³⁵When one man's ox butts another's and kills it, they must sell the live ox, share the price, and also share the dead beast.

³⁶But if it is known that the ox has for some time past been vicious and the owner has not kept it under control, he must make good the loss, ox for ox, but the dead beast is his.

22¹When a man steals an ox or a sheep and slaughters or sells it, he must repay five beasts for the ox and four sheep for the sheep.

²He must pay in full; if he has no means, he is to be sold to pay for the theft. But if the animal is found alive in his possession, be it ox, donkey, or sheep, he must repay two for each one stolen. If a burglar is caught in the act and receives a fatal injury, it is not murder; but if he breaks in after sunrise and receives a fatal injury, then it is murder.

³(22: 2)

⁴(22: 2)

⁵When a man burns off a field or a vineyard and lets the fire spread so that it burns another man's field, he

must make restitution from his own field according to the yield expected; and if the whole field is laid waste, he must make restitution from the best part of his own field or vineyard.

⁶When a fire starts and spreads to a thorn hedge, so that sheaves, or standing grain, or a whole field is destroyed, whoever started the fire must make full restitution.

⁷When someone gives another silver or chattels for safe keeping, and they are stolen from that person's house, the thief, if apprehended, must restore twofold.

⁸But if the thief is not apprehended, the owner of the house will have to appear before God for it to be ascertained whether or not he has laid hands on his neighbour's property.

⁹In every case of misappropriation involving an ox, a donkey, or a sheep, a cloak, or any lost property which may be claimed, each party must bring his case before God; the one whom God declares to be in the wrong will have to restore double to his neighbour.

¹⁰When someone gives a donkey, an ox, a sheep, or any beast into a neighbour's keeping, and it dies or is injured or is carried off, there being no witness,

¹¹then by swearing by the LORD it will have to be settled between them whether or not the neighbour has laid hands on the other's property. If not, no restitution is to be made and the owner must accept this.

¹²If it has been stolen from the neighbour, he must make restitution to its owner.

¹³If it has been mauled by a wild beast, he must bring it in as evidence; he will not have to make restitution for what has been mauled.

¹⁴When a man borrows a beast from his neighbour and it is injured or dies while its owner is not present, the borrower must make full restitution;

¹⁵but if the owner is with it, the borrower does not have to make restitution. If it was hired, only the hire is due.

¹⁶When a man seduces a virgin who is not yet betrothed, he must pay the bride-price for her to be his wife.

¹⁷If her father refuses to give her to him, the seducer must pay in silver a sum equal to the bride-price for virgins.

¹⁸You must not allow a witch to live.

¹⁹Whoever has sexual intercourse with a beast must be put to death.

²⁰Whoever sacrifices to any god but the LORD must be put to death under solemn ban.

²¹You must not wrong or oppress an alien; you were yourselves aliens in Egypt.

²²You must not wrong a widow or a fatherless child.

²³If you do, and they appeal to me, be sure that I shall listen;

²⁴my anger will be roused and I shall kill you with the sword; your own wives will become widows and your children fatherless.

²⁵If you advance money to any poor man amongst my people, you are not to act like a moneylender; you must not exact interest from him.

²⁶If you take your neighbour's cloak in pawn, return it to him by sunset,

²⁷because it is his only covering. It is the cloak in which he wraps his body; in what else can he sleep? If he appeals to me, I shall listen, for I am full of compassion.

²⁸You must not revile God, nor curse a chief of your own people.

²⁹You must not hold back the first of your harvest, whether grain or wine. You must give me your firstborn sons.

³⁰You must do the same with your oxen and your sheep. They should stay with the mother for seven days; on the eighth day you are to give them to me.

³¹You must be holy to me: you are not to eat the flesh of anything killed by beasts in the open country; you are to throw it to the dogs.

23¹You must not spread a baseless rumour, nor make common cause with a wicked man by giving malicious evidence.

²You must not be led into wrongdoing by the majority, nor, when you give evidence in a lawsuit, should you side with the majority to pervert justice;

³ nor should you show favouritism to a poor person in his lawsuit.

⁴ Should you come upon your enemy's ox or donkey straying, you must take it back to him.

⁵ Should you see the donkey of someone who hates you lying helpless under its load, however unwilling you may be to help, you must lend a hand with it.

⁶ You must not deprive the poor man of justice in his lawsuit.

⁷ Avoid all lies, and do not cause the death of the innocent and guiltless; for I the LORD will never acquit the guilty.

⁸ Do not accept a bribe, for bribery makes the discerning person blind and the just person give a crooked answer.

⁹ Do not oppress the alien, for you know how it feels to be an alien; you yourselves were aliens in Egypt.

¹⁰ For six years you may sow your land and gather its produce;

¹¹ but in the seventh year you must let it lie fallow and leave it alone. Let it provide food for the poor of your people, and what they leave the wild animals may eat. You are to do likewise with your vineyard and your olive grove.

¹²For six days you may do your work, but on the seventh day abstain from work, so that your ox and your donkey may rest, and your home-born slave and the alien may refresh themselves.

¹³Be attentive to every word of mine. You must not invoke other gods: their names are not to cross your lips.

¹⁴Three times a year you are to keep a pilgrim-feast to me.

¹⁵You are to celebrate the pilgrim-feast of Unleavened Bread: for seven days, as I have commanded you, you are to eat unleavened bread at the appointed time in the month of Abib, for in that month you came out of Egypt; and no one is to come into my presence without an offering.

¹⁶You are to celebrate the pilgrim-feast of Harvest, with the firstfruits of your work in sowing the land, and the pilgrim-feast of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you gather the fruits of your work in from the land.

¹⁷Those three times a year all your males are to come into the presence of the Lord GOD.

¹⁸Do not offer the blood of my sacrifice at the same time as anything leavened. The fat of my festal offering is not to remain overnight till morning.

¹⁹You must bring the choicest firstfruits of your soil to the house of the LORD your God. Do not boil a kid in its mother's milk.

²⁰And now I am sending an angel before you to guard you on your way and to bring you to the place I have prepared.

²¹Heed him and listen to his voice. Do not defy him; he will not pardon your rebelliousness, for my authority rests in him.

²²If you will only listen to his voice and do all I tell you, then I shall be an enemy to your enemies, and I shall harass those who harass you.

²³My angel will go before you and bring you to the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites, and I will make an end of them.

²⁴You are not to bow down to their gods; you are not to worship them or observe their rites. Rather, you must

tear down all their images and smash their sacred pillars.

²⁵You are to worship the LORD your God, and he will bless your bread and your water. I shall take away all sickness out of your midst.

²⁶No woman will miscarry or be barren in your land. I shall grant you a full span of life.

²⁷I shall send terror of me ahead of you and throw into panic every people you find in your path. I shall make all your enemies turn their backs towards you.

²⁸I shall spread panic before you to drive out the Hivites, the Canaanites, and the Hittites in front of you.

²⁹I shall not drive them out all in one year, or the land would become waste and the wild beasts too many for you,

³⁰but I shall drive them out little by little until you have grown numerous enough to take possession of the country.

³¹I shall establish your frontiers from the Red Sea to the sea of the Philistines, and from the wilderness to the river Euphrates. I shall give the inhabitants

of the land into your power, and you will drive them out before you.

³²You are not to make any alliance with them and their gods.

³³They must not stay in your land, for fear they make you sin against me by ensnaring you into the worship of their gods.

24¹THE LORD said to Moses, Come up to the LORD, you and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy of the Israelite elders. While you are still at a distance, you are to bow down;

²then Moses is to approach the LORD by himself, but not the others. The people must not go up with him.

³Moses went and repeated to the people all the words of the LORD, all his laws. With one voice the whole people answered, We will do everything the LORD has told us.

⁴Moses wrote down all the words of the LORD. Early in the morning he built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and erected twelve sacred pillars for the twelve tribes of Israel.

⁵ He sent the young men of Israel and they sacrificed bulls to the LORD as whole-offerings and shared-offerings.

⁶ Moses took half the blood and put it in basins, and the other half he flung against the altar.

⁷ Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it aloud for the people to hear. They said, We shall obey, and do all that the LORD has said.

⁸ Moses then took the blood and flung it over the people, saying, This is the blood of the covenant which the LORD has made with you on the terms of this book.

⁹ Moses went up with Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel,

¹⁰ and they saw the God of Israel. Under his feet there was, as it were, a pavement of sapphire, clear blue as the very heavens;

¹¹ but the LORD did not stretch out his hand against the leaders of Israel. They saw God; they ate and they drank.

¹² The LORD said to Moses, Come up to me on the mountain, stay there, and let me give you the stone tablets with the

law and commandment I have written down for their instruction.

¹³ Moses with Joshua his assistant set off up the mountain of God;

¹⁴ he said to the elders, Wait for us here until we come back to you. You have Aaron and Hur; if anyone has a dispute, let him go to them.

¹⁵ So Moses went up the mountain and a cloud covered it.

¹⁶ The glory of the LORD rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered the mountain for six days; on the seventh day he called to Moses out of the cloud.

¹⁷ To the Israelites the glory of the LORD looked like a devouring fire on the mountaintop.

¹⁸ Moses entered the cloud and went up the mountain; there he stayed forty days and forty nights.

25 ¹ THE LORD spoke to Moses and said:

² Tell the Israelites to set aside a contribution for me; you are to accept whatever contribution each man freely offers.

³ You may accept any of the following: gold, silver, copper;

⁴ violet, purple, and scarlet yarn; fine linen and goats' hair;

⁵ tanned rams' skins and dugong-hides; acacia-wood;

⁶ oil for the lamp, spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense;

⁷ cornelians and other stones ready for setting on the ephod and the breastpiece.

⁸ Make me a sanctuary, and I shall dwell among the Israelites.

⁹ Make it exactly according to the design I show you, the design for the Tabernacle and for all its furniture. This is how you must make it:

¹⁰ Make an Ark, a chest of acacia-wood two and a half cubits long, one and a half cubits wide, and one and a half cubits high.

¹¹ Overlay it with pure gold both inside and out, and put a band of gold all round it.

¹² Cast four gold rings for it, and fasten them to its four feet, two rings on each side.

¹³ Make poles of acacia-wood and overlay them with gold,

¹⁴ and insert the poles in the rings at the sides of the Ark to lift it.

¹⁵ The poles are to remain in the rings of the Ark and never be removed.

¹⁶ Put into the Ark the Testimony which I shall give you.

¹⁷ Make a cover of pure gold two and a half cubits long and one and a half cubits wide.

¹⁸ Make two gold cherubim of beaten work at the ends of the cover,

¹⁹ one at each end; make each cherub of one piece with the cover.

²⁰ They are to be made with wings spread out and pointing upwards to screen the cover with their wings. They will be face to face, looking inwards over the cover.

²¹ Place the cover on the Ark, and put into the Ark the Testimony that I shall give you.

²² It is there that I shall meet you; from above the cover, between the two cherubim over the Ark of the Testimony, I shall deliver to you all my commands for the Israelites.

²³ Make a table of acacia-wood two cubits long, one cubit wide, and one and a half cubits high.

²⁴ Overlay it with pure gold, and put a band of gold all round it.

²⁵ Make a rim round it a hand's breadth wide, and a gold band round the rim.

²⁶ Make four gold rings for the table, and put the rings at the four corners by the four legs.

²⁷ The rings, which are to receive the poles for carrying the table, must be adjacent to the rim.

²⁸ Make the poles of acacia-wood and overlay them with gold; they are to be used for carrying the table.

²⁹ Make dishes and saucers for it, and flagons and bowls from which drink-offerings may be poured; make them of pure gold.

³⁰ Put the Bread of the Presence on the table, to be always before me.

³¹ Make a lampstand of pure gold. The lampstand, stem and branches, shall be of beaten work: its cups, both calyxes and petals, shall be of one piece with it.

³² There are to be six branches springing from the sides of the lampstand, three

branches from one side and three branches from the other.

³³There shall be three cups shaped like almond blossoms with calyx and petals on the first branch, three cups shaped like almond blossoms with calyx and petals on the next branch, and similarly for all six branches springing from the lampstand.

³⁴On the main stem of the lampstand there are to be four cups shaped like almond blossoms with calyx and petals,

³⁵and there shall be calyxes of one piece with it under the six branches which spring from the lampstand, a single calyx under each pair of branches.

³⁶The calyxes and the branches are to be of one piece with it, all a single piece of beaten work of pure gold.

³⁷Make seven lamps for this and mount them to shed light over the space in front of the lampstand.

³⁸Its tongs and firepans are to be of pure gold.

³⁹The lampstand and all these fittings are to be made from one talent of pure gold.

⁴⁰See that you work to the design shown to you on the mountain.

26¹ Make the Tabernacle itself of ten hangings of finely woven linen, and violet, purple, and scarlet yarn, with cherubim worked on them, all made by a seamster.

²The length of each hanging is to be twenty-eight cubits and the breadth four cubits; all are to be of the same size.

³Five of the hangings are to be joined together, and similarly the other five.

⁴Make violet loops along the outer edge of the last hanging in each set,

⁵fifty for each set; they must be opposite one another.

⁶Make fifty gold fasteners, join the hangings one to another with them, and the Tabernacle will form a single whole.

⁷Make hangings of goats' hair, eleven in all, to form a tent over the Tabernacle;

⁸each hanging is to be thirty cubits long and four cubits wide; all eleven are to be of the same size.

⁹Join five of the hangings together, and similarly the other six; then fold the sixth hanging double at the front of the tent.

¹⁰Make fifty loops on the edge of the last hanging in the first set and make fifty loops on the joining edge of the second set.

¹¹Make fifty bronze fasteners, insert them into the loops, and join up the tent to make it a single whole.

¹²The additional length of the tent hanging is to fall over the back of the Tabernacle.

¹³On each side there will be an additional cubit in the length of the tent hangings; this must fall over the two sides of the Tabernacle to cover it.

¹⁴Make for the tent a cover of tanned rams' skins and an outer covering of dugong-hides.

¹⁵Make for the Tabernacle frames of acacia-wood as uprights,

¹⁶each frame ten cubits long and one and a half cubits wide,

¹⁷and two tenons for each frame joined to each other. Do the same for all the frames of the Tabernacle.

¹⁸Arrange the frames thus: twenty frames for the south side, facing southwards,

¹⁹with forty silver sockets under them, two sockets under each frame for its two tenons;

²⁰and for the second or northern side of the Tabernacle twenty frames

²¹with forty silver sockets, two under each frame.

²²Make six frames for the far end of the Tabernacle on the west.

²³Make two frames for the corners of the Tabernacle at the far end;

²⁴at the bottom they are to be alike, and at the top, both alike, they are to fit into a single ring. Do the same for both of them; they will be for the two corners.

²⁵There will be eight frames with their silver sockets, sixteen sockets in all, two sockets under each frame.

²⁶Make bars of acacia-wood: five for the frames on one side of the Tabernacle,

²⁷five for the frames on the other side, and five for the frames on the far side of the Tabernacle on the west.

²⁸The middle bar is to run along from end to end half-way up the frames.

²⁹Overlay the frames with gold, make rings of gold on them to hold the bars, and overlay the bars with gold.

³⁰Set up the Tabernacle according to the design you were shown on the mountain.

³¹Make a curtain of finely woven linen and violet, purple, and scarlet yarn, with cherubim worked on it, all made by a seamster.

³²Fasten it with hooks of gold to four posts of acacia-wood overlaid with gold, standing in four silver sockets.

³³Hang the curtain below the fasteners and bring the Ark of the Testimony inside the curtain. Thus the curtain will make a clear separation for you between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies.

³⁴Place the cover over the Ark of the Testimony in the Holy of Holies.

³⁵Put the table outside the curtain and the lampstand at the south side of the Tabernacle, opposite the table which you are to put at the north side.

³⁶For the entrance of the tent make a screen of finely woven linen, embroidered with violet, purple, and scarlet.

³⁷Make five posts of acacia-wood for the screen and overlay them with gold;

make golden hooks for them and cast five bronze sockets for them.

27 ¹ Make the altar of acacia-wood; it is to be square, five cubits long by five cubits broad, and its height is to be three cubits.

² Make horns at the four corners and let them be of one piece with it; then overlay it with bronze.

³ Make for it pots to take away the fat and the ashes, with shovels, tossing-bowls, forks, and firepans, all of bronze.

⁴ Make a grating for it of bronze network, and fit bronze rings on the network, one at each of its four corners.

⁵ Put it below the ledge of the altar, so that the network comes half-way up the altar.

⁶ Make poles of acacia-wood for the altar and overlay them with bronze.

⁷ They are to be inserted in the rings at either side of the altar to carry it.

⁸ Leave the altar hollow inside its boards. As you were shown on the mountain, so must it be made.

⁹ Make the court of the Tabernacle. On the south side facing southwards, the

court is to have hangings of finely woven linen a hundred cubits long,

¹⁰with twenty posts and twenty bronze sockets; the hooks and bands on the posts will be of silver.

¹¹Similarly along the north side there will be hangings of a hundred cubits, with twenty posts and twenty bronze sockets; the hooks and bands on the posts will be of silver.

¹²For the breadth of the court, on the west side, there are to be hangings fifty cubits long, with ten posts and ten sockets.

¹³On the east side, towards the sunrise, which will be fifty cubits,

¹⁴hangings will extend fifteen cubits from one corner, with three posts and three sockets,

¹⁵and hangings will extend fifteen cubits from the other corner, with three posts and three sockets.

¹⁶At the gateway of the court, there will be a screen twenty cubits long of finely woven linen embroidered with violet, purple, and scarlet, with four posts and four sockets.

¹⁷The posts all round the court are to have bands of silver, with silver hooks and bronze sockets.

¹⁸The length of the court is to be a hundred cubits, and the breadth fifty, and the height five cubits, with hangings of finely woven linen and with bronze sockets throughout.

¹⁹All the equipment needed for serving the Tabernacle, all its pegs and those of the court, will be of bronze.

²⁰You are to order the Israelites to bring you pure oil of pounded olives ready for the regular mounting of the lamp.

²¹In the Tent of Meeting outside the curtain that conceals the Testimony, Aaron and his sons must keep the lamp in trim from dusk to dawn before the LORD. This is a rule binding on their descendants among the Israelites for all time.

28¹ Out of all the Israelites you are to summon to your presence your brother Aaron and his sons to serve as my priests: Aaron and his sons Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar.

²For your brother Aaron make sacred vestments, to give him dignity and grandeur.

³To all the craftsmen whom I have endowed with skill give instructions for making the vestments for the consecration of Aaron as my priest.

⁴These are the vestments they are to make: a breastpiece, an ephod, a mantle, a chequered tunic, a turban, and a sash. For Aaron your brother and his sons to wear when they serve as my priests they are to make sacred vestments,

⁵using gold, violet, purple, and scarlet yarn, and fine linen.

⁶The ephod will be made of gold, and with violet, purple, and scarlet yarn, and with finely woven linen worked by a seamster.

⁷It will have two shoulder-pieces joined back and front.

⁸The waistband on it will be of the same workmanship and material as the fabric of the ephod, and will be of gold, with violet, purple, and scarlet yarn, and finely woven linen.

⁹You are to take two cornelians and engrave on them the names of the sons of Israel:

¹⁰six of their names on one stone, and the six other names on the second, all in order of seniority.

¹¹With the skill of a craftsman, a seal-cutter, you are to engrave the two stones with the names of the sons of Israel; set them in gold rosettes,

¹²and fasten them on the shoulder-pieces of the ephod, as reminders of the sons of Israel. Aaron will bear their names on his shoulders as a reminder before the LORD.

¹³Make gold rosettes

¹⁴and two chains of pure gold worked into the form of cords, which you will fix on the rosettes.

¹⁵Make the breastpiece of judgement; it is to be made in gold, like the ephod, by a seamster, with violet, purple, and scarlet yarn, and finely woven linen.

¹⁶It will form a square when folded double, a span long and a span wide.

¹⁷Arrange on it four rows of precious stones: the first row, sardin, chrysolite, and green feldspar;

¹⁸ the second row, purple garnet, sapphire, and jade;

¹⁹ the third row, turquoise, agate, and jasper;

²⁰ the fourth row, topaz, cornelian, and green jasper, all set in gold rosettes.

²¹ The stones will correspond to the twelve sons of Israel name by name, each stone bearing the name of one of the twelve tribes engraved as on a seal.

²² Make for the breastpiece chains of pure gold worked into a cord.

²³ Make two gold rings, and fix them on the two upper corners of the breastpiece.

²⁴ Fasten the two gold cords to the two rings at those corners of the breastpiece,

²⁵ and the other ends of the ropes to the two rosettes, thus binding the breastpiece to the shoulder-pieces on the front of the ephod.

²⁶ Make two gold rings and put them at the two lower corners of the breastpiece on the inner side next to the ephod.

²⁷ Make two gold rings and fix them on the two shoulder-pieces of the ephod, low down in front, along its seam above the waistband of the ephod.

²⁸Then the breastpiece is to be bound by its rings to the rings of the ephod with violet braid, just above the waistband of the ephod, so that the breastpiece does not become loosened from the ephod.

²⁹So, when Aaron enters the Holy Place, he will bear over his heart in the breastpiece of judgement the names of the sons of Israel, as a constant reminder before the LORD.

³⁰Finally, put the Urim and the Thummim into the breastpiece of judgement, and they will be over Aaron's heart when he enters the presence of the LORD. So Aaron will bear these symbols of judgement upon the sons of Israel over his heart constantly before the LORD.

³¹Make the mantle of the ephod a single piece of violet stuff.

³²Make an opening for the head in the middle of it. All round the opening there will be a hem of woven work, with an oversewn edge, to prevent it tearing.

³³On its hem make pomegranates of violet, purple, and scarlet stuff, with golden bells between them,

³⁴ a golden bell and a pomegranate alternately the whole way round the hem of the mantle.

³⁵ Aaron is to wear it when he ministers, and the sound of it will be heard when he enters the Holy Place before the LORD and when he comes out; and so he will not die.

³⁶ Make a medallion of pure gold and engrave on it as on a seal: Holy to the LORD.

³⁷ Fasten it on a violet braid and set it on the front of the turban.

³⁸ It is to be on Aaron's forehead; he has to bear the blame for defects in the rites with which the Israelites offer their sacred gifts, and the medallion will be always on his forehead so that they may be acceptable to the LORD.

³⁹ Make the chequered tunic and the turban of fine linen, but the sash of embroidered work.

⁴⁰ For Aaron's sons make tunics and sashes; and make tall headdresses to give them dignity and grandeur.

⁴¹ With these invest your brother Aaron and his sons, anoint them, install them,

and consecrate them; so they will serve me as priests.

⁴²Make for them linen shorts reaching to the thighs to cover their private parts;

⁴³and Aaron and his sons must wear them when they enter the Tent of Meeting or approach the altar to minister in the sanctuary. Thus they will not incur guilt and die. This is a statute binding on him and his descendants for all time.

29¹In their consecration to be my priests this is the rite to be observed. Take a young bull and two rams without blemish.

²Take unleavened bread, unleavened loaves mixed with oil, and unleavened wafers smeared with oil, all made of wheaten flour;

³put them in a basket and bring them in it. Bring also the bull and the two rams.

⁴When you have brought Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, wash them with water.

⁵Take the vestments and dress Aaron in the tunic, the mantle of the ephod, the ephod itself, and the breastpiece,

and fasten the ephod to him with its waistband.

⁶Set the turban on his head, and attach the symbol of holy dedication to the turban.

⁷Take the anointing oil, pour it on his head, and anoint him.

⁸Then bring his sons forward, dress them in tunics,

⁹gird them with the sashes, and tie their tall headdresses on them. They will hold the priesthood by a statute binding for all time. Next install Aaron and his sons.

¹⁰Bring the bull to the front of the Tent of Meeting, where they must lay their hands on its head.

¹¹Slaughter the bull before the LORD at the entrance to the Tent.

¹²Take some of its blood, and smear it with your finger on the horns of the altar. Pour the rest of it at the base of the altar.

¹³Then take all the fat covering the entrails, the long lobe of the liver, and the two kidneys with the fat upon them, and burn them on the altar;

¹⁴but the flesh of the bull, and its skin and offal, you must destroy by fire outside the camp. It is a purification-offering.

¹⁵Take one of the rams and, after Aaron and his sons have laid their hands on its head,

¹⁶slaughter it; take its blood, and fling it against the sides of the altar.

¹⁷Cut up the ram; wash its entrails and its shins, lay them with the pieces and the head,

¹⁸and burn the whole ram on the altar: it is a whole-offering to the LORD; it is a soothing odour, a food-offering to the LORD.

¹⁹Take the second ram and, after Aaron and his sons have laid their hands on its head,

²⁰slaughter it; take some of its blood, and put it on the lobes of the right ears of Aaron and his sons, and on their right thumbs and the big toes of their right feet. Fling the rest of the blood against the sides of the altar.

²¹Take some of the blood which is on the altar and some of the anointing oil, and sprinkle it on Aaron and his

vestments, and on his sons and their vestments. So he, his sons, and the vestments will become sacred.

²²Take the fat from the ram, the fat-tail, the fat covering the entrails, the long lobe of the liver, the two kidneys with the fat upon them, and the right leg: for it is a ram of installation.

²³Take also one round loaf of bread, one cake cooked with oil, and one wafer from the basket of unleavened bread that is before the LORD.

²⁴Place all these on the hands of Aaron and of his sons and present them as a special gift before the LORD.

²⁵Then receive them back from their hands, and burn them on the altar with the whole-offering for a soothing odour to the LORD: it is a food-offering to the LORD.

²⁶Take the breast of Aaron's ram of installation and present it as a special gift before the LORD; it is to be your perquisite.

²⁷Hallow the breast of the special gift and the leg of the contribution, that which is presented and that which is set aside from the ram of installation, that

which is for Aaron and that which is for his sons;

²⁸ they are to belong to Aaron and his sons, by a statute binding for all time, as a gift from the Israelites, for it is a contribution set aside from their shared-offerings, their contribution to the LORD.

²⁹ Aaron's sacred vestments must be kept for the anointing and installation of his sons after him.

³⁰ The priest appointed in his stead from among his sons, the one who enters the Tent of Meeting to minister in the Holy Place, is to wear them for seven days.

³¹ Take the ram of installation and boil its flesh in a sacred place;

³² Aaron and his sons are to eat the ram's flesh and the bread left in the basket, at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting.

³³ They are to eat the things with which expiation was made at their installation and their consecration. No lay person may eat them, for they are holy.

³⁴ If any of the flesh of the installation, or any of the bread, is left over till

morning, you must destroy it by fire; it is not to be eaten, for it is holy.

³⁵ Do this with Aaron and his sons as I have commanded you, spending seven days over their installation.

³⁶ Offer a bull each day, a purification-offering as expiation for sin; offer the purification-offering on the altar when you make expiation for it, and consecrate it by anointing.

³⁷ For seven days you are to purify the altar and consecrate it; it will be most holy. Whoever touches the altar must be treated as holy.

³⁸ This is what you have to offer on the altar: two yearling rams regularly every day.

³⁹ Offer one ram at dawn, and the second between dusk and dark.

⁴⁰ With the first lamb offer a tenth of an ephah of flour mixed with a quarter of a hin of pure oil of pounded olives, and a drink-offering of a quarter of a hin of wine.

⁴¹ Offer the second ram between dusk and dark, and with it the same grain-offering and drink-offering as

at dawn, for a soothing odour: it is a food-offering to the LORD,

⁴²a regular whole-offering generation after generation for all time; you are to make the offering at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting before the LORD, where I meet you and speak to you.

⁴³I shall meet the Israelites there, and the place will be hallowed by my glory.

⁴⁴I shall consecrate the Tent of Meeting and the altar; and Aaron and his sons I shall consecrate to serve me as priests.

⁴⁵I shall dwell in the midst of the Israelites, I shall become their God,

⁴⁶and by my dwelling among them they will know that I am the LORD their God who brought them out of Egypt. I am the LORD their God.

30¹ Make an altar on which to burn incense; make it of acacia-wood.

²It is to be square, a cubit long by a cubit broad, and stand two cubits high; its horns are to be of one piece with it.

³Overlay it with pure gold, the top, all the sides, and the horns; and put round it a band of gold.

⁴Make pairs of gold rings for it; put them under the gold band at the two

corners on both sides to receive the poles by which it is to be carried.

⁵The poles are to be of acacia-wood overlaid with gold.

⁶Put the altar before the curtain which is in front of the Ark of the Testimony where I shall meet you.

⁷On it Aaron must burn fragrant incense; every morning when he trims the lamps he is to burn the incense,

⁸and when he tends the lamps between dusk and dark he is to burn the incense; so let there be a regular burning of incense before the LORD for all time.

⁹You must not offer on it any unauthorized incense, nor any whole-offering or grain-offering; and you must not pour a drink-offering over it.

¹⁰Once a year Aaron is to make expiation with blood on its horns; this must be done for all time with blood from the purification-offering of the yearly expiation for it. It is most holy to the LORD.

¹¹The LORD said to Moses:

¹²When you take a census of the Israelites, each man is to give a ransom

for his life to the LORD, to avert plague among them during the registration.

¹³As each man crosses over to those already counted he must give half a shekel by the sacred standard at the rate of twenty gerahs to the shekel, as a contribution levied for the LORD.

¹⁴Everyone aged twenty or more who has crossed over to those already counted will give a contribution for the LORD.

¹⁵The rich man will give no more than the half-shekel, and the poor man no less, when you give the contribution for the LORD to make expiation for your lives.

¹⁶The money received from the Israelites for expiation you are to apply to the service of the Tent of Meeting. The expiation for your lives is to be a reminder of the Israelites before the LORD.

¹⁷The LORD said to Moses:

¹⁸Make a bronze basin for ablution with its stand of bronze; place it between the Tent of Meeting and the altar, and fill it with water

¹⁹with which Aaron and his sons are to wash their hands and feet.

²⁰When they enter the Tent of Meeting they must wash with water, lest they die. Likewise when they approach the altar to minister, to burn a food-offering to the LORD,

²¹they must wash their hands and feet, lest they die. It is to be a statute for all time binding on him and his descendants in every generation.

²²The LORD said to Moses:

²³Take spices as follows: five hundred shekels of sticks of myrrh, half that amount, that is two hundred and fifty shekels, of fragrant cinnamon, two hundred and fifty shekels of aromatic cane,

²⁴five hundred shekels of cassia by the sacred standard, and a hin of olive oil.

²⁵From these prepare sacred anointing oil, a perfume compounded by the perfumer's art. This will be the sacred anointing oil.

²⁶Anoint with it the Tent of Meeting and the Ark of the Testimony,

²⁷ the table and all its vessels, the lampstand and its fittings, the altar of incense,

²⁸ the altar of whole-offering and all its vessels, the basin and its stand.

²⁹ Consecrate them, and they will be most holy; whoever touches them will be treated as holy.

³⁰ Anoint Aaron and his sons, and consecrate them to be my priests.

³¹ Speak to the Israelites and say: This will be the holy anointing oil for my service in every generation.

³² It must not be used for anointing the human body, and you must not prepare any oil like it after the same prescription. It is holy, and you are to treat it as holy.

³³ The man who compounds perfume like it, or who puts any of it on any lay person, will be cut off from his father's kin.

³⁴ The LORD said to Moses, Take fragrant spices: gum resin, aromatic shell, galbanum; add clear frankincense to the spices in equal proportions.

³⁵ Make it into incense, perfume made by the perfumer's craft, salted and pure, a holy thing.

³⁶Pound some of it into fine powder, and put it in front of the Testimony in the Tent of Meeting, where I shall meet you; you are to treat it as most holy.

³⁷The incense prepared according to this prescription you must not make for your personal use; you are to treat it as holy to the LORD.

³⁸The man who makes any like it for his own enjoyment will be cut off from his father's kin.

31 ¹THE LORD said to Moses,
²Take note that I have specially chosen Bezalel son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah.

³I have filled him with the spirit of God, making him skilful and ingenious, expert in every craft,

⁴and a master of design, whether in gold, silver, copper,

⁵or cutting precious stones for setting, or carving wood, for workmanship of every kind.

⁶Further, I have appointed Aholiab son of Ahisamach of the tribe of Dan to be his assistant, and I have endowed every skilled craftsman with the skill which he

has. They are to make everything that I have commanded you:

⁷ the Tent of Meeting, the Ark for the Testimony, the cover over it, and all the furnishings of the tent;

⁸ the table and its vessels, the pure lampstand and all its fittings, the altar of incense,

⁹ the altar of whole-offering and all its vessels, the basin and its stand;

¹⁰ the stitched vestments, that is the sacred vestments for Aaron the priest and the vestments for his sons when they minister as priests,

¹¹ the anointing oil, and the fragrant incense for the Holy Place. They are to carry it all out as I commanded you.

¹² The LORD said to Moses,

¹³ Say to the Israelites: Above all you must keep my sabbaths, for the sabbath is a sign between me and you in every generation that you may know that I am the LORD who hallows you.

¹⁴ You are to keep the sabbath, because for you it is a holy day. If anyone profanes it he must be put to death. Anyone who does work on it is to be cut off from his father's kin.

¹⁵Work may be done for six days, but on the seventh day there is a sabbath of solemn abstinence from work, holy to the LORD. Whoever does any work on the sabbath day shall be put to death.

¹⁶The Israelites must keep the sabbath, observing it in every generation as a covenant for ever.

¹⁷It is a sign for ever between me and the Israelites, for in six days the LORD made the heavens and the earth, but on the seventh day he ceased work and refreshed himself.

¹⁸When he had finished speaking with Moses on Mount Sinai, the LORD gave him the two tablets of the Testimony, stone tablets written with the finger of God.

32¹ WHEN the people saw that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, they congregated before Aaron and said, Come, make us gods to go before us. As for this Moses, who brought us up from Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.

²Aaron answered, Take the gold rings from the ears of your wives and daughters, and bring them to me.

³ So all the people stripped themselves of their gold ear-rings and brought them to Aaron.

⁴ He received them from their hands, cast the metal in a mould, and made it into the image of a bull-calf; then they said, Israel, these are your gods that brought you up from Egypt.

⁵ Seeing this, Aaron built an altar in front of it and announced, Tomorrow there is to be a feast to the LORD.

⁶ Next day the people rose early, offered whole-offerings, and brought shared-offerings. After this they sat down to eat and drink and then gave themselves up to revelry.

⁷ The LORD said to Moses, Go down at once, for your people, the people you brought up from Egypt, have committed a monstrous act.

⁸ They have lost no time in turning aside from the way which I commanded them to follow, and cast for themselves a metal image of a bull-calf; they have prostrated themselves before it, sacrificed to it, and said, Israel, these are your gods that brought you up from Egypt.

⁹The LORD said to Moses, I have considered this people, and I see their stubbornness.

¹⁰Now, let me alone to pour out my anger on them, so that I may put an end to them and make a great nation spring from you.

¹¹Moses set himself to placate the LORD his God: LORD, he said, why pour out your anger on your people, whom you brought out of Egypt with great power and a strong hand?

¹²Why let the Egyptians say, He meant evil when he took them out, to kill them in the mountains and wipe them off the face of the earth? Turn from your anger, and think better of the evil you intend against your people.

¹³Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, to whom you swore by your own self: I shall make your descendants countless as the stars in the heavens, and all this land, of which I have spoken, I shall give to them, and they will possess it for ever.

¹⁴So the LORD thought better of the evil with which he had threatened his people.

¹⁵ Moses went back down the mountain holding the two tablets of the Testimony, inscribed on both sides, on the front and on the back.

¹⁶ The tablets were the handiwork of God, and the writing was God's writing, engraved on the tablets.

¹⁷ Joshua, hearing the uproar the people were making, said to Moses, Listen! There is fighting in the camp.

¹⁸ Moses replied, This is not the sound of warriors, nor the sound of a defeated people; it is the sound of singing that I hear.

¹⁹ As he approached the camp, Moses saw the bull-calf and the dancing, and in a burst of anger he flung down the tablets and shattered them at the foot of the mountain.

²⁰ He took the calf they had made and burnt it; he ground it to powder, sprinkled it on water, and made the Israelites drink it.

²¹ He demanded of Aaron, What did this people do to you that you should have brought such great guilt upon them?

²² Aaron replied, Please do not be angry, my lord. You know how wicked the people are.

²³ They said to me, Make us gods to go ahead of us, because, as for this Moses, who brought us up from Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.

²⁴ So I said to them, Those of you who have any gold, take it off. They gave it to me, I threw it in the fire, and out came this bull-calf.

²⁵ Moses saw that the people were out of control and that Aaron had laid them open to the secret malice of their enemies.

²⁶ He took his place at the gate of the camp and said, Who is on the LORD's side? Come here to me; and the Levites all rallied to him.

²⁷ He said to them, The LORD the God of Israel has said: Arm yourselves, each of you, with his sword. Go through the camp from gate to gate and back again. Each of you kill brother, friend, neighbour.

²⁸ The Levites obeyed, and about three thousand of the people died that day.

²⁹ Moses said, You have been installed as priests to the LORD today, because you have turned each against his own son and his own brother and so have brought a blessing this day upon yourselves.

³⁰ The next day Moses said to the people, You have committed a great sin. Now I shall go up to the LORD; perhaps I may be able to secure pardon for your sin.

³¹ When he went back to the LORD he said, Oh, what a great sin this people has committed: they have made themselves gods of gold.

³² Now if you will forgive them, forgive; but if not, blot out my name, I pray, from your book which you have written.

³³ The LORD answered Moses, Whoever has sinned against me, him I shall blot out from my book.

³⁴ Now go, lead the people to the place of which I have told you. My angel will go ahead of you, but a day will come when I shall punish them for their sin.

³⁵ Then the LORD punished the people who through Aaron made the bull-calf.

33¹ THE LORD spoke to Moses: Set out, you and the people you have brought up from Egypt, go from here to the land which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that I would give to their descendants.

²I shall send an angel ahead of you, and drive out the Canaanites, the Amorites and the Hittites and the Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites.

³I shall bring you to a land flowing with milk and honey, but I shall not journey in your company, for fear that I should destroy you on the way, for you are a stubborn people.

⁴When the people heard this harsh sentence they went about like mourners, and no one put on his ornaments.

⁵The LORD said to Moses, Tell the Israelites: You are a stubborn people; at any moment, if I journeyed in your company, I might destroy you. Put away your ornaments now, and I shall determine what to do to you.

⁶So the Israelites stripped off their ornaments, and wore them no more from Mount Horeb onwards.

⁷ Moses used to take the Tent and set it up outside the camp some distance away. He called it the Tent of Meeting, and everyone who sought the LORD would go outside the camp to the Tent of Meeting.

⁸ Whenever Moses went out to the Tent, all the people would rise and stand, each at the door of his tent, and follow Moses with their eyes until he had entered the Tent.

⁹ When Moses entered it, the pillar of cloud came down, and stayed at the entrance to the Tent while the LORD spoke with Moses.

¹⁰ As soon as the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance to the Tent, they would all prostrate themselves, each at the door of his tent.

¹¹ The LORD used to speak with Moses face to face, as one man speaks to another, and Moses then returned to the camp, but his attendant, Joshua son of Nun, never moved from inside the Tent.

¹² Moses said to the LORD, You tell me to lead up this people without letting me know whom you will send with me, even though you have said to me, I know you

by name, and, what is more, you have found favour with me.

¹³If I have indeed won your favour, then teach me to know your ways, so that I can know you and continue in favour with you, for this nation is your own people.

¹⁴The LORD answered, I shall go myself and set your mind at rest.

¹⁵Moses said to him, Indeed if you do not go yourself, do not send us up from here;

¹⁶for how can it ever be known that I and your people have found favour with you, except by your going with us? So we shall be distinct, I and your people, from all the peoples on earth.

¹⁷The LORD said to Moses, I shall do what you have asked, because you have found favour with me, and I know you by name.

¹⁸But Moses prayed, Show me your glory.

¹⁹The LORD answered, I shall make all my goodness pass before you, and I shall pronounce in your hearing the name LORD. I shall be gracious to whom I shall

be gracious, and I shall have compassion on whom I shall have compassion.

²⁰But he added, My face you cannot see, for no mortal may see me and live.

²¹The LORD said, Here is a place beside me. Take your stand on the rock

²²and, when my glory passes by, I shall put you in a crevice of the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by.

²³Then I shall take away my hand, and you will see my back, but my face must not be seen.

34¹The LORD said to Moses, Cut for yourself two stone tablets like the former ones, and I shall write on them the words which were on the first tablets which you broke.

²Be ready by morning, and then go up Mount Sinai, and present yourself to me there on the top.

³No one is to go up with you, no one must even be seen anywhere on the mountain, nor must flocks or herds graze within sight of that mountain.

⁴So Moses cut two stone tablets like the first, and early in the morning he went up Mount Sinai as the LORD had

commanded him, taking the two stone tablets in his hands.

⁵The LORD came down in the cloud, and, as Moses stood there in his presence, he pronounced the name LORD.

⁶He passed in front of Moses and proclaimed: The LORD, the LORD, a God compassionate and gracious, long-suffering, ever faithful and true, ⁷remaining faithful to thousands, forgiving iniquity, rebellion, and sin but without acquitting the guilty, one who punishes children and grandchildren to the third and fourth generation for the iniquity of their fathers!

⁸At once Moses bowed to the ground in worship.

⁹He said, If I have indeed won your favour, Lord, then please go in our company. However stubborn a people they are, forgive our iniquity and our sin, and take us as your own possession.

¹⁰The LORD said: Here and now I am making a covenant. In full view of all your people I shall do such miracles as have never been performed in all the world or in any nation. All the peoples

among whom you live shall see the work of the LORD, for it is an awesome thing that I shall do for you.

¹¹ Observe all I command you this day; and I for my part shall drive out before you the Amorites, Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites.

¹² Beware of making an alliance with the inhabitants of the land against which you are going, or they will prove a snare in your midst.

¹³ You must demolish their altars, smash their sacred pillars, and cut down their sacred poles.

¹⁴ You are not to bow in worship to any other god, for the LORD's name is the Jealous God, and a jealous God he is.

¹⁵ Avoid any alliance with the inhabitants of the land, or, when they go wantonly after their gods and sacrifice to them, you, any one of you, may be invited to partake of their sacrifices,

¹⁶ and marry your sons to their daughters, and when their daughters go wantonly after their gods, they may lead your sons astray too.

¹⁷ Do not make yourselves gods of cast metal.

¹⁸You are to celebrate the pilgrim-feast of Unleavened Bread: for seven days, as I have commanded you, you are to eat unleavened bread at the appointed time in the month of Abib, because it was in Abib that you came out from Egypt.

¹⁹The first birth of every womb belongs to me, the males of all your herds, both cattle and sheep.

²⁰The first birth of a donkey you may redeem with a lamb, but if you do not redeem it, you must break its neck. Every firstborn among your sons you must redeem, and no one is to come into my presence without an offering.

²¹For six days you may work, but on the seventh abstain from work; even at ploughing time and harvest you must cease work.

²²You are to observe the pilgrim-feast of Weeks, the firstfruits of the wheat harvest, and the pilgrim-feast of Ingathering at the turn of the year.

²³Those three times a year all your males are to come into the presence of the Lord, the LORD the God of Israel;

²⁴for after I have dispossessed the nations before you and extended your

frontiers, there will be no danger from covetous neighbours when you go up those three times to enter the presence of the LORD your God.

²⁵Do not offer the blood of my sacrifice at the same time as anything leavened; nor is any portion of the victim of the pilgrim-feast of Passover to remain overnight till morning.

²⁶You must bring the choicest firstfruits of your soil to the house of the LORD your God. Do not boil a kid in its mother's milk.

²⁷The LORD said to Moses, Write these words down, because the covenant I make with you and with Israel is on those terms.

²⁸So Moses remained there with the LORD forty days and forty nights without food or drink. The LORD wrote down the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments, on the tablets.

²⁹At length Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two stone tablets of the Testimony in his hands, and when he came down, he did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with the LORD.

³⁰When Aaron and the Israelites saw how the skin of Moses' face shone, they were afraid to approach him.

³¹He called out to them, and Aaron and all the chiefs in the community turned towards him. Moses spoke to them,

³²and after that all the Israelites drew near. He gave them all the commands with which the LORD had charged him on Mount Sinai.

³³When Moses finished what he had to say, he put a veil over his face.

³⁴But whenever he went in before the LORD to speak with him, he left the veil off until he came out. Then he would go out and tell the Israelites all the commands he had received.

³⁵The Israelites would see how the skin of Moses' face shone, and he would put the veil back over his face until he went in again to speak with the LORD.

35¹MOSES called the whole community of Israelites together: These, he said, are the LORD's commands to you:

²Work may be done for six days, but the seventh you are to keep as a sabbath of solemn abstinence from work, holy to

the LORD. Whoever does any work on that day is to be put to death.

³Wherever you live, you are not even to light your fire on the sabbath day.

⁴Moses said to the whole Israelite community: This is the command the LORD has given:

⁵Each of you is to set aside a contribution to the LORD. Let all who wish bring a contribution to the LORD: gold, silver, copper;

⁶violet, purple, and scarlet yarn; fine linen and goats hair;

⁷tanned rams' skins and dugong-hides; and acacia-wood;

⁸oil for the lamp, spices for the anointing oil and for the fragrant incense;

⁹cornelians and other stones ready for setting on the ephod and the breastpiece.

¹⁰Let all the skilled craftsmen among you come and make everything the LORD has commanded:

¹¹the Tabernacle, its tent and covering, fasteners, planks, bars, posts, and sockets,

¹² the Ark and its poles, the cover and the curtain of the screen,

¹³ the table, its poles and all its vessels, and the Bread of the Presence;

¹⁴ the lampstand for the light, its fittings, lamps, and the lamp oil;

¹⁵ the altar of incense and its poles, the anointing oil, the fragrant incense, and the screen for the entrance of the Tabernacle,

¹⁶ the altar of whole-offering, its bronze grating, poles, and all appurtenances, the basin and its stand;

¹⁷ the hangings of the court, its posts and sockets, and the screen for the gateway of the court;

¹⁸ the pegs of the Tabernacle and court and their cords,

¹⁹ the stitched vestments for ministering in the Holy Place, that is the sacred vestments for Aaron the priest and the vestments for his sons when they minister as priests.

²⁰ The whole community of the Israelites went out from Moses' presence,

²¹ and everyone who was so minded brought of his own free will a contribution to the LORD for the making of the Tent

of Meeting and for all its service, and for the sacred vestments.

²²Men and women alike came and freely brought clasps, ear-rings, finger-rings, and pendants, gold ornaments of every kind, every one of them presenting a special gift of gold to the LORD.

²³Every man brought what he possessed of violet, purple, and scarlet yarn, fine linen and goats' hair, tanned rams' skins, and dugong-hides.

²⁴Every man, setting aside a contribution of silver or copper, brought it as a contribution to the LORD, and all who had acacia-wood suitable for any part of the work brought it.

²⁵Every woman with the skill spun and brought the violet, purple, and scarlet yarn, and fine linen.

²⁶The women, all whose skill moved them, spun the goats' hair.

²⁷The chiefs brought cornelians and other stones ready for setting in the ephod and the breastpiece,

²⁸the spices and oil for the lamp, for the anointing oil, and for the fragrant incense.

²⁹ Every Israelite man and woman who was minded to bring offerings to the LORD for all the work which he had commanded through Moses did so freely.

³⁰ Moses said to the Israelites, Take note that the LORD has specially chosen Bezalel son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah.

³¹ He has filled him with the spirit of God, making him skilful and ingenious, expert in every craft,

³² and a master of design, whether in gold, silver, and copper,

³³ or cutting precious stones for setting, or carving wood, in every kind of design.

³⁴ He has inspired both him and Aholiab son of Ahisamach of the tribe of Dan to instruct

³⁵ workers and designers of every kind, engravers, seamsters, embroiderers in violet, purple, and scarlet yarn and fine linen, and weavers, fully endowing them with skill to execute all kinds of work.

36 ¹ Bezalel and Aholiab are to work exactly as the LORD has commanded, and so also is every craftsman whom the LORD has made skilful and ingenious in these matters

so that they may know how to execute every kind of work for the service of the sanctuary.

²Moses summoned Bezalel, Aholiab, and every other craftsman to whom the LORD had given skill and who was willing, to come forward and set to work.

³They took from before Moses all the contributions which the Israelites had brought for the work of the service of the sanctuary, but the people still brought freewill-offerings morning after morning.

⁴The craftsmen at work on the sanctuary therefore left what they were doing, every one of them,

⁵and came to Moses and said, The people are bringing much more than we need for doing the work which the LORD has commanded.

⁶So Moses sent word round the camp that no man or woman should prepare anything more as a contribution for the sanctuary. The people stopped bringing gifts;

⁷what was there already was more than enough for all the work they had to do.

⁸So all the skilled craftsmen among the workers made the Tabernacle of

ten hangings of finely woven linen, and violet, purple, and scarlet yarn, with cherubim worked on them, all made by a seamster.

⁹The length of each hanging was twenty-eight cubits and the breadth four cubits, all of the same size.

¹⁰They joined five of the hangings together, and similarly the other five.

¹¹They made violet loops along the outer edge of one set of hangings and they did the same for the outer edge of the other set of hangings.

¹²They made fifty loops for each hanging; they made also fifty loops for the end hanging in the second set, the loops being opposite each other.

¹³They made fifty gold fasteners, with which they joined the hangings one to another, and the Tabernacle became a single whole.

¹⁴They made hangings of goats' hair, eleven in all, to form a tent over the Tabernacle;

¹⁵each hanging was thirty cubits long and four cubits wide, all eleven of the same size.

¹⁶They joined five of the hangings together, and similarly the other six.

¹⁷They made fifty loops on the edge of the last hanging in the first set and fifty loops on the joining edge of the second set,

¹⁸and fifty bronze fasteners to join up the tent and make it a single whole.

¹⁹They made for the tent a cover of tanned rams' skins and an outer covering of dugong-hides.

²⁰They made for the Tabernacle frames of acacia-wood as uprights,

²¹each frame ten cubits long and one and a half cubits wide,

²²and two tenons for each frame joined to each other. They did the same for all the frames of the Tabernacle.

²³They arranged the frames thus: twenty frames for the south side facing southwards,

²⁴with forty silver sockets under them, two sockets under each frame for its two tenons;

²⁵and for the second or northern side of the Tabernacle twenty frames

²⁶with forty silver sockets, two under each frame.

²⁷ They made six frames for the far end of the Tabernacle on the west.

²⁸ They made two frames for the corners of the Tabernacle at the far end;

²⁹ at the bottom they were alike, and at the top, both alike, they fitted into a single ring. They did the same for both of them at the two corners.

³⁰ There were eight frames with their silver sockets, sixteen sockets in all, two sockets under each frame.

³¹ They made bars of acacia-wood: five for the frames on one side of the Tabernacle,

³² five bars for the frames on the second side of the Tabernacle, and five bars for the frames on the far end of the Tabernacle on the west.

³³ They made the middle bar to run along from end to end half-way up the frames.

³⁴ They overlaid the frames with gold and made rings of gold on them to hold the bars, which were also overlaid with gold.

³⁵ They made the curtain of finely woven linen and violet, purple, and

scarlet yarn, with cherubim worked on it, all made by a seamster.

³⁶They made for it four posts of acacia-wood overlaid with gold, with gold hooks, and cast four silver sockets for them.

³⁷For the entrance of the tent a screen of finely woven linen was made, embroidered with violet, purple, and scarlet,

³⁸and five posts of acacia-wood with their hooks. They overlaid the tops of the posts and the bands round them with gold; the five sockets for them were of bronze.

37 ¹Bezalel then made the Ark, a chest of acacia-wood two and a half cubits long, one and a half cubits wide, and one and a half cubits high.

²He overlaid it with pure gold both inside and out, and put a band of gold all round it.

³He cast four gold rings to be on its four feet, two rings on each side.

⁴He made poles of acacia-wood and overlaid them with gold,

⁵and inserted the poles in the rings at the sides of the Ark to lift it.

⁶He made a cover of pure gold two and a half cubits long and one and a half cubits wide.

⁷He made two gold cherubim of beaten work at the ends of the cover,

⁸one at each end; he made each cherub of one piece with the cover.

⁹They had wings spread out and pointing upwards, screening the cover with their wings; they stood face to face, looking inwards over the cover.

¹⁰He made the table of acacia-wood two cubits long, one cubit wide, and one and a half cubits high.

¹¹He overlaid it with pure gold and put a band of gold all round it.

¹²He made a rim round it a hand's breadth wide, and a gold band round the rim.

¹³He cast four gold rings for it, and put the rings at the four corners by the four legs.

¹⁴The rings, which were to receive the poles for carrying the table, were adjacent to the rim.

¹⁵These poles he made of acacia-wood and overlaid them with gold.

¹⁶He made the vessels for the table, its dishes and saucers, and its flagons and bowls from which drink-offerings were to be poured; he made them of pure gold.

¹⁷He made the lampstand of pure gold. The lampstand, stem and branches, was of beaten work, its cups, both calyxes and petals, being of one piece with it.

¹⁸There were six branches springing from the sides of the lampstand, three branches from one side and three branches from the other.

¹⁹There were three cups shaped like almond blossoms with calyx and petals on the first branch, three cups shaped like almond blossoms with calyx and petals on the next branch, and similarly for all six branches springing from the lampstand.

²⁰On the main stem of the lampstand there were four cups shaped like almond blossoms with calyx and petals,

²¹and there were calyxes of one piece with it under the six branches which sprang from the lampstand, a single calyx under each pair of branches.

²²The calyxes and the branches were of one piece with it, all a single piece of beaten work of pure gold.

²³He made its seven lamps, its tongs, and firepans of pure gold.

²⁴The lampstand and all these fittings were made from one talent of pure gold.

²⁵He made the altar of incense of acacia-wood; it was square, a cubit long by a cubit broad, and it stood two cubits high, its horns of one piece with it.

²⁶He overlaid it with pure gold, the top, all the sides, and the horns, and he put round it a band of gold.

²⁷He made pairs of gold rings for it; he put them under the gold band at the two corners on both sides to receive the poles by which it was to be carried.

²⁸He made the poles of acacia-wood and overlaid them with gold.

²⁹He prepared the sacred anointing oil and the fragrant incense, pure, compounded by the perfumer's art.

38¹He made the altar of whole offering from acacia-wood; it was square, five cubits long by five cubits broad, and its height was three cubits.

²Its horns at the four corners were of one piece with it, and he overlaid it with bronze.

³He made all the vessels for the altar, its pots, shovels, tossing-bowls, forks, and firepans, all of bronze.

⁴He made for the altar a grating of bronze network under the ledge, coming half-way up.

⁵He cast four rings for the four corners of the bronze grating to receive the poles,

⁶and he made the poles of acacia-wood and overlaid them with bronze.

⁷He inserted the poles in the rings at the sides of the altar to carry it. The altar was made of boards and left hollow.

⁸The basin and its stand of bronze he made out of the bronze mirrors of the women waiting at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting.

⁹He made the court. On the south side facing southwards the hangings of the court were of finely woven linen a hundred cubits long,

¹⁰with twenty posts and twenty bronze sockets; the hooks and bands on the posts were of silver.

¹¹ Along the north side there were hangings of a hundred cubits, with twenty posts and twenty bronze sockets; the hooks and bands on the posts were of silver.

¹² On the west side there were hangings fifty cubits long, with ten posts and ten sockets; the hooks and bands on the posts were of silver.

¹³ On the east side, towards the sunrise, fifty cubits;

¹⁴ there were hangings on either side of the gateway of the court; they extended fifteen cubits to one corner, with their three posts and three sockets, and fifteen cubits to the second corner, with their three posts and three sockets.

¹⁵ (38: 14)

¹⁶ The hangings of the court all round were of finely woven linen.

¹⁷ The sockets for the posts were of bronze; the hooks were of silver as were the bands on the posts, the tops of them overlaid with silver, and all the posts of the court were bound with silver.

¹⁸ The screen at the gateway of the court was of finely woven linen, embroidered with violet, purple, and

scarlet, twenty cubits long and five cubits high to correspond to the hangings of the court,

¹⁹with four posts and four sockets of bronze, their hooks of silver, and the tops of them and their bands overlaid with silver.

²⁰All the pegs for the Tabernacle and those for the court were of bronze.

²¹These were the appointments of the Tabernacle, that is the Tabernacle of the Testimony which was assigned by Moses to the charge of the Levites under Ithamar son of Aaron the priest.

²²Bezalel son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, made everything the LORD had commanded Moses.

²³He was assisted by Aholiab son of Ahisamach of the tribe of Dan, an engraver, a seamster, and an embroiderer in fine linen with violet, purple, and scarlet yarn.

²⁴The gold of the special gift used for the work of the sanctuary amounted in all to twenty-nine talents seven hundred and thirty shekels by the sacred standard.

²⁵The silver contributed by the community when registered was one hundred talents one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five shekels by the sacred standard.

²⁶This amounted to a beka a head, that is half a shekel by the sacred standard, for every man aged twenty years or more, who had been registered, a total of six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty men.

²⁷The hundred talents of silver were for casting the sockets for the sanctuary and those for the curtain, a hundred sockets to a hundred talents, a talent to a socket.

²⁸With the one thousand seven hundred and seventy-five shekels he made hooks for the posts, overlaid the tops of the posts, and put bands round them.

²⁹The bronze of the special gift came to seventy talents two thousand four hundred shekels;

³⁰with this he made sockets for the entrance to the Tent of Meeting, the bronze altar and its bronze grating, all the vessels for the altar,

³¹ the sockets all round the court, the sockets for the posts at the gateway of the court, all the pegs for the Tabernacle, and the pegs all round the court.

39¹ They used violet, purple, and scarlet yarn in making the stitched vestments for ministering in the sanctuary and in making the sacred vestments for Aaron, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

² They made the ephod of gold, with violet, purple, and scarlet yarn, and finely woven linen.

³ The gold was beaten into thin plates, cut and twisted into braid to be worked in by a seamster with the violet, purple, and scarlet yarn, and fine linen.

⁴ They made shoulder-pieces for it, joined back and front.

⁵ The waistband on it was of the same workmanship and material as the fabric of the ephod; it was gold, with violet, purple, and scarlet yarn, and finely woven linen, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

⁶ They prepared the cornelians, fixed in gold rosettes, engraved by the art of a

seal-cutter with the names of the sons of Israel,

⁷ and fastened them on the shoulder-pieces of the ephod as reminders of the sons of Israel, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

⁸ They made the breastpiece; it was worked in gold like the ephod by a seamster, with violet, purple, and scarlet yarn, and finely woven linen.

⁹ They made the breastpiece square when folded double, a span long and a span wide.

¹⁰ They set in it four rows of precious stones: the first row, sardin, chrysolite, and green feldspar;

¹¹ the second row, purple garnet, sapphire, and jade;

¹² the third row, turquoise, agate, and jasper;

¹³ the fourth row, topaz, cornelian, and green jasper, all set in gold rosettes.

¹⁴ The stones corresponded to the twelve sons of Israel, name by name, each stone bearing the name of one of the twelve tribes engraved as on a seal.

¹⁵ They made for the breastpiece chains of pure gold worked into a cord.

¹⁶They made two gold rosettes and two gold rings, and they fixed the two rings on the two corners of the breastpiece.

¹⁷They fastened the two gold cords to the two rings at those corners of the breastpiece,

¹⁸and the other ends of the two cords to the two rosettes, thus binding them to the shoulder-pieces on the front of the ephod.

¹⁹They made two gold rings and put them at the two corners of the breastpiece on the inner side next to the ephod.

²⁰They made two gold rings and fixed them on the two shoulder-pieces of the ephod, low down and in front, close to its seam above the waistband of the ephod.

²¹They bound the breastpiece by its rings to the rings of the ephod with a violet braid, just above the waistband on the ephod, so that the breastpiece would not become loosened from the ephod; so the LORD had commanded Moses.

²²They made the mantle of the ephod a single piece of woven violet stuff,

²³with an opening in the middle of it which had a hem round it, with

an oversewn edge to prevent it from tearing.

²⁴On its hem they made pomegranates of violet, purple, and scarlet stuff, and finely woven linen.

²⁵They made bells of pure gold and put them all round the hem of the mantle between the pomegranates,

²⁶a bell and a pomegranate alternately the whole way round the hem of the mantle, to be worn when ministering, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

²⁷They made the tunics of fine linen, woven work, for Aaron and his sons,

²⁸the turban of fine linen, the tall headdresses and their bands all of fine linen, the shorts of finely woven linen,

²⁹and the sashes of finely woven linen, embroidered in violet, purple, and scarlet, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

³⁰They made a medallion of pure gold as the symbol of their holy dedication and inscribed on it as the engraving on a seal, Holy to the LORD,

³¹and they fastened on it a violet braid to fix it on the turban at the top, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

³² Thus all the work of the Tabernacle of the Tent of Meeting was completed, and the Israelites did everything exactly as the LORD had commanded Moses.

³³ They brought the Tabernacle to Moses, the tent and all its furnishings, its fasteners, frames, bars, posts, and sockets,

³⁴ the covering of tanned rams' skins and the outer covering of dugong-hides, the curtain of the screen,

³⁵ the Ark of the Testimony and its poles, the cover,

³⁶ the table and its vessels, and the Bread of the Presence,

³⁷ the pure lampstand with its lamps in a row and all its fittings, and the lamp oil,

³⁸ the gold altar, the anointing oil, the fragrant incense, and the screen at the entrance of the tent,

³⁹ the bronze altar, the bronze grating attached to it, its poles and all its furnishings, the basin and its stand,

⁴⁰ the hangings of the court, its posts and sockets, the screen for the gateway of the court, its cords and pegs, and

all the equipment for the service of the Tabernacle for the Tent of Meeting,

⁴¹ the stitched vestments for ministering in the sanctuary, that is the sacred vestments for Aaron the priest and the vestments for his sons when ministering as priests.

⁴² As the LORD had commanded Moses, so the Israelites carried out the whole work.

⁴³ Moses inspected all the work, and saw that they had carried it out according to the command of the LORD; and he blessed them.

40 ¹ THE LORD said to Moses:
² On the first day of the first month you are to set up the Tabernacle of the Tent of Meeting.

³ Put the Ark of the Testimony in it and screen the Ark with the curtain.

⁴ Bring in the table and lay it; then bring in the lampstand and mount its lamps.

⁵ Then set the gold altar of incense in front of the Ark of the Testimony and put the screen of the entrance of the Tabernacle in place.

⁶Place the altar of whole-offering in front of the entrance of the Tabernacle of the Tent of Meeting,

⁷and the basin between the Tent of Meeting and the altar, and put water in it.

⁸Set up the court all round, and put in place the screen at the entrance of the court.

⁹With the anointing oil anoint the Tabernacle and everything in it, thus consecrating it and all its furnishings; it will then be holy.

¹⁰Anoint the altar of whole-offering and all its vessels, thus consecrating it; it will be most holy.

¹¹Anoint the basin and its stand and consecrate it.

¹²Bring Aaron and his sons to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting and wash them with the water.

¹³Then clothe Aaron with the sacred vestments, anoint him, and consecrate him to be my priest.

¹⁴Then bring forward his sons, clothe them in tunics,

¹⁵and anoint them as you anointed their father; and they will be my priests.

Their anointing inaugurates a hereditary priesthood for all time.

¹⁶Moses did everything exactly as the LORD had commanded him.

¹⁷In the first month of the second year, on the first day of that month, the Tabernacle was set up.

¹⁸Moses erected the Tabernacle: he put the sockets in place, inserted the frames, fixed the crossbars, and set up the posts.

¹⁹He spread the tent over the Tabernacle and fixed the covering of the tent on top of that, as the LORD had commanded him.

²⁰He took the Testimony and put it into the Ark, inserted the poles in the Ark, and put the cover over the top of the Ark.

²¹He brought the Ark into the Tabernacle, set up the curtain of the screen, and so screened the Ark of the Testimony, as the LORD had commanded him.

²²He put the table in the Tent of Meeting on the north side of the Tabernacle outside the curtain

²³ and arranged bread on it before the LORD, as the LORD had commanded him.

²⁴ He set the lampstand in the Tent of Meeting opposite the table at the south side of the Tabernacle

²⁵ and mounted the lamps before the LORD, as the LORD had commanded him.

²⁶ He set up the gold altar in the Tent of Meeting in front of the curtain

²⁷ and burnt fragrant incense on it, as the LORD had commanded him.

²⁸ He set up the screen at the entrance of the Tabernacle,

²⁹ fixed the altar of whole-offering at the entrance of the Tabernacle of the Tent of Meeting, and offered on it whole-offerings and grain-offerings, as the LORD had commanded him.

³⁰ He set up the basin between the Tent of Meeting and the altar and put water there for washing.

³¹ Moses and Aaron and Aaron's sons used to wash their hands and feet

³² when they entered the Tent of Meeting or approached the altar, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

³³ He set up the court all round the Tabernacle and the altar, and put the screen at the entrance of the court.

Moses completed the work,

³⁴ and the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the Tabernacle.

³⁵ Moses was unable to enter the Tent of Meeting, because the cloud had settled on it and the glory of the LORD filled the Tabernacle.

³⁶ At every stage of their journey, when the cloud lifted from the Tabernacle, the Israelites used to break camp;

³⁷ but if the cloud did not lift from the Tabernacle, they used not to break camp until such time as it did lift.

³⁸ For the cloud of the LORD was over the Tabernacle by day, and there was fire in the cloud by night, and all the Israelites could see it at every stage of their journey.

Leviticus

1 ¹THE LORD summoned Moses and spoke to him from the Tent of Meeting. He told him

²to say to the Israelites: When anyone among you presents an animal as an offering to the LORD, it may be chosen either from the herd or from the flock.

³If his offering is a whole-offering from the herd, he must present a male without blemish; he must present it at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting so as to secure acceptance before the LORD.

⁴He must lay his hand on the head of the victim and it will be accepted on his behalf to make expiation for him.

⁵He must then slaughter the bull before the LORD, and the Aaronite priests are to present the blood and fling it against the sides of the altar at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting.

⁶He must flay the victim and dismember it.

⁷ The sons of Aaron the priest, having kindled a fire on the altar and arranged wood on the fire,

⁸ are to arrange the pieces, including the head and the suet, on the wood on the altar-fire;

⁹ the entrails and shins must be washed in water, and the priest is to burn it all on the altar as a whole-offering, a food-offering of soothing odour to the LORD.

¹⁰ If his whole-offering is from the flock, from either the rams or the goats, he must present a male without blemish.

¹¹ He must slaughter it before the LORD at the north side of the altar, and the Aaronite priests are to fling the blood against the sides of the altar.

¹² He must cut it up in pieces, and the priests are to arrange the pieces, together with the head and the suet, on the wood on the altar-fire;

¹³ the entrails and shins must be washed in water, and the priest is to present and burn it all on the altar: it is a whole-offering, a food-offering of soothing odour to the LORD.

¹⁴If his offering to the LORD is a whole-offering of birds, he is to present a turtle-dove or pigeon as his offering.

¹⁵The priest must present it at the altar and wrench off the head, which he is to burn on the altar; the blood is to be drained out against the side of the altar.

¹⁶He must remove the crop and its contents in one piece, and throw it to the east side of the altar, where the ashes are.

¹⁷Having torn it open by its wings without severing it completely, the priest is to burn it on the altar, on top of the wood of the altar-fire: it is a whole-offering, a food-offering of soothing odour to the LORD.

2¹When someone presents a grain-offering to the LORD, his offering must be of flour. Having poured oil on it and added frankincense,

²he must bring it to the Aaronite priests, one of whom is to scoop up a handful of the flour and oil with all the frankincense. The priest must burn this as a token on the altar, a food-offering of soothing odour to the LORD.

³The remainder of the grain-offering belongs to Aaron and his sons: it is most holy, taken from the food-offerings of the LORD.

⁴When you present as a grain-offering something baked in an oven, it is to take the form either of unleavened cakes of flour mixed with oil or of unleavened wafers smeared with oil.

⁵If your offering is a grain-offering cooked on a griddle, let it be an unleavened cake of flour mixed with oil.

⁶Crumble it and pour oil over it. This is a grain-offering.

⁷If your offering is a grain-offering cooked in a pan, the flour is to be prepared with oil.

⁸Bring an offering prepared in any of these ways to the LORD and present it to the priest, who will take it to the altar.

⁹He must set aside part of the grain-offering as a token and burn it on the altar, a food-offering of soothing odour to the LORD.

¹⁰The remainder of the grain-offering belongs to Aaron and his sons: it is most holy, taken from the food-offerings of the LORD.

¹¹ No grain-offering which you present to the LORD must be made of anything that ferments; you are not to burn any leaven or any honey as a food-offering to the LORD.

¹² You may present them to the LORD as an offering of firstfruits, but they are not to be offered up at the altar as a soothing odour.

¹³ Every offering of yours which is a grain-offering is to be salted; you must not fail to put the salt of your covenant with God on your grain-offering. Salt must accompany all offerings.

¹⁴ If you present to the LORD a grain-offering of first-ripe grain, you must present fresh grain roasted, crushed meal from fully ripened grain;

¹⁵ add oil to it and put frankincense on it. This is a grain-offering,

¹⁶ and the priest is to burn as its token some of the crushed meal and some of the oil, together with all the frankincense, as a food-offering to the LORD.

3¹ If someone's offering is a shared-offering from the cattle, whether a male or a female, what he presents

before the LORD must be without blemish.

²He must lay his hand on the head of the victim and slaughter it at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. The Aaronite priests must fling the blood against the sides of the altar.

³One of them is to present part of the shared-offering as a food-offering to the LORD: he must remove the fat covering the entrails and all the fat upon the entrails,

⁴both kidneys with the fat on them near the loins, and the long lobe of the liver with the kidneys.

⁵The Aaronites are to burn it on the altar on top of the whole-offering which is upon the wood on the fire, a food-offering of soothing odour to the LORD.

⁶If someone's offering as a shared-offering to the LORD is from the flock, whether a male or a female, what he presents must be without blemish.

⁷If he is presenting a ram as his offering, he must present it before the LORD,

⁸lay his hand on the head of the victim, and slaughter it in front of the Tent of Meeting. The Aaronites must then fling its blood against the sides of the altar.

⁹He is to present part of the shared-offering as a food-offering to the LORD: he is to remove its fat, the entire fat-tail cut off close by the spine, the fat covering the entrails and all the fat upon the entrails,

¹⁰both kidneys with the fat on them beside the loins, and the long lobe of the liver with the kidneys.

¹¹The priest is to burn it at the altar, as food offered to the LORD.

¹²If someone's offering is a goat, he must present it before the LORD,

¹³lay his hand on its head, and slaughter it in front of the Tent of Meeting. The Aaronites must then fling its blood against the sides of the altar.

¹⁴He is to present part of the victim as a food-offering to the LORD; he is to remove the fat covering the entrails and all the fat upon the entrails,

¹⁵both kidneys with the fat on them near the loins, and the long lobe of the liver with the kidneys.

¹⁶The priest is to burn this at the altar as a food-offering of soothing odour. All fat belongs to the LORD.

¹⁷This is a rule for all time from generation to generation wherever you live: that you must consume neither fat nor blood.

4 ¹THE LORD told Moses ²to say to the Israelites, When anyone sins inadvertently by doing anything forbidden by any of the LORD's commandments:

³If it is the anointed priest who sins, thus bringing guilt on the people, then for the sin he has committed he must present to the LORD a young bull without blemish as a purification-offering.

⁴He must bring the bull to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting before the LORD, lay his hand on its head, and slaughter it before the LORD.

⁵The anointed priest must then bring some of its blood into the Tent of Meeting,

⁶dip his finger in the blood, and sprinkle it in front of the sanctuary curtain seven times before the LORD.

⁷ The priest must then smear some of the blood on the horns of the altar where fragrant incense is burnt before the LORD in the Tent of Meeting; the rest of the bull's blood he is to pour out at the base of the altar of whole-offering, which is at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting.

⁸ He must set aside all the fat from the bull of the purification-offering; he must set aside the fat covering the entrails and all the fat upon the entrails,

⁹ both kidneys with the fat on them beside the loins, and the long lobe of the liver with the kidneys.

¹⁰ It is to be set aside as was done with the fat from the bull at the shared-offering. The priest must burn the pieces of fat on the altar of whole-offering;

¹¹ but the hide of the bull and all its flesh, as well as its head, its shins, its entrails and offal,

¹² the whole of it, he must take away outside the camp to a ritually clean place, where the ash-heap is, and destroy it on a wood fire on top of the ash-heap.

¹³ If it is the whole Israelite community that sins inadvertently by doing what

is forbidden by any of the LORD's commandments, and so incurs guilt, and the matter is not known to the assembly,

¹⁴then, when the sin they have committed is brought to their notice, the assembly must present a young bull as a purification-offering and bring it in front of the Tent of Meeting.

¹⁵The elders of the community must lay their hands on the victim's head before the LORD, and it must be slaughtered before the LORD.

¹⁶The anointed priest must then bring some of the blood into the Tent of Meeting,

¹⁷dip his finger in it, and sprinkle it in front of the curtain seven times before the LORD.

¹⁸He must smear some of the blood on the horns of the altar which is before the LORD in the Tent of Meeting, and pour all the rest at the base of the altar of whole-offering, which is at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting.

¹⁹He must set aside all the fat from the bull and burn it on the altar.

²⁰He is to deal with this bull as he deals with the bull of the purification-offering;

in this way the priest makes expiation for the people's guilt and they are forgiven.

²¹ He is then to have the bull taken outside the camp to be burnt as the other bull was burnt. This is a purification-offering for the assembly.

²² When a leader sins by doing inadvertently what is forbidden by any of the commandments of the LORD his God, thereby incurring guilt,

²³ and the sin he has committed is made known to him, he must bring a he-goat without blemish as his offering.

²⁴ He must lay his hand on the goat's head and slaughter it before the LORD in the place where the whole-offering is slaughtered. It is a purification-offering.

²⁵ The priest must then take some of the blood of the victim with his finger and smear it on the horns of the altar of whole-offering; the rest of the blood he is to pour out at the base of the altar of whole-offering.

²⁶ He must burn all the fat at the altar in the same way as the fat of the shared-offering. Thus the priest is to make expiation for that person's sin, and it will be forgiven him.

²⁷ If anyone among the ordinary lay people sins inadvertently and does what is forbidden in any of the LORD's commandments, thereby incurring guilt, ²⁸ and the sin he has committed is made known to him, he must bring as his offering for the sin which he has committed a she-goat without blemish.

²⁹ He must lay his hand on the head of the victim and slaughter it at the place where the whole-offering is slaughtered.

³⁰ The priest must then take some of its blood with his finger and smear it on the horns of the altar of whole-offering; the rest of the blood he is to pour out at the base of the altar.

³¹ He must remove all its fat as the fat is removed from the shared-offering, and burn it on the altar as a soothing odour to the LORD. Thus the priest is to make expiation for that person's guilt, and it will be forgiven him.

³² If it is a sheep he brings as his offering for sin, it must be a ewe without blemish.

³³ He must lay his hand on the head of the victim and slaughter it as a

purification-offering at the place where the whole-offering is slaughtered.

³⁴The priest must then take some of the blood of the victim with his finger and smear it on the horns of the altar of whole-offering; the rest of the blood he is to pour out at the base of the altar.

³⁵He must remove all its fat, as the fat of the sheep is removed from the shared-offering. He must burn the pieces of fat at the altar on top of the food-offerings to the LORD; thus the priest is to make expiation on account of the sin that the person has committed, and it will be forgiven him.

5¹IF a person sins in that he hears a solemn adjuration to give evidence as a witness to something he has seen or heard, but does not declare what he knows, he must bear the consequences;
²or if a person touches anything ritually unclean, such as the dead body of an unclean animal, whether wild or domestic, or of an unclean swarming creature, and it is unremembered by him, and then being unclean he realizes his guilt;

³ or if he touches any human uncleanness of whatever kind, and it is unremembered by him, and becoming aware of it he realizes his guilt;

⁴ or if a person utters an oath to bring about evil or good, in any matter in which such a person may swear a rash oath, and it is unremembered by him, and becoming aware of it he realizes his guilt in such cases:

⁵ when he realizes his guilt in any of these cases, he must confess how he has sinned,

⁶ and bring to the LORD in reparation for the sin that he has committed a female of the flock, either a ewe or a she-goat, to be a purification-offering, and the priest is to offer expiation for his sin on his behalf, and he will be pardoned.

⁷ If he cannot afford as much as a young animal, he must bring to the LORD in reparation for his sin two turtle-doves or two pigeons, one to be a purification-offering and the other to be a whole-offering.

⁸ He must bring them to the priest, who is to present first the one intended

for the purification-offering. He must wrench its head back without severing it.

⁹He must sprinkle some of the blood of the victim against the side of the altar, and what is left of the blood is to be drained out at the base of the altar: it is a purification-offering.

¹⁰He must deal with the second bird as a whole-offering in the prescribed way. Thus the priest is to offer expiation for the sin the person has committed, and it will be forgiven him.

¹¹If anyone cannot afford two turtle-doves or two pigeons, for his sin he must bring as his offering a tenth of an ephah of flour as a purification-offering. He must add no oil to it nor put frankincense on it, because it is a purification-offering.

¹²He must bring it to the priest, who is to scoop up a handful from it as a token and burn it on the altar on the food-offerings to the LORD: it is a purification-offering.

¹³The priest is to offer expiation for the sin the person has committed in any one of these cases, and it will be forgiven him. As with the grain-offering, the remainder belongs to the priest.

¹⁴The LORD spoke to Moses and said:

¹⁵When any person commits an offence by inadvertently defaulting in dues sacred to the LORD, he must bring to the LORD as his reparation-offering a ram without blemish from the flock; the value is to be determined by you in silver shekels by the sacred standard, for a reparation-offering;

¹⁶he must make good his default in sacred dues, adding one fifth of the value. He must give it to the priest, who is to offer expiation for his sin with the ram of the reparation-offering, and it will be forgiven him.

¹⁷If and when any person sins unwittingly and does what is forbidden by any commandment of the LORD, thereby incurring guilt, he must bear the consequences.

¹⁸He must bring to the priest as a reparation-offering a ram without blemish from the flock, valued by you, and the priest is to offer expiation for the error into which he has unwittingly fallen, and it will be forgiven him.

¹⁹It is a reparation-offering; he has been guilty of an offence against the LORD.

6¹When the LORD spoke to Moses he said:

²When any person sins by false use of the LORD's name, whether the person lies to a fellow-countryman about a deposit or contract, or a theft, or wrongs him by extortion,

³or finds lost property and then lies about it, and swears a false oath in regard to any sin of this sort that he commits --

⁴if he does this and realizes his guilt, he must restore what he has stolen or gained by extortion, or the deposit entrusted to him, or the lost property which he found,

⁵or anything at all concerning which he swore a false oath. He must make full restitution, adding one fifth of the value to it, and give it back to the aggrieved party on the day when he realizes his guilt.

⁶He must bring to the priest as his reparation-offering to the LORD a ram

without blemish from the flock, valued by you, as a reparation-offering.

⁷When the priest makes expiation for his guilt before the LORD, he will be forgiven for any act for which he has realized his guilt.

⁸THE LORD told Moses

⁹to give these commands to Aaron and his sons: This is the law of the whole-offering. The whole-offering is to remain on the altar-hearth overnight till morning, and the altar-fire is to be kept burning there.

¹⁰The priest, having donned his linen robe and put on linen shorts to cover himself, must remove the ashes to which the fire reduces the whole-offering on the altar and put them beside the altar.

¹¹Then having changed into other garments he is to take the ashes outside the camp to a place which is ritually clean.

¹²The fire on the altar is to be kept burning; it must never go out. Every morning the priest must add fresh wood, arrange the whole-offering on it, and on top burn the fat from the shared-offerings.

¹³Fire must always be kept burning on the altar; it must not go out.

¹⁴This is the law of the grain-offering. The Aaronites must present it before the LORD in front of the altar.

¹⁵The priest must set aside a handful of the flour from it, with the oil of the grain-offering, and all the frankincense on it, and burn this token of it on the altar as a soothing odour to the LORD.

¹⁶Aaron and his sons are to eat the rest; it is to be eaten in the form of unleavened cakes and in a holy place, the court of the Tent of Meeting.

¹⁷It must not be baked with leaven. I have allotted this to them as their share of my food-offerings. Like the purification and the reparation-offerings, it is most holy.

¹⁸Only Aaron's descendants may eat it, as a due from the food-offerings to the LORD, for generation after generation for all time. Whoever touches it is to be treated as holy.

¹⁹When the LORD spoke to Moses he said:

²⁰This is the offering which Aaron and his sons are to present to the LORD:

one tenth of an ephah of flour, the usual grain-offering, half of it in the morning and half in the evening.

²¹ It is to be cooked with oil on a griddle. Bring it well-mixed, and present it crumbled in small pieces as a grain-offering, a soothing odour to the LORD.

²² The priest in the line of Aaron anointed to succeed him is to offer it. This is a rule binding for all time; it must be burnt in sacrifice to the LORD as a complete offering.

²³ Every grain-offering of a priest shall be a complete offering; it must not be eaten.

²⁴ The LORD told Moses

²⁵ to say to Aaron and his sons: This is the law of the purification-offering. This offering is to be slaughtered before the LORD in the place where the whole-offering is slaughtered; it is most holy.

²⁶ The priest who officiates is to eat of the flesh; it must be eaten in a sacred place, in the court of the Tent of Meeting.

²⁷ Whoever touches its flesh is to be treated as holy, and if any of the blood is

splashed on clothing, it must be washed in a sacred place.

²⁸Any earthenware vessel in which the purification-offering is boiled must be broken; if it has been boiled in a copper vessel, that must be scoured and rinsed with water.

²⁹Any male of priestly family may eat of this offering; it is most holy.

³⁰If, however, part of the blood is brought to the Tent of Meeting to make expiation in the holy place, the offering must not be eaten; it must be destroyed by fire.

7¹This is the law of the reparation-offering. It is most holy;

²the reparation victim must be slaughtered in the place where the whole-offering is slaughtered, and its blood flung against the sides of the altar.

³The priest must present all the fat from it: the fat-tail and the fat covering the entrails,

⁴both kidneys with the fat on them beside the loins, and the long lobe of the liver with the kidneys.

⁵The priest must burn those pieces on the altar as a food-offering to the LORD: it is a reparation-offering.

⁶Only males belonging to the priestly family may eat it. It is to be eaten in a sacred place; it is most holy.

⁷There is one law for both purification-offering and reparation-offering: they belong to the priest who performs the rite of expiation.

⁸The hide of anyone's whole-offering belongs to the priest who presents it.

⁹Every grain-offering baked in an oven and everything that is cooked in a pan or on a griddle belong to the priest who presents them.

¹⁰Every grain-offering, whether mixed with oil or dry, is to be shared equally among all the Aaronites.

¹¹This is the law of the shared-offering presented to the LORD.

¹²If someone presents it as a thank-offering, then, in addition to the thank-offering, he must present unleavened bread mixed with oil, wafers of unleavened flour smeared with oil, and flat bread-cakes of well-mixed flour moistened with oil.

¹³He must present flat cakes of leavened bread in addition to his shared thank-offering.

¹⁴One part of every offering he is to present as a contribution for the LORD: it is to belong to the priest who flings the blood of the shared-offering against the altar.

¹⁵The flesh must be eaten on the day it is presented; none of it may be put aside till morning.

¹⁶If, however, anyone's sacrifice is a votive offering or a freewill-offering, it may be eaten on the day it is presented or on the next day;

¹⁷but any flesh left over on the third day must be destroyed by fire.

¹⁸If any flesh of his shared-offering is eaten on the third day, the one who has presented it will not be accepted. It will not be counted to his credit, but will be reckoned as tainted, and the person who eats any of it must accept responsibility.

¹⁹If the flesh comes into contact with anything unclean it must not be eaten; it must be destroyed by fire. Flesh may be eaten by anyone who is clean,

²⁰but the person who, while unclean, eats flesh from a shared-offering presented to the LORD is to be cut off from his father's kin.

²¹When any person is contaminated by contact with anything unclean, be it man, beast, or swarming creature, and then eats any of the flesh from the shared-offerings presented to the LORD, that person is to be cut off from his father's kin.

²²The LORD told Moses

²³to say to the Israelites: You must not eat the fat of any ox, sheep, or goat.

²⁴The fat of an animal that has died a natural death or has been mauled by wild beasts may be put to any other use, but you are not to eat it.

²⁵Everyone who eats fat from a beast from which food-offerings are presented to the LORD is to be cut off from his father's kin.

²⁶You are not to consume any of the blood, whether of bird or of beast, wherever you may live.

²⁷Anyone consuming any of the blood is to be cut off from his father's kin.

²⁸The LORD told Moses

²⁹ to say to the Israelites: Whoever comes to present a shared-offering must set aside part of it as an offering to the LORD.

³⁰ With his own hands he is to bring the food-offerings to the LORD. He must also bring the fat together with the breast which is to be presented as a dedicated portion before the LORD.

³¹ The priest must burn the fat on the altar, but the breast is to belong to Aaron and his descendants.

³² Give the right hind leg of your shared-offerings as a contribution for the priest;

³³ it will be the perquisite of the Aaronite who presents the blood and the fat of the shared-offering.

³⁴ I have taken from the Israelites the breast of the dedicated portion and the leg of the contribution made out of the shared-offerings, and have given them as a due from the Israelites to Aaron the priest and his descendants for all time.

³⁵ This is the portion allotted to Aaron and his descendants out of the LORD's food-offerings, appointed on the day

when they were presented as priests to the LORD;

³⁶and on the day when they were anointed, the LORD commanded that these prescribed portions should be given to them by the Israelites. This is a rule binding on their descendants for all time.

³⁷Such, then, is the law concerning the whole-offering, the grain-offering, the purification-offering, the reparation-offering, the ordination-offering, and the shared-offering,

³⁸with which the LORD charged Moses on Mount Sinai on the day when he commanded the Israelites to present their offerings to the LORD in the wilderness of Sinai.

8¹ WHEN the LORD spoke to Moses he said:

²Bring Aaron and his sons, along with the vestments, the anointing oil, the bull for a purification-offering, the two rams, and the basket of unleavened bread,

³and assemble all the community at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting.

⁴ Moses did as the LORD commanded him, and when the community assembled at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting,

⁵ he told them that this was what the LORD had ordered to be done.

⁶ Moses brought forward Aaron and his sons and washed them with water.

⁷ He invested Aaron with the tunic, girded him with the sash, robed him with the mantle, put the ephod on him, tied it with its waistband, and fastened the ephod to him with the band.

⁸ He put the breastpiece on him and set the Urim and Thummim in it.

⁹ He placed the turban on his head, with the gold medallion as a symbol of holy dedication on the front of the turban, as the LORD had commanded him.

¹⁰ Moses then took the anointing oil, and anointed the Tabernacle and all that was in it, so consecrating them.

¹¹ With some of the oil he sprinkled the altar seven times, anointing it and all its vessels, along with the basin with its stand, to consecrate them,

¹² and poured some of the anointing oil on Aaron's head to consecrate him.

¹³ Moses brought Aaron's sons forward and, as the LORD had commanded him, he invested them with tunics, girded them with sashes, and tied their headaddresses.

¹⁴ Moses had the bull for the purification-offering brought, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on its head.

¹⁵ Moses slaughtered it, and taking some of the blood he smeared it with his finger on the horns at the corners of the altar to purify it. He poured out the remaining blood at the base of the altar, which he consecrated by purifying it.

¹⁶ He took all the fat on the entrails, the long lobe of the liver, and both kidneys with their fat, and burnt them on the altar,

¹⁷ but the rest of the bull with its hide, flesh, and offal he destroyed by fire outside the camp, as commanded by the LORD.

¹⁸ Moses then had the ram of the whole-offering brought, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on the ram's head.

¹⁹ Moses slaughtered it, and flung its blood against the sides of the altar.

²⁰He cut the ram into pieces and burnt the head, the pieces, and the suet.

²¹He washed the entrails and the shins in water and burnt the whole on the altar. This was a whole-offering, to be a food-offering of soothing odour to the LORD, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

²²Moses had the second ram brought forward, the ram for the ordination of priests, and Aaron and his sons laid their hands on its head.

²³Moses slaughtered it, and taking some of its blood he put it on the lobe of Aaron's right ear, on his right thumb, and on the big toe of his right foot.

²⁴He then brought forward the sons of Aaron and put some of the blood on the lobes of their right ears, on their right thumbs, and on the big toes of their right feet. The rest of the blood he flung against the sides of the altar.

²⁵He took the fat, the fat-tail, the fat covering the entrails, the long lobe of the liver, both kidneys with their fat, and the right leg.

²⁶From the basket of unleavened bread before the LORD he took one unleavened

cake, one cake of bread made with oil, and one wafer, and laid them on the fatty parts and the right leg.

²⁷ He put it all on the hands of Aaron and of his sons, presenting it as a dedicated portion before the LORD.

²⁸ Moses then took it from their hands and burnt it on the altar on top of the whole-offering. This was an ordination-offering, a food-offering of soothing odour to the LORD.

²⁹ He took the breast and presented it as a dedicated portion before the LORD; it was his portion of the ram of ordination, as the LORD had commanded him.

³⁰ Moses took some of the anointing oil and some of the blood on the altar and sprinkled it on Aaron and his vestments, and also on his sons and their vestments. Thus he consecrated Aaron and his vestments, along with his sons and their vestments.

³¹ Moses said to Aaron and his sons, Boil the flesh of the ram at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting, and eat it there, together with the bread that is in the ordination-basket, in accordance with

the command: Aaron and his sons are to eat it.

³²What remains of the flesh and bread you are to destroy by fire.

³³You are not to go outside the entrance to the Tent of Meeting for seven days, until the day which completes the period of your ordination, for it lasts seven days.

³⁴What was done this day followed the LORD's command to make expiation for you.

³⁵Stay by the entrance to the Tent of Meeting day and night for seven days, keeping vigil to the LORD, so that you do not die, for so I was commanded.

³⁶Aaron and his sons did everything that the LORD had commanded through Moses.

9¹On the eighth day, when Moses had summoned Aaron and his sons and the Israelite elders,

²he said to Aaron, Take for yourself a bull-calf for a purification-offering and a ram for a whole-offering, both without blemish, and present them before the LORD.

³Then bid the Israelites take a he-goat for a purification-offering, a calf and a lamb, both yearlings without blemish, for a whole-offering,

⁴and a bull and a ram for shared-offerings to be sacrificed before the LORD, together with a grain-offering mixed with oil. For today the LORD will appear to you.

⁵They brought what Moses had commanded to the front of the Tent of Meeting, and the whole community approached and stood before the LORD.

⁶Moses said, This is what the LORD has commanded you to do, so that the glory of the LORD may appear to you.

⁷Moses said to Aaron, Approach the altar; sacrifice your purification-offering and your whole-offering, making expiation for yourself and for your household. Then sacrifice the offering of the people and make expiation for them, as the LORD has commanded.

⁸So Aaron approached the altar and slaughtered the calf, which was his purification-offering.

⁹His sons presented the blood to him, and he dipped his finger in the blood and

smeared it on the horns of the altar; the rest of the blood he poured out at the base of the altar.

¹⁰Part of the purification-offering, namely the fat, the kidneys, and the long lobe of the liver, he burnt on the altar as the LORD had commanded Moses;

¹¹the flesh and the hide he destroyed by fire outside the camp.

¹²Then Aaron slaughtered the whole-offering. His sons handed him the blood, and he flung it against the sides of the altar;

¹³they handed him the pieces of the whole-offering and the head, and he burnt them on the altar.

¹⁴He washed the entrails and the shins and burnt them on the altar, on top of the whole-offering.

¹⁵Next he brought forward the offering of the people. He took the he-goat, the people's purification-offering, slaughtered it, and performed the rite of the purification-offering as he had previously done for himself.

¹⁶He presented the whole-offering and sacrificed it in the manner prescribed.

¹⁷ He brought forward the grain-offering, took a handful of it, and burnt it on the altar, in addition to the morning whole-offering.

¹⁸ He slaughtered the bull and the ram, the shared-offerings of the people. His sons handed him the blood, and he flung it against the sides of the altar.

¹⁹ But the portions of fat from the bull, the fat-tail of the ram, the fat covering the entrails, and both kidneys with the fat upon them, and the long lobe of the liver,

²⁰ all this fat they first put on the breasts of the animals and then Aaron burnt it on the altar.

²¹ He presented the breasts and the right leg as a dedicated portion before the LORD, as Moses had been commanded.

²² Aaron lifted up his hands towards the people and pronounced the blessing over them. After performing the rites of the purification-offering, the whole-offering, and the shared-offerings, he came down,

²³ and Moses and Aaron entered the Tent of Meeting. When they came out,

they blessed the people, and the glory of the LORD appeared to all the people.

²⁴Fire came out from before the LORD and consumed the whole-offering and the portions of fat on the altar. At the sight, all the people shouted joyfully and prostrated themselves.

10¹AARON'S sons Nadab and Abihu took their censers, put fire in them, threw incense on the fire, and presented before the LORD illicit fire, such as he had not commanded them to present.

²Fire came out from before the LORD and destroyed them; so they died in the presence of the LORD.

³Moses said to Aaron, This is what the LORD meant when he said: Among those who approach me I must be treated as holy; in the presence of all the people I must be given honour. Aaron kept silent.

⁴Moses sent for Mishael and Elzaphan, the sons of Aaron's uncle Uzziel, and said to them, Come and carry your cousins outside the camp away from the sanctuary.

⁵They came and carried them away in their tunics out of the camp, as Moses had told them.

⁶Moses said to Aaron and to his sons Eleazar and Ithamar, You are not to let your hair hang loose or tear your clothes in mourning, or you may die and the LORD be angry with the whole community. Your kinsmen, all the house of Israel, shall weep for the destruction by fire which the LORD has kindled.

⁷You must not leave the entrance to the Tent of Meeting; otherwise you may die, because the LORD's anointing oil is on you. They did as Moses had said.

⁸WHEN the LORD spoke to Aaron he said:

⁹You and your sons with you must not drink wine or strong drink when you are to enter the Tent of Meeting, that you may not die. This is a rule binding on your descendants for all time,

¹⁰to make a distinction between sacred and profane, between clean and unclean,

¹¹and to teach the Israelites all the decrees which the LORD has spoken to them through Moses.

¹²Moses said to Aaron and his surviving sons, Eleazar and Ithamar, Take what is left over of the grain-offering out of the food-offerings of the LORD, and eat it unleavened beside the altar; it is most holy.

¹³Eat it in a sacred place; it is your due and that of your sons out of the LORD's food-offerings, for so I was commanded.

¹⁴You and your sons and daughters must eat in a clean place the breast of the dedicated portion and the leg which is a contribution for the priests, for they have been given to you and your children as your due out of the shared-offerings of the Israelites.

¹⁵The leg of the contribution and the breast of the dedicated portion must be brought, along with the food-offerings of fat, to be presented as a dedicated portion before the LORD; it will belong to you and your children as a due for all time; for so the LORD has commanded.

¹⁶When Moses made searching enquiry about the goat of the purification-offering and found it had been burnt, he was angry with Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's surviving sons, and said,

¹⁷ Why did you not eat the purification-offering in the sacred place? It is most holy. It was given to you to take away the guilt of the community by making expiation for them before the LORD.

¹⁸ Since the blood was not brought within the sacred precincts, you should have eaten the purification-offering there as I was commanded.

¹⁹ But Aaron replied to Moses, See, they have today presented their purification-offering and their whole-offering before the LORD, and this is what has happened to me! If I had eaten a purification-offering today, would the LORD have considered it right?

²⁰ When Moses heard this, he considered Aaron was right.

11 ¹ THE LORD told Moses and Aaron ² to say to the Israelites: These are the creatures you may eat: Of all the larger land animals

³ you may eat any hooved animal which has cloven hoofs and also chews the cud;

⁴ those which only have cloven hoofs or only chew the cud you must not eat. These are: the camel, because though it

chews the cud it does not have cloven hoofs, and is unclean for you;

⁵ the rock-badger, because though it chews the cud it does not have cloven hoofs, and is unclean for you;

⁶ the hare, because though it chews the cud it does not have a parted foot; it is unclean for you;

⁷ the pig, because although it is a hoofed animal with cloven hoofs it does not chew the cud, and is unclean for you.

⁸ You are not to eat the flesh of these or even touch their dead carcasses; they are unclean for you.

⁹ Of creatures that live in water these may be eaten: all, whether in salt water or fresh, that have fins and scales;

¹⁰ but all, whether in salt or fresh water, that have neither fins nor scales, including both small creatures in shoals and larger creatures, you are to regard as prohibited.

¹¹ They are prohibited to you; you must not eat their flesh, and their dead bodies you are to treat as prohibited.

¹² Every creature in the water that has neither fins nor scales is prohibited to you.

¹³ These are the birds you are to regard as prohibited, and for that reason they must not be eaten: the griffon-vulture, the black vulture, and the bearded vulture;

¹⁴ the kite and every kind of falcon;

¹⁵ every kind of crow,

¹⁶ the desert-owl, the short-eared owl, the long-eared owl, and every kind of hawk;

¹⁷ the tawny owl, the fisher-owl, and the screech-owl;

¹⁸ the little owl, the horned owl, the osprey,

¹⁹ the stork, the various kinds of cormorant, the hoopoe, and the bat.

²⁰ All winged creatures that swarm and go on all fours are prohibited to you,

²¹ except those which have legs jointed above their feet for leaping on the ground.

²² Of these you may eat every kind of great locust, every kind of long-headed locust, every kind of green locust, and every kind of desert locust.

²³ Every other swarming winged creature that has four legs is prohibited to you.

²⁴ These are the creatures that will make you unclean: whoever touches their dead bodies will be unclean till evening,

²⁵ and whoever picks up the dead body of any of them must wash his clothes and remain unclean till evening.

²⁶ Every animal which has hoofs but not cloven hoofs and does not chew the cud is to be unclean to you: whoever touches them will be unclean.

²⁷ You are to regard as unclean all four-footed wild animals that walk on flat paws; whatever touches their dead bodies will be unclean till evening,

²⁸ and whoever takes up their dead bodies must wash his clothes and remain unclean till evening. They are to be unclean to you.

²⁹ The following creatures that swarm on the ground are to be unclean to you: the mole-rat, the jerboa, and every kind of thorn-tailed lizard;

³⁰ the gecko, the sand-gecko, the wall-gecko, the great lizard, and the chameleon.

³¹ Those among swarming creatures are to be unclean to you; whoever touches

them when they are dead will be unclean till evening.

³² Anything on which any of them falls when dead will be unclean, any article of wood, any garment or hide or sacking, any article which may be put to use; it must be immersed in water and remain unclean till evening, when it will be clean.

³³ If any of the creatures falls into an earthenware vessel, its contents will be unclean, and you must break the vessel.

³⁴ Any food which is fit for eating and then comes in contact with water from such a vessel will be unclean, and any drink in such a vessel will be unclean.

³⁵ Anything on which the dead body of such a creature falls will be unclean; a clay oven or pot must be broken, for they are unclean and you must treat them as such;

³⁶ but a spring or a cistern where water collects will remain clean, though whoever touches the dead body will be unclean.

³⁷ When any of their dead bodies falls on seed intended for sowing, the seed remains clean;

³⁸but if the seed has been soaked in water and any dead body falls on it, it will be unclean for you.

³⁹When any animal allowed as food dies, anyone who touches the carcass will be unclean till evening.

⁴⁰Whoever eats any of the carcass must wash his clothes and remain unclean till evening, and whoever takes up the carcass must wash his clothes and be unclean till evening.

⁴¹All creatures that swarm on the ground are prohibited; they must not be eaten.

⁴²All creatures that swarm on the ground, whether they crawl on their bellies or go on all fours or have many legs, you must not eat, because they are prohibited.

⁴³You must not contaminate yourselves through any creatures that swarm; you must not defile yourselves with them and make yourselves unclean by them.

⁴⁴For I am the LORD your God; you are to make yourselves holy and keep yourselves holy, because I am holy. You must not defile yourselves with any

creatures that swarm and creep on the ground.

⁴⁵I am the LORD who brought you up from Egypt to become your God. You are to keep yourselves holy, because I am holy.

⁴⁶Such, then, is the law concerning beast and bird, every living creature that moves in the water, and all living creatures that swarm on the land,

⁴⁷the purpose of the law being to make a distinction between the unclean and the clean, between living creatures that may be eaten and those that may not be eaten.

12¹The LORD told Moses² to say to the Israelites: When a woman becomes pregnant and gives birth to a male child, she will be unclean for seven days, as in the period of her impurity through menstruation.

³On the eighth day, the child is to have the flesh of his foreskin circumcised.

⁴The woman must then wait for thirty-three days because her blood requires purification; she must touch nothing that is holy, and must not enter

the sanctuary till her days of purification are completed.

⁵If she bears a female child, she will be unclean as in menstruation for fourteen days and must wait for sixty-six days because her blood requires purification.

⁶When her days of purification are completed for either son or daughter, she must bring a yearling ram for a whole-offering and a pigeon or a turtle-dove for a purification-offering to the priest at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting.

⁷He will present it before the LORD and offer expiation for her, and she will be clean from her issue of blood. This is the law for the woman who gives birth to a child, whether male or female.

⁸If she cannot afford a ram, she is to bring two turtle-doves or two pigeons, one for a whole-offering and the other for a purification-offering. The priest then offers expiation for her, and she will be clean.

13¹When the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron he said:

²When anyone has a discoloration on the skin of his body, a pustule or

inflammation, and it may develop into the sores of a virulent skin disease, that person is to be brought to the priest, either to Aaron or to one of his sons.

³The priest is to examine the sore on the skin; if the hairs on the affected part have turned white and it appears to be more than skin deep, it must be considered the sore of a virulent skin disease, and, after examination, the priest will pronounce the person ritually unclean.

⁴But if the inflammation on his skin is white and seems no deeper than the skin, and not a single hair has turned white, the priest must isolate the affected person for seven days.

⁵If, when he examines him on the seventh day, the sore remains as it was and has not spread in the skin, he is to keep him in isolation for a further seven days.

⁶When on the seventh day the priest examines him again, if he finds that the sore has faded and has not spread on the skin, the priest will pronounce him ritually clean. It is only a scab; after washing his clothes, he will be clean.

⁷ But if the scab spreads on the skin after he has been to the priest to be pronounced ritually clean, he must show himself a second time to the priest,

⁸ who must examine him again. If it continues to spread, the priest will pronounce him ritually unclean; it is a virulent skin disease.

⁹ When anyone has the sores of a virulent skin disease, he is to be brought to the priest,

¹⁰ who then examines him. If there is a white mark on the skin, turning hairs white, and an ulceration appears in the mark,

¹¹ it is a chronic skin disease on the body, and the priest must pronounce him ritually unclean; there is no need for isolation because he is unclean already.

¹² If the skin disease spreads and covers the affected person from head to foot as far as the priest can see,

¹³ the priest is to examine him, and if he finds the condition covers the whole body, he must pronounce him ritually clean. It has all gone white; he is clean.

¹⁴ But as soon as raw flesh appears, he must be considered unclean.

¹⁵The priest, when he sees it, must pronounce him unclean. Raw flesh is to be considered unclean; it is a virulent skin disease.

¹⁶On the other hand, when the raw flesh heals and turns white, he is to go to the priest,

¹⁷who will examine him, and if the sores have gone white, he will pronounce him clean. He is ritually clean.

¹⁸When a fester appears on the skin and heals up,

¹⁹but is followed by a white mark or reddish-white inflammation on the site of the fester, the person affected must show himself to the priest.

²⁰The priest will examine him, and if it seems to be beneath the skin and the hairs have turned white, the priest must pronounce him ritually unclean; it is a virulent skin disease which has broken out on the site of the fester.

²¹But if the priest on examination finds that it has no white hairs, is not beneath the skin, and has faded, he must isolate him for seven days.

²²If the affection has spread at all in the skin, then the priest must pronounce

him unclean; for it is a virulent skin disease.

²³ But if the inflammation is no worse and has not spread, it is only the scar of the fester, and the priest will pronounce him ritually clean.

²⁴ Again, in the case of a burn on the skin, if the raw spot left by the burn becomes a reddish-white or white inflammation,

²⁵ the priest is to examine it. If hair on the inflammation has turned white and it is deeper than the skin, it is a virulent skin disease which has broken out at the site of the burn. The priest must pronounce the person ritually unclean; it is a virulent skin disease.

²⁶ But if the priest on examination finds that there are no white hairs on the inflammation and it is not beneath the skin and has faded, he must keep him in isolation for seven days.

²⁷ When the priest examines him on the seventh day, if the inflammation has spread at all in the skin, the priest must pronounce him unclean; it is a virulent skin disease.

²⁸ But if the inflammation is no worse, has not spread, and has faded, it is only a mark from the burn. The priest will pronounce him ritually clean because it is the scar of the burn.

²⁹ When a man, or woman, has a sore on the head or chin,

³⁰ the priest is to examine it, and if it seems deeper than the skin and the hair is yellow and sparse, the priest must pronounce the person ritually unclean; it is a scale, a virulent skin disease of the head or chin.

³¹ But when the priest sees the sore, if it appears to be no deeper than the skin and yet there are no yellow hairs on the place, the priest must isolate the affected person for seven days.

³² When the priest examines the sore on the seventh day, if the scale has not spread and there are no yellow hairs on it and it seems no deeper than the skin,

³³ the person must be shaved except for the scurfy part, and be kept in isolation for another seven days.

³⁴ When the priest examines it again on the seventh day, if the scale has not spread on the skin and appears to

be no deeper than the skin, the priest will pronounce the person clean. After washing his clothes the person will be ritually clean.

³⁵ But if the scale spreads at all in the skin after the person has been pronounced clean,

³⁶ the priest must make a further examination. If it has spread in the skin, the priest need not even look for yellow hairs; the person is unclean.

³⁷ If, however, the scale remains as it was but black hair has begun to grow on it, it has healed. The person is ritually clean and the priest will pronounce this.

³⁸ When a man, or woman, has inflamed patches on the skin and they are white,

³⁹ the priest is to examine them. If they are white and fading, it is vitiligo that has broken out on the skin. The person is ritually clean.

⁴⁰ When someone's hair falls out from his head, he is bald but not ritually unclean.

⁴¹ If the hair falls out from the front of the scalp, he is bald on the forehead but clean.

⁴² But if on the bald patch on his head or forehead there is a reddish-white sore, it is a virulent skin disease breaking out on those parts.

⁴³ The priest must examine him, and if the discoloured sore on the bald patch on his head or forehead is reddish-white, similar in appearance to a virulent skin disease on the body,

⁴⁴ the person is suffering from such a disease; he is ritually unclean and the priest must not fail to pronounce him so. The symptoms are in this case on his head.

⁴⁵ Anyone who suffers from a virulent skin disease must wear torn clothes and have his hair all dishevelled; he must conceal his upper lip, and call out, Unclean, unclean.

⁴⁶ So long as the sore persists, he is to be considered ritually unclean, and live alone, staying outside the camp.

⁴⁷ When there is a stain of mould, whether on a garment of wool or linen,

⁴⁸ or on the threads or woven piece of linen or wool, or on a hide or anything made of hide;

⁴⁹if the stain is greenish or reddish in colour on the garment or hide, or on the threads or woven piece of cloth, or on anything made of hide, it is a stain of mould which must be shown to the priest.

⁵⁰The priest must examine it and put the stained material aside by itself for seven days.

⁵¹On the seventh day he must examine it again. If the stain has spread on the garment, threads, piece of cloth, or hide, whatever the use of the hide, the stain is a rotting mould: it is ritually unclean.

⁵²He must burn the garment or the threads or woven piece, whether wool or linen, or anything of hide which is stained; because it is a rotting mould, it must be destroyed by fire.

⁵³But if the priest sees that the stain has not spread on the garment, threads, or piece of woven cloth, or anything made of hide,

⁵⁴he is to give orders for the stained material to be washed, and then put it aside for another seven days.

⁵⁵After it has been washed the priest must examine the stain; if it has not

changed its appearance, even though it has not spread, it is unclean and you must destroy it by fire, whether the rot is on the right side or the wrong.

⁵⁶If the priest examines it and finds the stain faded after being washed, he is to tear it out of the garment, or the hide, or the threads, or woven piece.

⁵⁷If, however, the stain reappears in the garment, threads, or woven piece, or in anything made of hide, it is breaking out afresh and you must destroy by fire whatever is stained.

⁵⁸If you wash the garment, threads, piece of woven cloth, or the article made of hide and the stain disappears, it must be washed a second time and then it will be ritually clean.

⁵⁹Such is the law concerning stain of mould on a garment of wool or linen, on threads or a piece of woven cloth, or on anything made of hide; by it they will be pronounced ritually clean or unclean.

14¹ WHEN the LORD spoke to Moses he said:

²This is the law concerning anyone suffering from a virulent skin disease.

On the day when he is to be cleansed he is to be brought to the priest,

³ who will go outside the camp and examine him. If the person has recovered from his disease,

⁴ then the priest is to order two ritually clean small birds to be brought alive for the person who is to be cleansed, together with cedar-wood, scarlet thread, and marjoram.

⁵ He must order one of the birds to be killed over an earthenware bowl containing fresh water.

⁶ He will then take the live bird together with the cedar-wood, scarlet thread, and marjoram and dip them all in the blood of the bird that has been killed over the fresh water.

⁷ He must sprinkle the blood seven times on the one who is to be cleansed from the skin disease and so cleanse him; the live bird he will release to fly away over the open country.

⁸ The person to be cleansed must wash his clothes, shave off all his hair, bathe in water, and so be ritually clean. He may then enter the camp, but must stay outside his tent for seven days.

⁹On the seventh day he must shave off all the hair on his head, his beard, and his eyebrows, and then shave the rest of his hair, wash his clothes, and bathe in water; then he will be ritually clean.

¹⁰On the eighth day he must bring two yearling rams and one yearling ewe, all three without blemish, a grain-offering of three tenths of an ephah of flour mixed with oil, and one log measure of oil.

¹¹The officiating priest must place the person to be cleansed and his offerings before the LORD at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting.

¹²The priest must take one of the rams and offer it with the log of oil as a reparation-offering, presenting them as a dedicated portion before the LORD.

¹³The ram must be slaughtered where the purification-offerings and the whole-offerings are slaughtered, within the sacred precincts, because the reparation-offering, like the purification-offering, belongs to the priest. It is most holy.

¹⁴The priest must then take some of the blood of the reparation-offering and put it on the lobe of the right ear of the

person to be cleansed, and on his right thumb and the big toe of his right foot.

¹⁵He must next take the log of oil and pour some of it on the palm of his own left hand,

¹⁶dip his right forefinger into the oil on his left palm, and sprinkle some of it with his finger seven times before the LORD.

¹⁷He must then put some of the oil remaining on his palm on the lobe of the right ear of the person to be cleansed, on his right thumb, and on the big toe of his right foot, on top of the blood of the reparation-offering.

¹⁸The remainder of the oil on the priest's palm is to be put upon the head of the person to be cleansed, and thus the priest makes expiation for him before the LORD.

¹⁹The priest will then offer the purification-offering and make expiation for the uncleanness of the person who is to be cleansed. After this he must slaughter the whole-offering

²⁰and offer it and the grain-offering on the altar. Thus the priest makes expiation for him, and he will be clean.

²¹ If the person is poor and cannot afford these offerings, he must bring one young ram as a reparation-offering to be a dedicated portion making expiation for him, and a grain-offering of a tenth of an ephah of flour mixed with oil, and a log measure of oil,

²² also two turtle-doves or two pigeons, whichever he can afford, one for a purification-offering and the other for a whole-offering.

²³ He must bring them on the eighth day to the priest for his cleansing, at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting before the LORD.

²⁴ The priest will take the ram for the reparation-offering and the log of oil, and present them as a dedicated portion before the LORD.

²⁵ The ram for the reparation-offering must then be slaughtered, and the priest must take some of the blood of the reparation-offering, and put it on the lobe of the right ear of the man to be cleansed and on his right thumb and on the big toe of his right foot.

²⁶ The priest must pour some of the oil on the palm of his own left hand

²⁷ and sprinkle some of it with his right forefinger seven times before the LORD.

²⁸ He will then put some of the oil remaining on his palm on the lobe of the right ear of the man to be cleansed, and on his right thumb and on the big toe of his right foot exactly where the blood of the reparation-offering was put.

²⁹ The remainder of the oil on the priest's palm is to be put upon the head of the person to be cleansed to make expiation for him before the LORD.

³⁰ Of the birds which the person has been able to afford, turtle-doves or pigeons, whichever it may be, the priest must deal with one as a purification-offering and with the other as a whole-offering and make the grain-offering with them. Thus the priest makes expiation before the LORD for the person who is to be cleansed.

³¹ (14: 30)

³² Such is the law for anyone with a virulent skin disease who cannot afford the regular offering for his cleansing.

³³ When the LORD spoke to Moses and Aaron he said:

³⁴ When you have entered Canaan, which I am giving you to occupy, if I inflict a fungous infection upon a house in the land you have occupied,

³⁵ the owner must come and report to the priest that there appears to him to be a patch of infection in his house.

³⁶ The priest must order the house to be emptied before he goes in to examine the infection, or everything in it will become unclean. After this the priest must go in to inspect the house.

³⁷ If on inspection he finds the patch on the walls consists of greenish or reddish depressions, apparently going deeper than the surface,

³⁸ he is to go out of the house, and at the entrance put it in quarantine for seven days.

³⁹ On the seventh day he must return and inspect the house, and if the patch has spread in the walls,

⁴⁰ he must order the infected stones to be pulled out and thrown away outside the town in an unclean place.

⁴¹ He must then have the house scraped inside throughout, and all the daub they

have scraped off is to be tipped outside the town in an unclean place.

⁴²They must take fresh stones to replace the others and replaster the house with fresh daub.

⁴³If the infection reappears in the house and spreads after the stones have been pulled out and the house scraped and redaubed,

⁴⁴the priest must come and inspect it. If the infection has spread in the house, it is a corrosive growth; the house is unclean.

⁴⁵The house must be demolished, stones, timber, and daub, and everything must be taken away outside the town to an unclean place.

⁴⁶Anyone who has entered the house during the time it has been in quarantine will be unclean till evening.

⁴⁷Anyone who has slept or eaten a meal in the house must wash his clothes.

⁴⁸If, when the priest goes into the house and inspects it, he finds that the infection has not spread after the redaubing, then he must pronounce the house ritually clean, because the infection has been cured.

⁴⁹In order to rid the house of impurity, the priest must take two small birds along with cedar-wood, scarlet thread, and marjoram.

⁵⁰He must kill one of the birds over an earthenware bowl containing fresh water.

⁵¹He must then take the cedar-wood, marjoram, and scarlet thread, together with the live bird, dip them in the blood of the bird that has been killed and in the fresh water, and sprinkle the house seven times.

⁵²Thus he must purify the house, using the blood of the bird, the fresh water, the live bird, the cedar-wood, the marjoram, and the scarlet thread.

⁵³He is to set the live bird free outside the town to fly away over the open country. So he will purify the house, and it will be clean.

⁵⁴Such is the law for all virulent skin diseases, and for scale,

⁵⁵for mould in clothes and fungus in houses,

⁵⁶for a discoloration of the skin, scab, and inflammation,

⁵⁷ in deciding when these are pronounced unclean and when clean. It is the law for skin disease, mould, and fungus.

15 ¹ THE LORD told Moses and Aaron ² to say to the Israelites: When anyone has a discharge from his private parts, the discharge is ritually unclean.

³ This is the law concerning the uncleanness due to his discharge whether it continues or has been stopped; in either case he is unclean.

⁴ All bedding on which anyone with such a discharge lies will be ritually unclean, and everything on which he sits will be unclean.

⁵ Anyone who touches the bedding must wash his clothes, bathe in water, and remain unclean till evening.

⁶ Whoever sits on anything on which the person with this discharge has sat must wash his clothes, bathe in water, and remain unclean till evening.

⁷ Whoever touches the body of a person with the discharge must wash his clothes, bathe in water, and remain unclean till evening.

⁸If the person with such a discharge spits on one who is ritually clean, the latter must wash his clothes, bathe in water, and remain unclean till evening.

⁹Everything on which this person sits when riding will be unclean.

¹⁰Whoever touches anything that has been under him will be unclean till evening, and whoever handles such things must wash his clothes, bathe in water, and remain unclean till evening.

¹¹Anyone whom the person with the discharge touches without having rinsed his hands in water must wash his clothes, bathe in water, and remain unclean till evening.

¹²Every earthenware bowl touched by the person must be broken, and every wooden bowl be rinsed with water.

¹³When such a person is cleansed from his discharge, he must reckon seven days to his cleansing, then wash his clothes, bathe his body in fresh water, and be ritually clean.

¹⁴On the eighth day he must obtain two turtle-doves or two pigeons, come before the LORD at the entrance to the

Tent of Meeting, and give them to the priest.

¹⁵The priest must deal with one as a purification-offering and with the other as a whole-offering, and offer for him before the LORD the expiation on account of the discharge.

¹⁶When a man has emitted semen, he must bathe his whole body in water and be unclean till evening.

¹⁷Every piece of clothing or leather on which there is any semen is to be washed and remain unclean till evening.

¹⁸This applies also to the woman with whom a man has had intercourse; both must bathe in water and remain unclean till evening.

¹⁹When a woman has her discharge of blood, her impurity will last for seven days; anyone who touches her will be unclean till evening.

²⁰Everything on which she lies or sits during her impurity will be unclean,

²¹and whoever touches her bedding must wash his clothes, bathe in water, and remain unclean till evening.

²²Whoever touches anything on which she sits must wash his clothes, bathe in water, and remain unclean till evening.

²³If it is the bed or seat where she is sitting, by touching it he will become unclean till evening.

²⁴If a man goes so far as to have intercourse with her and any of her discharge gets on to him, then he will be unclean for seven days, and any bedding on which he lies down will be unclean.

²⁵If a woman has a prolonged discharge of blood not at the time of her menstruation, or if her discharge continues beyond the period of menstruation, her impurity will last all the time of her discharge; she will be unclean as during the period of her menstruation.

²⁶Any bedding on which she lies during the time of her discharge will be like that which she used during menstruation, and everything on which she sits will be unclean as in her menstrual uncleanness.

²⁷Anyone who touches them will be unclean; he must wash his clothes, bathe in water, and remain unclean till evening.

²⁸If she becomes cleansed from her discharge, she must reckon seven days and after that she will be ritually clean.

²⁹On the eighth day she is to obtain two turtle-doves or two pigeons and bring them to the priest at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting.

³⁰The priest must deal with one as a purification-offering and with the other as a whole-offering, and offer for her before the LORD the expiation on account of her unclean discharge.

³¹In this way you must warn the Israelites against uncleanness, in order that they may not die by bringing uncleanness upon the Tabernacle where I dwell among them.

³²Such is the law for the man who has a discharge, for him who has an emission of semen and is thereby unclean,

³³and for the woman who is suffering her menstruation -- for everyone, male or female, who has a discharge, and for the man who has intercourse with a woman who is unclean.

16¹THE LORD spoke to Moses after the death of Aaron's two sons,

who died when they offered illicit fire before the LORD.

²He said to him: Tell your brother Aaron that on pain of death he must not enter the sanctuary behind the curtain, which is in front of the cover over the Ark, except at the appointed time; for I appear in the cloud above the cover.

³When Aaron enters the sanctuary, this is what he must do. He must bring a young bull for a purification-offering and a ram for a whole-offering;

⁴he is to wear a sacred linen tunic and linen shorts to cover himself, and he is to put a linen sash round his waist and wind a linen turban round his head; all these are sacred vestments, and he must bathe in water before putting them on.

⁵He is to receive from the community of the Israelites two he-goats for a purification-offering and a ram for a whole-offering.

⁶He must offer the bull reserved for his purification-offering and make expiation for himself and his household.

⁷ Then he must take the two he-goats and set them before the LORD at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting.

⁸ He must cast lots over the two goats, one to be for the LORD and the other for Azazel.

⁹ He must present the goat on which the lot for the LORD has fallen and deal with it as a purification-offering;

¹⁰ but the goat on which the lot for Azazel has fallen is to be made to stand alive before the LORD, for expiation to be made over it, before it is driven away into the wilderness to Azazel.

¹¹ Aaron must present his bull as a purification-offering, making expiation for himself and his household. He is to slaughter the bull as a purification-offering,

¹² and then take a censer full of glowing embers from the altar before the LORD, and a double handful of powdered fragrant incense, and bring them behind the curtain.

¹³ He is to put the incense on the fire before the LORD, and the cloud of incense will hide the cover over the Tokens so that he may not die.

¹⁴He must take some of the bull's blood and sprinkle it with his finger both on the surface of the cover, eastwards, and seven times in front of the cover.

¹⁵He must then slaughter the goat for the people's purification-offering, bring its blood behind the curtain, and do with its blood as he did with the bull's blood, sprinkling it on the cover and in front of it.

¹⁶So is he to purge the sanctuary of the ritual uncleanness of the Israelites and their acts of rebellion, that is, of all their sins; and he must do the same for the Tent of Meeting, which is present among them in the midst of their uncleanness.

¹⁷No one else must be within the Tent of Meeting from the time when he goes in to effect cleansing in the sanctuary until he comes out. So is he to make expiation for himself, his household, and the whole assembly of Israel.

¹⁸Then he is to come out to the altar which is before the LORD and purify it, take some of the bull's blood and some of the goat's blood, and smear them over each of the horns of the altar;

¹⁹ he is to sprinkle some of the blood on the altar with his finger seven times. So he will purify it from all the uncleanness of the Israelites and hallow it.

²⁰ When Aaron has finished the purification of the sanctuary, the Tent of Meeting, and the altar, he is to bring forward the live goat.

²¹ Laying both his hands on its head he must confess over it all the iniquities of the Israelites and all their acts of rebellion, that is all their sins; he is to lay his hands on the head of the goat and send it away into the wilderness in the charge of a man who is waiting ready.

²² The goat will carry all their iniquities upon itself into some barren waste, where the man will release it, there in the wilderness.

²³ Aaron is then to enter the Tent of Meeting, take off the linen clothes which he had put on when he entered the sanctuary, and leave them there.

²⁴ He must bathe in water in a consecrated place and, after putting on his vestments, he is to go out and perform his own whole-offering and that

of the people, thus making expiation for himself and for the people.

²⁵ He must burn the fat of the purification-offering upon the altar.

²⁶ The man who drove the goat away to Azazel must wash his clothes and bathe in water, and not till then may he enter the camp.

²⁷ The two purification-offerings, the bull and the goat, the blood of which was brought behind the curtain to purge the sanctuary of ritual uncleanness, must be taken outside the camp and destroyed by fire -- hide, flesh, and offal.

²⁸ The man who burns them must wash his clothes and bathe in water, and not till then may he enter the camp.

²⁹ This is to be a rule binding on you for all time: on the tenth day of the seventh month you must fast; you, whether native Israelite or alien settler among you, must do no work,

³⁰ because on this day expiation will be made on your behalf to cleanse you, and so make you clean before the LORD from all your sins.

³¹ This is a sabbath of solemn abstinence from work for you, and you

must mortify yourselves; it is a rule binding for all time.

³²Expiation is to be made by the priest duly anointed and ordained to serve in succession to his father; he is to put on the sacred linen clothes

³³and purify of ritual uncleanness the holy sanctuary, the Tent of Meeting, and the altar, on behalf of the priests and the whole assembly of the people.

³⁴This is to become a rule binding on you for all time, to offer for the Israelites once a year the expiation required by all their sins. It was carried out as the LORD commanded Moses.

17 ¹THE LORD told Moses ²to say to Aaron, his sons, and all the Israelites: This is what the LORD has commanded.

³Any Israelite who slaughters an ox, a sheep, or a goat, either inside or outside the camp,

⁴and has not brought it to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting to present it as an offering to the LORD before his Tabernacle is to be held guilty of bloodshed: he has shed blood and will be cut off from his people.

⁵The purpose is that the Israelites should bring to the LORD the animals which they have been slaughtering in the open country; they must bring them to the priest at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting and offer them as shared-offerings to the LORD.

⁶The priest will fling the blood against the altar of the LORD at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting, and burn the fat as a soothing odour to the LORD.

⁷No longer are they to offer their slaughtered beasts to the demons whom they wantonly follow. This is to be a rule binding on them and their descendants for all time.

⁸You must warn them: Any Israelite or alien settled in Israel who offers a whole-offering or a sacrifice

⁹and does not bring it to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting to offer it to the LORD is to be cut off from his father's kin.

¹⁰If any Israelite or alien settled in Israel consumes any blood, I shall set my face against him and cut him off from his people,

¹¹ because the life of a creature is the blood, and I appoint it to make expiation on the altar for yourselves: it is the blood, which is the life, that makes expiation.

¹² Therefore I have told you Israelites that neither you, nor any alien settled among you, is to consume blood.

¹³ Any Israelite or alien settled in Israel who hunts beasts or birds that may lawfully be eaten must drain out the blood and cover it with earth,

¹⁴ because the life of every living creature is its blood, and I have forbidden the Israelites to consume the blood of any creature, because the life of every creature is its blood: whoever eats it is to be cut off.

¹⁵ Every person, native or alien, who eats something which has died a natural death or has been mauled by wild beasts must wash his clothes and bathe in water, and remain ritually unclean till evening; then he will be clean.

¹⁶ But if he does not wash his clothes and bathe his body, he must accept responsibility.

18¹ THE LORD told Moses² to say to the Israelites: I am the LORD your God.

³You must not do as they do in Egypt where once you dwelt, nor may you do as they do in Canaan to which I am bringing you; you must not conform to their customs.

⁴You must keep my laws and conform faithfully to my statutes: I am the LORD your God.

⁵Observe my statutes and my laws: whoever keeps them will have life through them. I am the LORD.

⁶No man may approach a blood relation for intercourse. I am the LORD.

⁷You must not bring shame on your father by intercourse with your mother: she is your mother; do not bring shame on her.

⁸You must not have intercourse with a wife of your father: that is to bring shame upon your father.

⁹You must not have intercourse with your sister, either your father's daughter or your mother's daughter, whether brought up in the family or in another

home; you must not bring shame on them.

¹⁰You must not have intercourse with your son's daughter or your daughter's daughter: that is to bring shame on yourself.

¹¹You must not have intercourse with a daughter of a wife of your father, begotten by your father, because she is your sister; do not bring shame on her.

¹²You must not have intercourse with your father's sister; she is a blood relation of your father.

¹³You must not have intercourse with your mother's sister: she is a blood relation of your mother.

¹⁴You must not bring shame on your father's brother by approaching his wife, because she is your aunt.

¹⁵You must not have intercourse with your daughter-in-law, because she is your son's wife; you must not bring shame on her.

¹⁶You must not have intercourse with your brother's wife: that is to bring shame on him.

¹⁷You must not have intercourse with both a woman and her daughter, nor

may you take her son's daughter or her daughter's daughter to have intercourse with them: they are blood relations, and such conduct is lewdness.

¹⁸You must not take a woman who is your wife's sister to make her a rival wife, and to have intercourse with her during her sister's lifetime.

¹⁹You must not approach a woman to have intercourse with her during her period of menstruation.

²⁰Do not have sexual intercourse with the wife of your fellow-countryman and so make yourself unclean with her.

²¹You must not surrender any of your children to Molech and thus profane the name of your God: I am the LORD.

²²You must not lie with a man as with a woman: that is an abomination.

²³You must not have sexual intercourse with any animal to make yourself unclean with it, nor may a woman submit herself to intercourse with an animal: that is a violation of nature.

²⁴You must not make yourselves unclean in any of those ways; for in such ways the nations, whom I am driving out before you, made themselves unclean.

²⁵ That is how the land became unclean, and I punished it for its iniquity so that it spewed out its inhabitants.

²⁶ You, unlike them, must observe my statutes and my laws: none of you, whether natives or aliens settled among you, may do any of those abominable things.

²⁷ The people who were there before you did those abominable things and the land became unclean.

²⁸ So do not let the land spew you out for making it unclean as it spewed them out;

²⁹ for anyone who does any of those abominable things will be cut off from his people.

³⁰ Observe my charge, therefore, and follow none of the abominable institutions customary before your time; do not make yourselves unclean with them. I am the LORD your God.

19¹ THE LORD told Moses
² to say to the whole Israelite community: You must be holy, because I, the LORD your God, am holy.

³Each one of you must revere his mother and father. You must keep my sabbaths. I am the LORD your God.

⁴Do not resort to idols or make for yourselves gods of cast metal. I am the LORD your God.

⁵When you sacrifice a shared-offering to the LORD, you are to slaughter it so as to win acceptance for yourselves.

⁶It must be eaten on the day of your sacrifice or on the next day. Anything left over till the third day must be destroyed by fire;

⁷it is tainted, and if any of it is eaten on the third day, it will not be acceptable.

⁸He who eats it must accept responsibility, because he has profaned the holy-gift to the LORD: that person will be cut off from his father's kin.

⁹When you reap the harvest in your land, do not reap right up to the edges of your field, or gather the gleanings of your crop.

¹⁰Do not completely strip your vineyard, or pick up the fallen grapes; leave them for the poor and for the alien. I am the LORD your God.

¹¹ You must not steal; you must not cheat or deceive a fellow-countryman.

¹² You must not swear in my name with intent to deceive and thus profane the name of your God. I am the LORD.

¹³ You are not to oppress your neighbour or rob him. Do not keep back a hired man's wages till next morning.

¹⁴ Do not treat the deaf with contempt, or put an obstacle in the way of the blind; you are to fear your God. I am the LORD.

¹⁵ You are not to pervert justice, either by favouring the poor or by subservience to the great. You are to administer justice to your fellow-countryman with strict fairness.

¹⁶ Do not go about spreading slander among your father's kin; do not take sides against your neighbour on a capital charge. I am the LORD.

¹⁷ You are not to nurse hatred towards your brother. Reprove your fellow-countryman frankly, and so you will have no share in his guilt.

¹⁸ Never seek revenge or cherish a grudge towards your kinsfolk; you must

love your neighbour as yourself. I am the LORD.

¹⁹You must observe my statutes. You may not allow two different kinds of animal to mate together. You are not to plant your field with two kinds of seed, nor to wear a garment woven with two kinds of yarn.

²⁰When a man has intercourse with a slave-girl who has been assigned to another but has been neither redeemed nor given her freedom, enquiry should be made. They are not to be put to death, because she has not been freed.

²¹The man is to bring his reparation-offering, a ram, to the LORD to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting,

²²and with it the priest will make expiation for him before the LORD for his sin, and he will be forgiven the sin he has committed.

²³When you enter the land, and plant any kind of tree for food, you are to treat it as bearing forbidden fruit. For three years it is forbidden and may not be eaten.

²⁴In the fourth year all its fruit is to be holy for a praise-offering to the LORD, a festal jubilation.

²⁵In the fifth year you may eat its fruit. Thus the yield it gives you will be increased. I am the LORD your God.

²⁶Never eat meat with the blood in it. You must not practise divination or soothsaying.

²⁷You are not to cut off your hair from your temples or shave the edge of your beards.

²⁸You must not gash yourselves in mourning for the dead or tattoo yourselves. I am the LORD.

²⁹Do not debase your daughter by making her become a prostitute. The land is not to play the prostitute and be full of lewdness.

³⁰You must keep my sabbaths and revere my sanctuary. I am the LORD.

³¹Do not resort to ghosts and spirits or make yourselves unclean by seeking them out. I am the LORD your God.

³²Rise in the presence of grey hairs, give honour to the aged, and fear your God. I am the LORD.

³³When an alien resides with you in your land, you must not oppress him.

³⁴He is to be treated as a native born among you. Love him as yourself, because you were aliens in Egypt. I am the LORD your God.

³⁵You are not to falsify measures of length, weight, or quantity.

³⁶You must use true scales and weights, true dry and liquid measures. I am the LORD your God who brought you out of Egypt.

³⁷You must observe all my statutes and all my laws and carry them out. I am the LORD.

20¹The LORD told Moses
²to say to the Israelites: Anyone, whether Israelite or alien settled in Israel, who gives any of his children to Molech must be put to death: the people are to stone him.

³I for my part shall set my face against that man and cut him off from his people, for by giving a child of his to Molech he has made my sanctuary unclean and profaned my holy name.

⁴ If the people connive at it when a man has given a child of his to Molech and do not put him to death,

⁵ I shall set my face against that man and his family, and cut off from their people both him and all who follow him in his wanton worship of Molech.

⁶ I shall set my face against anyone who wantonly resorts to ghosts and spirits, and I shall cut that person off from his people.

⁷ Hallow yourselves and be holy, because I am the LORD your God.

⁸ Observe my statutes and obey them: I am the LORD who hallows you.

⁹ When anyone reviles his father and his mother, he must be put to death. Since he has reviled his father and his mother, let his blood be on his own head.

¹⁰ If a man commits adultery with another's wife, that is with the wife of a fellow-countryman, both adulterer and adulteress must be put to death.

¹¹ The man who has intercourse with his father's wife has brought shame on his father. Both must be put to death; their blood be on their own heads!

¹²If a man has intercourse with his daughter-in-law, both must be put to death. Their deed is a violation of nature; their blood be on their own heads!

¹³If a man has intercourse with a man as with a woman, both commit an abomination. They must be put to death; their blood be on their own heads!

¹⁴If a man takes both a woman and her mother, that is lewdness. Both he and they must be burnt, so that there may be no lewdness in your midst.

¹⁵A man who has sexual intercourse with an animal must be put to death, and you are to kill the beast.

¹⁶If a woman approaches an animal to mate with it, you must kill both woman and beast. They must be put to death; their blood be on their own heads!

¹⁷If a man takes his sister, whether his father's daughter or his mother's daughter, and they see one another naked, it is an infamous disgrace. They are to be cut off in the presence of their people. The man has had intercourse with his sister and he must be held responsible.

¹⁸If a man lies with a woman during her monthly period, uncovering her body, he has exposed her discharge and she has uncovered the source of her discharge; they are both to be cut off from their people.

¹⁹You must not have intercourse with your mother's sister or your father's sister: it is the exposure of a blood relation. Both must accept responsibility.

²⁰A man who has intercourse with his uncle's wife has brought shame on his uncle. They must accept responsibility for their sin and be proscribed and put to death.

²¹If a man takes his brother's wife, it is impurity. He has brought shame on his brother; they are to be proscribed.

²²You are to observe my statutes and my laws and carry them out, so that the land into which I am bringing you to live may not spew you out.

²³You must not conform to the institutions of the nations whom I am driving out before you: they did all these things and I abhorred them,

²⁴and I told you that you should occupy their land, and I would give you

possession of it, a land flowing with milk and honey. I am the LORD your God: I have made a clear separation between you and the nations,

²⁵and you are to make a clear separation between clean beasts and unclean beasts and between unclean and clean birds. You must not contaminate yourselves through beast or bird or anything that creeps on the ground, for I have made a clear separation between them and you, declaring them unclean.

²⁶You must be holy to me, because I the LORD am holy. I have made a clear separation between you and the heathen, that you may belong to me.

²⁷Any man or woman among you who calls up ghosts or spirits must be put to death. The people are to stone them; their blood be on their own heads!

21 ¹THE LORD told Moses to say to the priests, the sons of Aaron: A priest is not to render himself unclean for the death of any of his kin

²except for a near blood relation, that is for mother, father, son, daughter, brother,

³ or full sister who is unmarried and a virgin;

⁴ nor is he to make himself unclean for any married woman among his father's kin, and so profane himself.

⁵ Priests are not to make bald patches on their heads as a sign of mourning, or cut the edges of their beards, or gash their bodies.

⁶ They must be holy to their God, and must not profane the name of their God, because they present the food-offerings of the LORD, the food of their God, and they must be holy.

⁷ A priest must not marry a prostitute or a girl who has lost her virginity, or marry a woman divorced from her husband; for he is holy to his God.

⁸ You must keep him holy because he presents the food of your God; you are to regard him as holy, because I the LORD, I who hallow them, am holy.

⁹ When a priest's daughter makes herself profane by becoming a prostitute, she profanes her father. She must be burnt.

¹⁰ The high priest, the one among his fellows who has had the anointing

oil poured on his head and has been ordained to wear the priestly vestments, must neither let his hair hang loose nor tear his clothes.

¹¹ He must not enter the place where any dead body lies; not even for his father or his mother may he render himself unclean.

¹² He must not go out of the sanctuary, for fear that he dishonour the sanctuary of his God, because the consecration of the anointing oil of his God is on him. I am the LORD.

¹³ He is to marry a woman who is still a virgin.

¹⁴ He is not to marry a widow, a divorced woman, a woman who has lost her virginity, or a prostitute, but only a virgin from his father's kin;

¹⁵ he must not dishonour his descendants among his father's kin, for I am the LORD who hallows him.

¹⁶ The LORD told Moses

¹⁷ to say to Aaron: No man among your descendants for all time who has any physical defect is to come and present the food of his God.

¹⁸No man with a defect is to come, whether a blind man, a lame man, a man stunted or overgrown,

¹⁹a man deformed in foot or hand,

²⁰or with misshapen brows or a film over his eye or a discharge from it, a man who has a scab or eruption or has had a testicle ruptured.

²¹No descendant of Aaron the priest who has any defect in his body may approach the altar to present the food-offerings of the LORD; because he has a defect he must not approach the altar to present the food of his God.

²²He may eat the bread of God both from the holy-gifts and from the holiest of holy-gifts,

²³but not come up to the curtain or approach the altar, because he has a defect in his body; he is not to profane my sanctuaries, for I am the LORD who hallows them.

²⁴Thus Moses spoke to Aaron and his sons and to all the Israelites.

22 ¹The LORD told Moses ²to say to Aaron and his sons: You must be scrupulous in your handling of the holy-gifts of the Israelites which

you hallow to me, so that you do not profane my holy name. I am the LORD.

³Say to them: Any man of your descent for all time who in a state of uncleanness approaches the holy-gifts which the Israelites hallow to the LORD is to be cut off from my presence. I am the LORD.

⁴No man descended from Aaron who suffers from a virulent skin disease, or has a bodily discharge, may eat of the holy-gifts until he is cleansed. A man who touches anything which makes him unclean, or who has an emission of semen,

⁵a man who touches any creature which makes him unclean or any human being who makes him unclean:

⁶any person who touches such a thing is unclean till sunset and unless he has washed his body he must not eat of the holy-gifts.

⁷When the sun goes down, he will be clean, and after that he may eat from the holy-gifts, because they are his food.

⁸He must not eat an animal that has died a natural death or has been mauled by wild beasts, thereby making himself unclean. I am the LORD.

⁹The priests must observe my charge, lest they make themselves guilty and die for profaning my name. I am the LORD who hallows them.

¹⁰No lay person may eat a holy-gift; neither a stranger who is a priest's guest nor a priest's hired man may eat it.

¹¹A slave bought by a priest with his own money may do so, and slaves born in his household may also share his food.

¹²When a priest's daughter marries a layman, she may not eat any of the contributions of holy-gifts;

¹³but if she is widowed or divorced and is childless and returns to live in her father's house as in her youth, she may share her father's food. No lay person may eat any of it.

¹⁴When anyone inadvertently eats a holy-gift, he must make good the holy-gift to the priest, adding one fifth to its value.

¹⁵The priests must not profane the holy-gifts of the Israelites which they set aside for the LORD;

¹⁶they are not to let anyone eat their holy-gifts and so incur guilt and its

penalty, for I am the LORD who hallows them.

¹⁷The LORD said to Moses:

¹⁸Tell Aaron, his sons, and all the Israelites that whenever anyone belonging to the Israelite community or any alien settled in Israel presents, whether as a votive offering or as a freewill-offering, an offering such as is presented to the LORD for a whole-offering

¹⁹so as to win acceptance for yourselves, it must be a male without defect from the cattle, sheep, or goats.

²⁰You are not to present anything which has a defect, because it will not be acceptable on your behalf.

²¹When a man presents a shared-offering to the LORD, whether cattle or sheep, to fulfil a special vow or as a freewill-offering, if it is to be acceptable it must be perfect; there must be no defect in it.

²²You are to present to the LORD nothing blind, disabled, mutilated, with a running sore, scab, or eruption, nor are you to set any such creature on the altar as a food-offering to the LORD.

²³If a bull or a sheep is overgrown or stunted, you may make of it a freewill-offering, but it will not be acceptable in fulfilment of a vow.

²⁴If its testicles have been crushed or bruised, torn or cut, do not present it to the LORD; this is forbidden in your own land,

²⁵and you must not procure any such creature from a foreigner and present it as food for your God. Their deformity is inherent in them, a permanent defect, and they will not be acceptable on your behalf.

²⁶When the LORD spoke to Moses he said:

²⁷When a calf, a lamb, or a kid is born, it must not be taken from its mother for seven days. From the eighth day onwards it will be acceptable when offered as a food-offering to the LORD.

²⁸You must not slaughter a cow or a sheep at the same time as its young.

²⁹When you make a thank-offering to the LORD, you must sacrifice it so as to win acceptance for yourselves;

³⁰it is to be eaten that same day, and none must be left over till morning. I am the LORD.

³¹Observe my commandments and perform them. I am the LORD.

³²You must not profane my holy name; I am to be hallowed among the Israelites. I am the LORD who hallows you,

³³who brought you out of Egypt to become your God. I am the LORD.

23 ¹THE LORD told Moses ²to say to the Israelites: These are the appointed seasons of the LORD, and you are to proclaim them as sacred assemblies; these are my appointed seasons.

³On six days work may be done, but every seventh day is a day of solemn abstinence from work, a day of sacred assembly, on which you must do no work. Wherever you live, it is the LORD's sabbath.

⁴These are the appointed seasons of the LORD, the sacred assemblies which you are to proclaim in their appointed order.

⁵In the first month on the fourteenth day between dusk and dark is the LORD's Passover.

⁶On the fifteenth day of the same month begins the LORD's pilgrim-feast of Unleavened Bread; for seven days you are to eat unleavened bread.

⁷On the first day there will be a sacred assembly; you are not to do your daily work.

⁸For seven days you must present your food-offerings to the LORD. On the seventh day also there will be a sacred assembly; you are not to do your daily work.

⁹The LORD told Moses

¹⁰to say to the Israelites: When you enter the land which I am giving you, and you reap its harvest, you are to bring the first sheaf of your harvest to the priest.

¹¹He will present the sheaf as a dedicated portion before the LORD on the day after the sabbath, so as to gain acceptance for you.

¹²On the day you present the sheaf, you are to prepare a perfect yearling ram for a whole-offering to the LORD,

¹³ together with the proper grain-offering, two tenths of an ephah of flour mixed with oil, as a food-offering to the LORD, of soothing odour, and also with the proper drink-offering, a quarter of a hin of wine.

¹⁴ You are to eat neither bread nor roasted or fully ripened grain until that day, the day on which you bring your God his offering; this is a rule binding on your descendants for all time wherever you live.

¹⁵ From the day after the sabbath, the day on which you bring your sheaf as a dedicated portion, you are to count off seven full weeks.

¹⁶ The day after the seventh sabbath will make fifty days, and then you will present to the LORD a grain-offering from the new crop.

¹⁷ Bring from your homes two loaves as a dedicated portion; they are to contain two tenths of an ephah of flour and be baked with leaven. They are the LORD's firstfruits.

¹⁸ In addition to the bread you are to present seven perfect yearling sheep, one young bull, and two rams. They

will be a whole-offering to the LORD with the proper grain-offering and the proper drink-offering, a food-offering of soothing odour to the LORD.

¹⁹You must also prepare one he-goat as a purification-offering and two yearling sheep as a shared-offering,

²⁰and the priest will present the two sheep in addition to the bread of the firstfruits as a dedicated portion before the LORD. They are a holy-gift to the LORD for the priest.

²¹On that same day you are to proclaim a sacred assembly for yourselves; you must not do your daily work. This is a rule binding on your descendants for all time wherever you live.

²²When you reap the harvest in your land, do not reap right up to the edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your crop. Leave them for the poor and for the alien. I am the LORD your God.

²³When the LORD spoke to Moses he said:

²⁴Tell the Israelites that in the seventh month they are to keep the first day as a day of solemn abstinence from work, a

day of remembrance and acclamation, of sacred assembly.

²⁵They must not do their daily work, but are to present a food-offering to the LORD.

²⁶When the LORD spoke to Moses he said:

²⁷Further, the tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. There is to be a sacred assembly; you yourselves must fast and present a food-offering to the LORD.

²⁸On that day you are to do no work because it is a day of expiation, on which expiation is made for you before the LORD your God.

²⁹Everyone who does not fast on that day must be cut off from his father's kin,

³⁰and everyone who does any work on that day I shall root out from among them.

³¹Do no work whatsoever; it is a rule binding on your descendants for all time wherever you live.

³²It is for you a day of solemn abstinence from work, and you must fast. From the evening of the ninth day

to the following evening you are to keep your sabbath rest.

³³The LORD told Moses

³⁴to say to the Israelites: On the fifteenth day of this seventh month the LORD's pilgrim-feast of Booths begins, and it lasts for seven days.

³⁵On the first day there is to be a sacred assembly; you are not to do your daily work.

³⁶For seven days present a food-offering to the LORD; on the eighth day there will be a sacred assembly, and you are to present a food-offering to the LORD. It is the closing ceremony; you must not do your daily work.

³⁷These are the appointed seasons of the LORD which you are to proclaim as sacred assemblies for presenting food-offerings to the LORD, whole-offerings and grain-offerings, shared-offerings and drink-offerings, each on its day,

³⁸besides the LORD's sabbaths and all your gifts, your votive offerings and your freewill-offerings to the LORD.

³⁹Further, from the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when the harvest has been gathered, you are to keep the

LORD's pilgrim-feast for seven days. The first day is a day of solemn abstinence from work and so is the eighth day.

⁴⁰On the first day take the fruit of citrus trees, palm-fronds, and leafy branches, and willows from the riverside, and rejoice before the LORD your God for seven days.

⁴¹You are to keep this as a pilgrim-feast in the LORD's honour for seven days every year. It is a rule binding for all time on your descendants; in the seventh month you are to hold this pilgrim-feast.

⁴²You are to live in booths for seven days, all who are native Israelites,

⁴³so that your descendants may be reminded how I made the Israelites live in booths when I brought them out of Egypt. I am the LORD your God.

⁴⁴Thus Moses announced to the Israelites the appointed seasons of the LORD.

24¹WHEN the LORD spoke to Moses he said:

²Order the Israelites to bring pure oil of pounded olives ready for the regular mounting of the lamp

³ outside the curtain of the Testimony in the Tent of Meeting. Aaron must keep the lamp in trim regularly from dusk to dawn before the LORD: this is a rule binding on your descendants for all time.

⁴ The lamps on the lampstand, ritually clean, must be regularly kept trimmed by him before the LORD.

⁵ You are to take flour and bake it into twelve loaves, two tenths of an ephah to each.

⁶ Arrange them in two rows, six to a row on the table, ritually clean, before the LORD.

⁷ Sprinkle pure frankincense on the rows, and this will be a token of the bread, offered to the LORD as a food-offering.

⁸ Regularly, sabbath after sabbath, it is to be arranged before the LORD as a gift from the Israelites. This is a covenant for ever;

⁹ it is the privilege of Aaron and his sons, and they are to eat the bread in a holy place, because it is the holiest of holy-gifts. It is his due out of the food-offerings of the LORD for all time.

¹⁰IN the Israelite camp there was a certain man whose mother was an Israelite and his father an Egyptian; his mother's name was Shelomith daughter of Dibri of the tribe of Dan. He went out and, becoming involved in a brawl with an Israelite of pure descent, he uttered the holy name in blasphemy. He was brought to Moses,

¹¹ (24: 10)

¹²and put in custody until the LORD's will should be made clear to them.

¹³When the LORD spoke to Moses he said:

¹⁴The man who blasphemed is to be taken outside the camp, and let everyone who heard him lay a hand on his head, and let the whole community stone him to death.

¹⁵Say to the Israelites: When anyone, whoever he is, blasphemes his God, he must accept responsibility for his sin.

¹⁶Whoever utters the name of the LORD must be put to death. The whole community must stone him; whether alien or native, if he utters the name, he must be put to death.

¹⁷ If one person strikes another and kills him, he must be put to death.

¹⁸ Whoever strikes an animal and kills it is to make restitution, life for life.

¹⁹ If anyone injures and disfigures a fellow-countryman, it must be done to him as he has done:

²⁰ fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; the injury and disfigurement that he has inflicted on another must in turn be inflicted on him.

²¹ Whoever strikes and kills an animal is to make restitution, but whoever strikes a man and kills him must be put to death.

²² You must have one and the same law for resident alien and native Israelite. For I am the LORD your God.

²³ Moses spoke thus to the Israelites, and they took the man who had blasphemed out of the camp and stoned him to death. The Israelites did as the LORD had commanded Moses.

25 ¹ WHEN the LORD spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai he told him

² to say to the Israelites: When you enter the land which I am giving you, the land must keep sabbaths to the LORD.

³For six years you may sow your fields and prune your vineyards and gather the harvest,

⁴but in the seventh year the land is to have a sabbatical rest, a sabbath to the LORD. You are not to sow your field or prune your vineyard;

⁵you are not to harvest the crop that grows from fallen grain, or gather in the grapes from the unpruned vines. It is to be a year of rest for the land.

⁶Yet what the land itself produces in the sabbath year will be food for you, for your male and female slaves, for your hired man, and for the stranger lodging under your roof,

⁷for your cattle and for the wild animals in your country. Everything it produces may be used for food.

⁸You are to count off seven sabbaths of years, that is seven times seven years, forty-nine years,

⁹and in the seventh month on the tenth day of the month, on the Day of Atonement, you are to send the ram's horn throughout your land to sound a blast.

¹⁰Hallow the fiftieth year and proclaim liberation in the land for all its inhabitants. It is to be a jubilee year for you: each of you is to return to his holding, everyone to his family.

¹¹The fiftieth year is to be a jubilee for you: you are not to sow, and you are not to harvest the self-sown crop, or gather in the grapes from the unpruned vines,

¹²for it is a jubilee, to be kept holy by you. You are to eat the produce direct from the land.

¹³In this year of jubilee every one of you is to return to his holding.

¹⁴When you sell or buy land amongst yourselves, neither party must exploit the other.

¹⁵You must pay your fellow-countryman according to the number of years since the jubilee, and he must sell to you according to the remaining number of annual crops.

¹⁶The more years there are to run, the higher the price; the fewer the years, the lower, because what he is selling you is a series of crops.

¹⁷You must not victimize one another, but fear your God, because I am the LORD your God.

¹⁸Observe my statutes, keep my judgements, and carry them out; and you will live without any fear in the land.

¹⁹The land will yield its harvest; you will eat your fill and live there secure.

²⁰If you ask what you are to eat during the seventh year, seeing that you will neither sow nor gather the harvest,

²¹I shall ordain my blessing for you in the sixth year and the land will produce a crop sufficient for three years.

²²When you sow in the eighth year, you will still be eating from the earlier crop; you will eat the old until the new crop is gathered in the ninth year.

²³No land may be sold outright, because the land is mine, and you come to it as aliens and tenants of mine.

²⁴Throughout the whole land you hold, you must allow a right of redemption over land which has been sold.

²⁵If one of you is reduced to poverty and sells part of his holding, his next-of-kin who has the duty of redemption may

come and redeem what his kinsman has sold.

²⁶When a man has no such next-of-kin and himself becomes able to afford its redemption,

²⁷he must take into account the years since the sale and repay the purchaser the balance up to the jubilee. Then he may return to his holding.

²⁸But if the man cannot afford to buy back the property, it remains in the hands of the purchaser till the jubilee year. It then reverts to the original owner, and he can return to his holding.

²⁹When a man sells a dwelling-house in a walled town, he must retain the right of redemption till a full year has elapsed after the sale; for that time he has the right of redemption.

³⁰If it is not redeemed before a full year is out, the house in the walled town will belong for ever to the buyer and his descendants; it does not revert to its former owner at the jubilee.

³¹But houses in unwalled hamlets are to be treated as property in the open country: the right of redemption will hold

good, and in any case the house reverts at the jubilee.

³² Levites are to have the perpetual right to redeem houses which they hold in towns belonging to them.

³³ If one of the Levites does not redeem his house in such a town, then it will still revert to him at the jubilee, because the houses in Levite towns are their holding in Israel.

³⁴ The common land surrounding their towns cannot be sold, because it is their property in perpetuity.

³⁵ If your brother-Israelite is reduced to poverty and cannot support himself in the community, you must assist him as you would an alien or a stranger, and he will live with you.

³⁶ You must not charge him interest on a loan, either by deducting it in advance from the capital sum, or by adding it on repayment. Fear your God, and let your brother live with you;

³⁷ do not deduct interest when advancing him money, or add interest to the payment due for food supplied on credit.

³⁸I am the LORD your God who brought you out of Egypt to give you Canaan and to become your God.

³⁹If your fellow-countryman is reduced to poverty and sells himself to you, you must not use him to work for you as a slave.

⁴⁰His status will be that of a hired man or a stranger lodging with you; he will work for you only until the jubilee year.

⁴¹He will then leave your service, with his children, and go back to his family and to his ancestral property:

⁴²because they are my slaves whom I brought out of Egypt, they must not be sold as slaves are sold.

⁴³You must not work him ruthlessly, but you are to fear your God.

⁴⁴Such slaves as you have, male or female, should come from the nations round about you; from them you may buy slaves.

⁴⁵You may also buy the children of those who have settled and lodge with you and such of their family as are born in your land. These may become your property,

⁴⁶and you may leave them to your sons after you; you may use them as slaves permanently. But your fellow-Israelites you must not work ruthlessly.

⁴⁷If an alien or a stranger living among you becomes rich, and one of your fellow-countrymen becomes poor and sells himself to the alien or stranger or to a member of some alien family,

⁴⁸he is to keep the right of redemption after he has sold himself. One of his brothers may redeem him,

⁴⁹or his uncle, his cousin, or any blood relation of his family, or, if he has the means, he may redeem himself.

⁵⁰He and his purchaser together must reckon from the year when he sold himself to the year of jubilee, and the price will be adjusted to the number of years. His period of service with his owner will be reckoned at the rate of a hired man.

⁵¹If there are still many years to run to the year of jubilee, he must pay for his redemption a proportionate amount of the sum for which he sold himself;

⁵²if there are only a few, he is to reckon and repay accordingly.

⁵³ He will have the status of a labourer hired from year to year, and you must not let him be worked ruthlessly by his owner.

⁵⁴ If the man is not redeemed in the intervening years, he and his children must be released in the year of jubilee;

⁵⁵ for it is to me that the Israelites are slaves, my slaves whom I brought out of Egypt. I am the LORD your God.

26 ¹ YOU MUST not make idols for yourselves or erect carved images or sacred pillars; you must not put a stone carved figure on your land to worship, because I am the LORD your God.

² You must keep my sabbaths and revere my sanctuary. I am the LORD.

³ If you conform to my statutes, if you observe and carry out my commandments,

⁴ I shall give you rain at the proper season; the land will yield its produce and the trees of the countryside their fruit.

⁵ Threshing will last till vintage, and vintage till sowing; you will eat your fill and live secure in your land.

⁶I shall give peace in the land, and you will lie down to sleep with none to terrify you. I shall rid the land of beasts of prey and it will not be ravaged by the sword.

⁷You will put your enemies to flight and they will fall in battle before you.

⁸Five of you will give chase to a hundred and a hundred of you chase ten thousand; so will the enemy fall by your sword.

⁹I shall look upon you with favour, making you fruitful and increasing your numbers; I shall give full effect to my covenant with you.

¹⁰Your harvest will last you in store until you have to clear out the old to make room for the new.

¹¹I shall establish my Tabernacle among you and never spurn you.

¹²I shall be ever present among you; I shall become your God and you will become my people.

¹³I am the LORD your God who brought you out of Egypt to be slaves there no longer; I broke the bars of your yoke and enabled you to walk erect.

¹⁴But if you do not listen to me, if you fail to keep all these commandments,

¹⁵if you reject my statutes, spurn my judgements, and fail to obey all my commandments, and if you break my covenant,

¹⁶then assuredly this is what I shall do to you: I shall bring upon you sudden terror, wasting disease, recurrent fever, and plagues that dim the sight and cause the appetite to fail. You will sow your seed to no purpose, for your enemies will eat the crop.

¹⁷I shall set my face against you, and you will be routed by your enemies. Those that hate you will hound you, and you will run when there is no one pursuing.

¹⁸If after all this you will not listen to me, I shall go on to punish you seven times over for your sins.

¹⁹I shall break down your stubborn pride. I shall make the sky above you like iron, the earth beneath you like bronze.

²⁰Your strength will be spent in vain; your land will not yield its produce, nor the trees in it their fruit.

²¹ If you still defy me and refuse to listen, I shall increase your calamities seven times, as your sins deserve.

²² I shall send wild beasts in among you; they will tear your children from you, destroy your cattle, and bring your numbers low, until your roads are deserted.

²³ If after all this you have not learnt discipline but still defy me,

²⁴ I in turn shall show hostility to you and scourge you seven times over for your sins.

²⁵ I shall bring the sword against you to avenge the covenant; you will be herded into your cities, where I shall send pestilence among you, and you will be given into the clutches of the enemy.

²⁶ I shall cut short your daily bread until ten women can bake your bread in a single oven; they will dole it out by weight, and though you eat, you will not be satisfied.

²⁷ If in spite of this you do not listen to me and still oppose me,

²⁸ I shall oppose you in anger, and I myself shall punish you seven times over for your sins.

²⁹ Instead of meat you will eat your sons and your daughters.

³⁰ I shall destroy your shrines and demolish your incense-altars. I shall pile your corpses on your lifeless idols, and I shall spurn you.

³¹ I shall make your cities desolate and lay waste your sanctuaries; I shall not accept the soothing odour of your offerings.

³² I shall destroy your land, and the enemies who occupy it will be appalled.

³³ I shall scatter you among the heathen, pursue you with drawn sword; your land will be desert and your cities heaps of rubble.

³⁴ Then, all the time that it lies desolate, while you are in exile among your enemies, your land will enjoy its sabbaths to the full.

³⁵ All the time of its desolation it will have the sabbath rest which it did not have while you were living there.

³⁶ And I shall make those of you who are left in the land of your enemies so fearful that, when a leaf rustles behind them in the wind, they will run as if it

were a sword after them; they will fall with no one in pursuit.

³⁷ Though no one pursues them they will stumble over one another, as if a sword were after them, and you will be helpless to make a stand against the enemy.

³⁸ You will meet your end among the heathen, and your enemies' land will swallow you up.

³⁹ Those who survive will pine away in an enemy land because of their iniquities, and also because of their forefathers' iniquities they will pine away just as they did.

⁴⁰ But though they confess their iniquity, their own and that of their forefathers, their treachery and their opposition to me,

⁴¹ I in my turn shall oppose them and carry them off into their enemies' land. If then their stubborn spirit is broken and they accept their punishment in full,

⁴² I shall remember my covenant with Jacob, my covenant also with Isaac, and my covenant with Abraham, and I shall remember the land.

⁴³The land, deserted by its people, will enjoy in full its sabbaths while it lies desolate; they will pay the penalty in full because they rejected my judgements and spurned my statutes.

⁴⁴Yet even then while they are in their enemies' land, I shall not have so rejected and spurned them as to bring them to an end and break my covenant with them, because I am the LORD their God.

⁴⁵I shall remember on their behalf the covenant with the former generation whom I brought out of Egypt in full sight of the nations, that I might be their God. I am the LORD.

⁴⁶These are the statutes, the judgements, and the laws which the LORD established between himself and the Israelites through Moses on Mount Sinai.

27 ¹WHEN the LORD spoke to Moses he said,

²Speak to the Israelites and tell them: When anyone makes a special vow to the LORD which requires your valuation of living persons,

³a male between twenty and sixty years old is to be valued at fifty silver shekels by the sacred standard.

⁴If it is a female, she is to be valued at thirty shekels.

⁵If it is someone between five years old and twenty, the valuation will be twenty shekels for a male and ten for a female.

⁶If it is someone between a month and five years old, the valuation will be five silver shekels for a male and three for a female.

⁷If it is someone over sixty and a male, the valuation will be fifteen shekels, but if a female, ten shekels.

⁸If the person who is making the vow is too poor to pay the amount of your valuation, the person to be valued must be set before the priest, who will then set the value according to what the person who makes the vow can afford: the priest will make the valuation.

⁹If the vow concerns an animal acceptable as an offering to the LORD, then such a gift is holy to the LORD.

¹⁰It must not be exchanged or substituted for another, whether good for bad or bad for good. But if a substitution

is in fact made of one animal for another, then both the original animal and its substitute are holy.

¹¹ If the vow concerns an unclean animal unacceptable as an offering to the LORD, then the animal is to be brought before the priest,

¹² and he must value it whether good or bad. The priest's valuation is decisive;

¹³ in case of redemption the payment must be increased by one fifth.

¹⁴ When a man dedicates his house as holy to the LORD, the priest is to judge whether it is good or bad, and the priest's valuation must be decisive.

¹⁵ If the donor redeems his house, he must pay the amount of the valuation increased by one fifth, and the house then reverts to him.

¹⁶ If someone dedicates to the LORD part of his ancestral land, you are to value it according to the amount of seed-corn it can carry, at the rate of fifty shekels of silver for a homer of barley seed.

¹⁷ If he dedicates his land from the year of jubilee, it stands at your valuation;

¹⁸but if he dedicates it after the year of jubilee, the priest must estimate the price in silver according to the number of years remaining until the next year of jubilee, and this will be deducted from your valuation.

¹⁹If the one who dedicates his field should redeem it, he has to pay the amount of your valuation in silver, increased by one fifth, and it then reverts to him.

²⁰If he does not redeem it but sells the land to another, it is no longer redeemable;

²¹when the land reverts at the year of jubilee, it will be like land that has been dedicated, holy to the LORD. It will belong to the priest as his holding.

²²If someone dedicates to the LORD land which he has bought, land which is not part of his ancestral land,

²³the priest must estimate the amount of the value for the period until the year of jubilee, and the person must give the amount fixed as at that day; it is holy to the LORD.

²⁴At the year of jubilee the land reverts to the person from whom it was bought, whose holding it is.

²⁵Every valuation you make is to be made by the sacred standard at the rate of twenty gerahs to the shekel.

²⁶No one may dedicate to the LORD the firstborn of an animal which in any case has to be offered as a firstborn, whether from the herd or the flock. It is the LORD's.

²⁷If it is an unclean animal, he may redeem it at your valuation and add one fifth; but if it is not redeemed, it is to be sold at your valuation.

²⁸Nothing, however, which anyone devotes to the LORD irredeemably from his own property, whether a human being, an animal, or ancestral land, may be sold or redeemed. Everything so devoted is most holy to the LORD.

²⁹No human being thus devoted may be redeemed; he must be put to death.

³⁰Every tithe on land, whether from grain or from the fruit of a tree, belongs to the LORD; it is holy to the LORD.

³¹ If anyone wishes to redeem any of his tithe, he must pay its value increased by one fifth.

³² Every tenth creature that passes under the counting rod is holy to the LORD; this applies to all tithes of cattle and sheep.

³³ There is to be no enquiry whether it is good or bad, and no substitution. If any substitution is made, then the tithe-animal and its substitute are both forfeit as holy; they cannot be redeemed.

³⁴ These are the commandments which the LORD gave to Moses on Mount Sinai for the Israelites.

Numbers

1 ¹ ON the first day of the second month in the second year after the Israelites came out of Egypt, the LORD spoke to Moses in the Tent of Meeting in the wilderness of Sinai. He said:

² Make a census of the whole community of Israel by families in the father's line, recording the name of every male person

³ aged twenty years and upwards fit for military service. You and Aaron are to make a list of them by their tribal hosts,

⁴ and to assist you you will have one head of family from each tribe.

⁵ These are their names: from Reuben, Elizur son of Shedeur;

⁶ from Simeon, Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai;

⁷ from Judah, Nahshon son of Amminadab;

⁸ from Issachar, Nethanel son of Zuar;

⁹ from Zebulun, Eliab son of Helon;

¹⁰ from Joseph: of Ephraim, Elishama son of Ammihud; of Manasseh, Gamaliel son of Pedahzur;

¹¹ from Benjamin, Abidan son of Gideoni;

¹² from Dan, Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai;

¹³ from Asher, Pagiel son of Ocran;

¹⁴ from Gad, Eliasaph son of Reuel;

¹⁵ from Naphtali, Ahira son of Enan.

¹⁶ These were the representatives of the community, chiefs of their fathers' tribes and heads of Israelite clans.

¹⁷ Moses and Aaron took those men who had been indicated by name,

¹⁸ and on the first day of the second month they summoned the whole community, and recorded every male person aged twenty years and upwards, registering their descent by families in the father's line,

¹⁹ as the LORD had commanded Moses. He drew up the lists as follows in the wilderness of Sinai.

²⁰ The tribal list of Reuben, Israel's eldest son, by families in the father's line, with the name of every male person aged twenty years and upwards fit for service,

²¹ the number in the list of the tribe of Reuben being forty-six thousand five hundred.

²² The tribal list of Simeon, by families in the father's line, with the name of every male person aged twenty years and upwards fit for service,

²³ the number in the list of the tribe of Simeon being fifty-nine thousand three hundred.

²⁴ The tribal list of Gad, by families in the father's line, with the names of all men aged twenty years and upwards fit for service,

²⁵ the number in the list of the tribe of Gad being forty-five thousand six hundred and fifty.

²⁶ The tribal list of Judah, by families in the father's line, with the names of all men aged twenty years and upwards fit for service,

²⁷ the number in the list of the tribe of Judah being seventy-four thousand six hundred.

²⁸ The tribal list of Issachar, by families in the father's line, with the names of all men aged twenty years and upwards fit for service,

²⁹ the number in the list of the tribe of Issachar being fifty-four thousand four hundred.

³⁰ The tribal list of Zebulun, by families in the father's line, with the names of all men aged twenty years and upwards fit for service,

³¹ the number in the list of the tribe of Zebulun being fifty-seven thousand four hundred.

³² The tribal lists of Joseph: that of Ephraim, by families in the father's line, with the names of all men aged twenty years and upwards fit for service,

³³ the number in the list of the tribe of Ephraim being forty thousand five hundred;

³⁴ that of Manasseh, by families in the father's line, with the names of all men aged twenty years and upwards fit for service,

³⁵ the number in the list of the tribe of Manasseh being thirty-two thousand two hundred.

³⁶ The tribal list of Benjamin, by families in the father's line, with the names of all men aged twenty years and upwards fit for service,

³⁷ the number in the list of the tribe of Benjamin being thirty-five thousand four hundred.

³⁸ The tribal list of Dan, by families in the father's line, with the names of all men aged twenty years and upwards fit for service,

³⁹ the number in the list of the tribe of Dan being sixty-two thousand seven hundred.

⁴⁰ The tribal list of Asher, by families in the father's line, with the names of all men aged twenty years and upwards fit for service,

⁴¹ the number in the list of the tribe of Asher being forty-one thousand five hundred.

⁴² The tribal list of Naphtali, by families in the father's line, with the names of all men aged twenty years and upwards fit for service,

⁴³ the number in the list of the tribe of Naphtali being fifty-three thousand four hundred.

⁴⁴ These were the numbers recorded in the lists by Moses, Aaron, and the twelve chiefs of Israel, each representing one tribe and being the head of a family.

⁴⁵The total number of Israelites aged twenty years and upwards fit for service, recorded in the lists of fathers' families,
⁴⁶was six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty.

⁴⁷A list of the Levites by their fathers' families was not made.

⁴⁸The LORD said to Moses,

⁴⁹You are not to record the total number of the Levites or make a census of them among the Israelites.

⁵⁰You are to put the Levites in charge of the Tabernacle of the Testimony with all its equipment and everything in it. They will carry the Tabernacle and all its equipment; they alone will be its attendants and pitch their tents round it.

⁵¹The Levites will take the Tabernacle down when it is due to move and put it up when it halts; any lay person who comes near it must be put to death.

⁵²The other Israelites will pitch their tents, each tribal host in its proper camp and under its own standard.

⁵³But the Levites are to encamp round the Tabernacle of the Testimony, so that divine wrath may not come on the

community of Israel; the Tabernacle of the Testimony will be in their charge.

⁵⁴The Israelites did everything exactly as the LORD had commanded Moses.

2¹The LORD said to Moses and Aaron,
²The Israelites are to encamp each under his own standard by the emblems of his father's family; they are to pitch their tents round the Tent of Meeting, facing it.

³In front of it, on the east, the division of Judah is to be stationed under the standard of its camp by tribal hosts. The chief of Judah will be Nahshon son of Amminadab.

⁴His host, with its members as listed, numbers seventy-four thousand six hundred men.

⁵Next to Judah the tribe of Issachar is to be stationed. Its chief will be Nethanel son of Zuar;

⁶his host, with its members as listed, numbers fifty-four thousand four hundred.

⁷Then the tribe of Zebulun; its chief will be Eliab son of Helon;

⁸his host, with its members as listed, numbers fifty-seven thousand four hundred.

⁹The number listed in the camp of Judah, by hosts, is one hundred and eighty-six thousand four hundred. They will be the first to march.

¹⁰To the south the division of Reuben is to be stationed under the standard of its camp by tribal hosts. The chief of Reuben will be Elizur son of Shedeur;

¹¹his host, with its members as listed, numbers forty-six thousand five hundred.

¹²Next to him the tribe of Simeon is to be stationed. Its chief will be Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai;

¹³his host, with its members as listed, numbers fifty-nine thousand three hundred.

¹⁴Then the tribe of Gad: its chief will be Eliasaph son of Reuel;

¹⁵his host, with its members as listed, numbers forty-five thousand six hundred and fifty.

¹⁶The number listed in the camp of Reuben, by hosts, is one hundred and

fifty-one thousand four hundred and fifty. They will be the second to march.

¹⁷When the Tent of Meeting moves, the camp of the Levites must keep its station in the centre of the other camps; let them move in the order of their encamping, each man in his proper place under his standard.

¹⁸To the west the division of Ephraim is to be stationed under the standard of its camp by tribal hosts. The chief of Ephraim will be Elishama son of Ammihud;

¹⁹his host, with its members as listed, numbers forty thousand five hundred.

²⁰Next to him the tribe of Manasseh is to be stationed. Its chief will be Gamaliel son of Pedahzur;

²¹his host, with its members as listed, numbers thirty-two thousand two hundred.

²²Then the tribe of Benjamin: its chief will be Abidan son of Gideoni;

²³his host, with its members as listed, numbers thirty-five thousand four hundred.

²⁴The number listed in the camp of Ephraim, by hosts, is one hundred and

eight thousand one hundred. They will be the third to march.

²⁵To the north the division of Dan is to be stationed under the standard of its camp by tribal hosts. The chief of Dan will be Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai;

²⁶his host, with its members as listed, numbers sixty-two thousand seven hundred.

²⁷Next to him the tribe of Asher is to be stationed. Its chief will be Pagiel son of Ocran;

²⁸his host, with its members as listed, numbers forty-one thousand five hundred.

²⁹Then the tribe of Naphtali: its chief will be Ahira son of Enan;

³⁰his host, with its members as listed, numbers fifty-three thousand four hundred.

³¹The number listed in the camp of Dan is one hundred and fifty-seven thousand six hundred. They will march last, under their standards.

³²Those were the Israelites listed by their fathers' families. The total number in the camp, recorded by tribal hosts,

was six hundred and three thousand five hundred and fifty.

³³The Levites were not included in the lists with their fellow-Israelites, for so the LORD had commanded Moses.

³⁴The Israelites did everything just as the LORD had commanded Moses, pitching and breaking camp standard by standard, each man according to his family in his father's line.

3¹THESE were the descendants of Aaron and Moses at the time when the LORD spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai.

²The names of the sons of Aaron were Nadab the eldest, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.

³These were the names of Aaron's sons, the anointed priests who had been installed in the priestly office.

⁴Nadab and Abihu fell dead before the LORD because they had presented illicit fire before the LORD in the wilderness of Sinai; they left no sons. Eleazar and Ithamar continued to perform the priestly office during their father's lifetime.

⁵The LORD said to Moses,

⁶Bring forward the tribe of Levi and appoint them to serve Aaron the priest and to minister to him.

⁷They are to be in attendance on him and on the whole community before the Tent of Meeting, undertaking the service of the Tabernacle.

⁸They are to be in charge of all the equipment in the Tent of Meeting, and be in attendance on the Israelites, undertaking the service of the Tabernacle.

⁹You are to assign the Levites to Aaron and his sons as especially dedicated to him out of all the Israelites.

¹⁰Commit the priestly office to Aaron and his line, and they are to perform its duties; any lay person who encroaches on it must be put to death.

¹¹The LORD said to Moses,

¹²I take for myself, out of all the Israelites, the Levites as a substitute for the eldest male child of every woman; the Levites are to be mine.

¹³For every eldest child, if a boy, became mine when I destroyed all the eldest sons in Egypt. So I have consecrated to myself all the firstborn in

Israel, both man and beast. They are to be mine. I am the LORD.

¹⁴The LORD said to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai,

¹⁵Make a list of all the Levites by their families in the father's line, every male aged one month or more.

¹⁶Moses made a list of them in accordance with the command given him by the LORD.

¹⁷Now these were the names of the sons of Levi. Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

¹⁸Descendants of Gershon, by families: Libni and Shimei.

¹⁹Descendants of Kohath, by families: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel.

²⁰Descendants of Merari, by families: Mahli and Mushi. These were the families of Levi, by fathers' families.

²¹Gershon: the family of Libni and the family of Shimei. These were the families of Gershon,

²²and the number of males in their list as drawn up, aged one month or more, was seven thousand five hundred.

²³The families of Gershon were stationed on the west, behind the Tabernacle.

²⁴Their chief was Eliasaph son of Lael,

²⁵and in the service of the Tent of Meeting they were in charge of the Tabernacle and the Tent, its covering, and the screen at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting,

²⁶the hangings of the court, the screen at the entrance to the court all round the Tabernacle and the altar, and of all else needed for its maintenance.

²⁷Kohath: the family of Amram, the family of Izhar, the family of Hebron, the family of Uzziel. These were the families of Kohath,

²⁸and the number of males aged one month or more was eight thousand six hundred. They were the guardians of the holy things.

²⁹The families of Kohath were stationed on the south, at the side of the Tabernacle.

³⁰Their chief was Elizaphan son of Uzziel;

³¹they were in charge of the Ark, the table, the lampstands and the altars,

together with the sacred vessels used in their service, and the screen with everything needed for its maintenance.

³²The chief over all the chiefs of the Levites was Eleazar son of Aaron the priest, who was appointed overseer of those in charge of the sanctuary.

³³Merari: the family of Mahli, the family of Mushi. These were the families of Merari,

³⁴and the number of males in their list as drawn up, aged one month or more, was six thousand two hundred.

³⁵Their chief was Zuriel son of Abihail; they were stationed on the north, at the side of the Tabernacle.

³⁶The Merarites were in charge of the planks, bars, posts, and sockets of the Tabernacle, together with its vessels and all the equipment needed for its maintenance,

³⁷the posts, sockets, pegs, and cords of the surrounding court.

³⁸In front of the Tabernacle on the east, Moses was stationed, with Aaron and his sons, in front of the Tent of Meeting eastwards. They were in charge of the sanctuary on behalf of the Israelites; any

lay person who came near would be put to death.

³⁹The number of Levites recorded by Moses on the list by families at the command of the LORD was twenty-two thousand males aged one month or more.

⁴⁰The LORD said to Moses, Make a list of all the male firstborn in Israel aged one month or more, and count the number of persons.

⁴¹You are to reserve the Levites for me -- I am the LORD -- in substitution for the eldest sons of the Israelites, and in the same way the Levites cattle in substitution for the firstborn cattle of the Israelites.'

⁴²As the LORD had commanded him, Moses made a list of all the eldest sons of the Israelites,

⁴³and the total number of firstborn males recorded by name in the register, aged one month or more, was twenty-two thousand two hundred and seventy-three.

⁴⁴The LORD said to Moses,

⁴⁵Take the Levites as a substitute for all the eldest sons in Israel and the cattle

of the Levites as a substitute for their cattle. The Levites are to be mine. I am the LORD.

⁴⁶The eldest sons in Israel will outnumber the Levites by two hundred and seventy-three.

⁴⁷This remainder must be redeemed, and for each of them you are to accept five shekels by the sacred standard, at the rate of twenty gerahs to the shekel;

⁴⁸give the money with which they are redeemed to Aaron and his sons.

⁴⁹Moses took the money paid to redeem those who remained over when the substitution of Levites was complete.

⁵⁰The amount received was one thousand three hundred and sixty-five shekels of silver by the sacred standard.

⁵¹In accordance with what the LORD had said, he gave the money to Aaron and his sons, doing what the LORD had commanded him.

4¹The LORD said to Moses and Aaron,
²Among the Levites, make a count of the descendants of Kohath between the ages of thirty and fifty, by families in the father's line, comprising everyone

who comes to take duty in the service of the Tent of Meeting.

³(4: 2)

⁴This is the service to be rendered by the Kohathites in the Tent of Meeting; it is most holy.

⁵When the camp is due to move, let Aaron and his sons come and take down the curtain of the screen, and cover the Ark of the Testimony with it;

⁶over this they are to put a covering of dugong-hide and over that again a violet cloth all of one piece; they will then put its poles in place.

⁷Over the table of the Bread of the Presence they are to spread a violet cloth and lay on it the dishes, saucers, and flagons, and the bowls for drink-offerings; the Bread regularly presented will also lie on it;

⁸then they are to spread over them a scarlet cloth and over that a covering of dugong-hide, and put the poles in place.

⁹They are to take a violet cloth and cover the lampstand, its lamps, tongs, firepans, and all the containers for the oil used in its service;

¹⁰they are to put it with all its equipment in a sheet of dugong-hide slung from a pole.

¹¹Over the gold altar let them spread a violet cloth, cover it with a dugong-hide covering, and put its poles in place.

¹²They are to take all the articles used for the service of the sanctuary, put them on a violet cloth, cover them with a dugong-hide covering, and sling them from a pole.

¹³They are to clear the altar of the fat and ashes, spread a purple cloth over it,

¹⁴and then lay on it all the equipment used in its service, the firepans, forks, shovels, tossing-bowls, and all the equipment of the altar, spread a covering of dugong-hide over it, and put the poles in place.

¹⁵Once Aaron and his sons have finished covering the sanctuary and all the sacred equipment, when the camp is due to move, the Kohathites are to do the carrying; they must not touch the sacred objects, on pain of death. Those things are the load to be carried by the Kohathites, the things connected with the Tent of Meeting.

¹⁶Eleazar son of Aaron the priest is to have charge of the lamp oil, the fragrant incense, the regular grain-offering, and the anointing oil, with the general oversight of the whole Tabernacle and its contents, the sanctuary and its equipment.

¹⁷The LORD said to Moses and Aaron,

¹⁸You must not let the families of Kohath be wiped out and lost to the tribe of Levi.

¹⁹If they are to live and not die when they approach the most holy things, this is what you must do: let Aaron and his sons come and set each man to his appointed task and to his load,

²⁰but the Kohathites themselves must not enter to cast even a passing glance at the sanctuary, on pain of death.

²¹The LORD said to Moses,

²²Number the Gershonites by families in the father's line.

²³Make a list of all those between the ages of thirty and fifty who come on duty to perform service in the Tent of Meeting.

²⁴ This is the service to be rendered by the Gershonite families, comprising their general duty and their loads.

²⁵ They are to transport the hangings of the Tabernacle, the Tent of Meeting, its covering, that is the covering of dugong-hide which is over it, the screen at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting,

²⁶ the hangings of the court, the screen at the entrance to the court surrounding the Tabernacle and the altar, their cords, and all the equipment for their service; and they are to perform all the tasks connected with them. These are the acts of service they have to render.

²⁷ All the service of the Gershonites, their loads and their other duties, will be directed by Aaron and his sons; you will assign them the loads for which they will be responsible.

²⁸ That is the service assigned to the Gershonite families in connection with the Tent of Meeting; Ithamar son of Aaron the priest is to be in charge of them.

²⁹ Make a list of the Merarites by families in the father's line,

³⁰ all those between the ages of thirty and fifty, who come on duty to perform service in the Tent of Meeting.

³¹ These are the loads for which they are to be responsible in virtue of their service in the Tent of Meeting: the planks of the Tabernacle with its bars, posts, and sockets,

³² the posts of the surrounding court with their sockets, pegs, and cords, and all that is needed for the maintenance of them; you should assign to each man by name the load for which he is responsible.

³³ Those are the duties of the Merarite families in virtue of their service in the Tent of Meeting. Ithamar son of Aaron the priest shall be in charge of them.

³⁴ Moses and Aaron and the chiefs of the community made a list of the Kohathites by families in the father's line,

³⁵ taking all between the ages of thirty and fifty who came on duty to perform service in the Tent of Meeting.

³⁶ The number recorded by families in the lists was two thousand seven hundred and fifty.

³⁷ This was the total number in the lists of the Kohathite families who did duty in the Tent of Meeting; they were recorded by Moses and Aaron as the LORD had commanded them through Moses.

³⁸ The Gershonites between the ages of thirty and fifty, who came on duty for service in the Tent of Meeting, were recorded in lists by families in the father's line.

³⁹ (4: 38)

⁴⁰ Their number, by families in the father's line, was two thousand six hundred and thirty.

⁴¹ This was the total recorded in the lists of the Gershonite families who came on duty in the Tent of Meeting and were recorded by Moses and Aaron as the LORD had commanded them.

⁴² The families of Merari, between the ages of thirty and fifty, who came on duty to perform service in the Tent of Meeting, were recorded in lists by families in the father's line.

⁴³ (4: 42)

⁴⁴ Their number by families was three thousand two hundred.

⁴⁵ These were recorded in the Merarite families by Moses and Aaron as the LORD had commanded them through Moses.

⁴⁶ Thus Moses and Aaron and the chiefs of Israel made a list of all the Levites by families in the father's line,

⁴⁷ between the ages of thirty and fifty years; these were all who came to perform their various duties and carry their loads in the service of the Tent of Meeting.

⁴⁸ Their number was eight thousand five hundred and eighty.

⁴⁹ They were recorded one by one by Moses at the command of the LORD, according to their general duty and the loads they carried. For so the LORD had commanded Moses.

5 ¹ THE LORD said to Moses:
² Command the Israelites to expel from the camp everyone who suffers from a ritually unclean skin disease or a discharge, and everyone ritually unclean through contact with a corpse.

³ Put them outside the camp, both male and female, so that they do not defile your camps in which I dwell among you.

⁴The Israelites did this: they expelled them from the camp, doing exactly as the LORD had said when he spoke to Moses.

⁵The LORD told Moses

⁶to say to the Israelites: When anyone, man or woman, wrongs another and thereby breaks faith with the LORD, that person has incurred guilt which demands reparation.

⁷He must confess the sin he has committed, make restitution in full with the addition of one fifth, and give it to the one to whom compensation is due.

⁸If there is no next-of-kin to whom compensation can be paid, the compensation payable in that case is to be the LORD's, for the use of the priest, in addition to the ram of expiation with which the priest makes expiation for him.

⁹Every contribution made by way of holy-gift which the Israelites bring to the priest is to be the priest's.

¹⁰The priest is to have the holy-gifts which a man gives; whatever is given to him is to be his.

¹¹The LORD told Moses

¹²to say to the Israelites: When a married woman goes astray and is unfaithful to her husband

¹³by having sexual intercourse with another man, and this happens without the husband's knowledge, and without the woman being detected because, though she has been defiled, there is no direct evidence against her and she was not caught in the act,

¹⁴and when in such a case a fit of jealousy comes over the husband which makes him suspect his wife, whether she is defiled or not;

¹⁵then the husband must bring his wife to the priest together with the prescribed offering for her, a tenth of an ephah of barley-meal. He must not pour oil on it or put frankincense on it, because it is a grain-offering for jealousy, a grain-offering of protestation conveying an imputation of guilt.

¹⁶The priest must bring her forward and set her before the LORD.

¹⁷He is to take holy water in an earthenware vessel, and take dust from the floor of the Tabernacle and add it to the water.

¹⁸He must set the woman before the LORD, uncover her head, and place the grain-offering of protestation in her hands; it is a grain-offering for jealousy. Holding in his own hand the ordeal-water which tests under pain of curse,

¹⁹the priest must put the woman on oath and say to her, If no man has had intercourse with you, if you have not gone astray and let yourself become defiled while owing obedience to your husband, then may your innocence be established by the ordeal-water.

²⁰But if, while owing him obedience, you have gone astray and let yourself become defiled, if any man other than your husband has had intercourse with you,

²¹(the priest shall here put the woman on oath with an adjuration, and shall continue) may the LORD make an example of you among your people in adjurations and in swearing of oaths by bringing upon you miscarriage and untimely birth;

²²and let this ordeal-water that tests under pain of curse enter your body, bringing upon you miscarriage

and untimely birth. The woman must respond, Amen, Amen.

²³The priest is to write these curses on a scroll, wash them off into the ordeal-water,

²⁴and make the woman drink the ordeal-water; it will enter her body to test her.

²⁵The priest is to take the grain-offering for jealousy from the woman's hand, present it as a special gift before the LORD, and offer it at the altar.

²⁶He is to take a handful from the grain-offering by way of token, and burn it at the altar. Finally he must make the woman drink the water.

²⁷If she has let herself become defiled and has been unfaithful to her husband, then, when the priest makes her drink the ordeal-water and it enters her body to test her, she will suffer a miscarriage or untimely birth, and her name will become an example in adjuration among her kin.

²⁸But if the woman has not let herself become defiled and is pure, then her innocence is established and she will bear her child.

²⁹Such is the law for cases of jealousy, where a woman, owing obedience to her husband, goes astray and lets herself become defiled,

³⁰or where a fit of jealousy comes over a man which causes him to suspect his wife. When he sets her before the LORD, the priest must deal with her as this law prescribes.

³¹No guilt will attach to the husband, but the woman must bear the penalty of her guilt.

6¹The LORD told Moses ²to say to the Israelites: When anyone, man or woman, makes a special vow dedicating himself to the LORD as a Nazirite,

³he is to abstain from wine and strong drink. These he must not drink, nor anything made from the juice of grapes; nor is he to eat grapes, fresh or dried.

⁴During the whole term of his vow he must eat nothing that comes from the vine, nothing whatever, skin or seed.

⁵During the whole term of his vow no razor is to touch his head; he must let his hair grow in long locks until he has

completed the term of his dedication: he is to keep himself holy to the LORD.

⁶During the whole term of his vow to the LORD he must not go near a dead person,

⁷not even when it is his father or mother, brother or sister who has died; he must not make himself ritually unclean for them, because the Nazirite vow to his God is on his head.

⁸He must keep himself holy to the LORD during the whole term of his Nazirite vow.

⁹If someone suddenly falls dead by his side, touching him and thereby making his hair, which has been dedicated, ritually unclean, he must shave his head on the day when he becomes clean; he shall shave it on the seventh day.

¹⁰On the eighth day he must bring two turtle-doves or two pigeons to the priest at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting.

¹¹The priest will offer one as a purification-offering and the other as a whole-offering and so make expiation for him for the sin he has incurred through contact with the dead body; he must consecrate his head afresh on that day.

¹²The man must rededicate himself to the LORD for the full term of his vow and bring a yearling ram as a guilt-offering. The previous period is not to be included, because the hair which he dedicated became unclean.

¹³The law for the Nazirite, when the term of his dedication is complete, is this. He is to be brought to the entrance to the Tent of Meeting

¹⁴and present his offering to the LORD: one yearling ram without blemish as a whole-offering, one yearling ewe without blemish as a purification-offering, one ram without blemish as a shared-offering,

¹⁵and a basket of bread made of flour mixed with oil, and of wafers smeared with oil, both unleavened, together with the proper grain-offerings and drink-offerings.

¹⁶The priest will present all these before the LORD and offer the man's purification-offering and whole-offering;

¹⁷the ram he offers is a shared-offering to the LORD, together with the basket of unleavened bread and the proper grain-offering and drink-offering.

¹⁸The Nazirite will shave his head at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting, take the hair which had been dedicated, and put it on the fire where the shared-offering is burning.

¹⁹The priest will take the shoulder of the ram, after boiling it, and take also one unleavened loaf from the basket and one unleavened wafer, and put them on the palms of the Nazirite's hands, his hair which had been dedicated having been shaved.

²⁰The priest will then present them as a dedicated portion before the LORD; these, together with the breast of the dedicated portion and the leg of the contribution, are holy and belong to the priest. When this has been done, the Nazirite is again free to drink wine.

²¹Such is the law for the Nazirite who has made his vow. Such is the offering he must make to the LORD for his dedication, apart from anything else that he can afford. He must carry out his vow in full according to the law governing his dedication.

²²The LORD said to Moses,

²³ Say this to Aaron and his sons: These are the words with which you are to bless the Israelites:

²⁴ May the LORD bless you and guard you;

²⁵ may the LORD make his face shine on you and be gracious to you;

²⁶ may the LORD look kindly on you and give you peace.

²⁷ So they are to invoke my name on the Israelites, and I shall bless them.

7 ¹ ON the day that Moses completed the setting up of the Tabernacle, he anointed and consecrated it and all its equipment, along with the altar and all its vessels.

² The chief men of Israel, heads of families -- that is the tribal chiefs in charge of the enrolled men -- came forward

³ and brought their offering before the LORD, six covered wagons and twelve oxen, one wagon from every two chiefs and from every chief one ox. These they brought forward before the Tabernacle;

⁴ and the LORD said to Moses,

⁵ Accept these from them: they are for use in the service of the Tent of Meeting.

Assign them to the Levites as their several duties require.

⁶So Moses accepted the wagons and oxen and assigned them to the Levites.

⁷He gave two wagons and four oxen to the Gershonites as required for their service;

⁸four wagons and eight oxen to the Merarites as required for their service, in charge of Ithamar the son of Aaron the priest.

⁹He gave none to the Kohathites because the service laid upon them was that of the holy things: these they had to carry on their shoulders.

¹⁰When the altar was anointed, the chiefs brought their gift for its dedication and presented their offering before it.

¹¹The LORD said to Moses, Let the chiefs present their offering for the dedication of the altar one by one, on consecutive days.

¹²The chief who presented his offering on the first day was Nahshon son of Amminadab of the tribe of Judah.

¹³His offering was one silver dish weighing a hundred and thirty shekels by the sacred standard, and one silver

tossing-bowl weighing seventy, both full of flour mixed with oil as a grain-offering;

¹⁴ one gold saucer weighing ten shekels, filled with incense;

¹⁵ one young bull, one full-grown ram, and one yearling ram, as a whole-offering;

¹⁶ one he-goat as a purification-offering;

¹⁷ and two bulls, five full-grown rams, five he-goats, and five yearling rams, as a shared-offering. This was the offering of Nahshon son of Amminadab.

¹⁸ On the second day Nethanel son of Zuar, chief of Issachar, brought his offering.

¹⁹ He brought one silver dish weighing a hundred and thirty shekels by the sacred standard, and one silver tossing-bowl weighing seventy, both full of flour mixed with oil as a grain-offering;

²⁰ one gold saucer weighing ten shekels, filled with incense;

²¹ one young bull, one full-grown ram, and one yearling ram, as a whole-offering;

²² one he-goat as a purification-offering;

²³ and two bulls, five full-grown rams, five he-goats, and five yearling rams, as

a shared-offering. This was the offering of Nethanel son of Zuar.

²⁴On the third day the chief of the Zebulunites, Eliab son of Helon, came.

²⁵His offering was one silver dish weighing a hundred and thirty shekels by the sacred standard, and one silver tossing-bowl weighing seventy, both full of flour mixed with oil as a grain-offering;

²⁶one gold saucer weighing ten shekels, filled with incense;

²⁷one young bull, one full-grown ram, and one yearling ram, as a whole-offering;

²⁸one he-goat as a purification-offering;

²⁹and two bulls, five full-grown rams, five he-goats, and five yearling rams, as a shared-offering. This was the offering of Eliab son of Helon.

³⁰On the fourth day the chief of the Reubenites, Elizur son of Shedeur, came.

³¹His offering was one silver dish weighing a hundred and thirty shekels by the sacred standard, and one silver tossing-bowl weighing seventy, both full of flour mixed with oil as a grain-offering;

³²one gold saucer weighing ten shekels, filled with incense;

³³ one young bull, one full-grown ram, and one yearling ram, as a whole-offering;

³⁴ one he-goat as a purification-offering;

³⁵ and two bulls, five full-grown rams, five he-goats, and five yearling rams, as a shared-offering. This was the offering of Elizur son of Shedeur.

³⁶ On the fifth day the chief of the Simeonites, Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai, came.

³⁷ His offering was one silver dish weighing a hundred and thirty shekels by the sacred standard, and one silver tossing-bowl weighing seventy, both full of flour mixed with oil as a grain-offering;

³⁸ one gold saucer weighing ten shekels, filled with incense;

³⁹ one young bull, one full-grown ram, and one yearling ram, as a whole-offering;

⁴⁰ one he-goat as a purification-offering;

⁴¹ and two bulls, five full-grown rams, five he-goats, and five yearling rams, as a shared-offering. This was the offering of Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai.

⁴² On the sixth day the chief of the Gadites, Eliasaph son of Reuel, came.

⁴³ His offering was one silver dish weighing a hundred and thirty shekels by the sacred standard, and one silver tossing-bowl weighing seventy, both full of flour mixed with oil as a grain-offering;

⁴⁴ one gold saucer weighing ten shekels, filled with incense;

⁴⁵ one young bull, one full-grown ram, and one yearling ram, as a whole-offering;

⁴⁶ one he-goat as a purification-offering;

⁴⁷ and two bulls, five full-grown rams, five he-goats, and five yearling rams, as a shared-offering. This was the offering of Eliasaph son of Reuel.

⁴⁸ On the seventh day the chief of the Ephraimites, Elishama son of Ammihud, came.

⁴⁹ His offering was one silver dish weighing a hundred and thirty shekels by the sacred standard, and one silver tossing-bowl weighing seventy, both full of flour mixed with oil as a grain-offering;

⁵⁰ one gold saucer weighing ten shekels, filled with incense;

⁵¹ one young bull, one full-grown ram, and one yearling ram, as a whole-offering;

⁵² one he-goat as a purification-offering;
⁵³ and two bulls, five full-grown rams,
five he-goats, and five yearling rams, as
a shared-offering. This was the offering
of Elishama son of Ammihud.

⁵⁴ On the eighth day the chief of the
Manassites, Gamaliel son of Pedahzur,
came.

⁵⁵ His offering was one silver dish
weighing a hundred and thirty shekels
by the sacred standard, and one silver
tossing-bowl weighing seventy, both full
of flour mixed with oil as a grain-offering;

⁵⁶ one gold saucer weighing ten shekels,
filled with incense;

⁵⁷ one young bull, one full-grown
ram, and one yearling ram, as a
whole-offering;

⁵⁸ one he-goat as a purification-offering;

⁵⁹ and two bulls, five full-grown rams,
five he-goats, and five yearling rams, as
a shared-offering. This was the offering
of Gamaliel son of Pedahzur.

⁶⁰ On the ninth day the chief of the
Benjamites, Abidan son of Gideoni,
came.

⁶¹ His offering was one silver dish
weighing a hundred and thirty shekels

by the sacred standard, and one silver tossing-bowl weighing seventy, both full of flour mixed with oil as a grain-offering;

⁶² one gold saucer weighing ten shekels, filled with incense;

⁶³ one young bull, one full-grown ram, and one yearling ram, as a whole-offering;

⁶⁴ one he-goat as a purification-offering;

⁶⁵ and two bulls, five full-grown rams, five he-goats, and five yearling rams, as a shared-offering. This was the offering of Abidan son of Gideoni.

⁶⁶ On the tenth day the chief of the Danites, Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai, came.

⁶⁷ His offering was one silver dish weighing a hundred and thirty shekels by the sacred standard, and one silver tossing-bowl weighing seventy, both full of flour mixed with oil as a grain-offering;

⁶⁸ one gold saucer weighing ten shekels, filled with incense;

⁶⁹ one young bull, one full-grown ram, and one yearling ram, as a whole-offering;

⁷⁰ one he-goat as a purification-offering;

⁷¹ and two bulls, five full-grown rams, five he-goats, and five yearling rams, as a shared-offering. This was the offering of Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai.

⁷² On the eleventh day the chief of the Asherites, Pagiel son of Ochrán, came.

⁷³ His offering was one silver dish weighing a hundred and thirty shekels by the sacred standard, and one silver tossing-bowl weighing seventy, both full of flour mixed with oil as a grain-offering;

⁷⁴ one gold saucer weighing ten shekels, filled with incense;

⁷⁵ one young bull, one full-grown ram, and one yearling ram, as a whole-offering;

⁷⁶ one he-goat as a purification-offering;

⁷⁷ and two bulls, five full-grown rams, five he-goats, and five yearling rams, as a shared-offering. This was the offering of Pagiel son of Ochrán.

⁷⁸ On the twelfth day the chief of the Naphtalites, Ahira son of Enán, came.

⁷⁹ His offering was one silver dish weighing a hundred and thirty shekels by the sacred standard, and one silver tossing-bowl weighing seventy, both full of flour mixed with oil as a grain-offering;

⁸⁰one gold saucer weighing ten shekels, filled with incense;

⁸¹one young bull, one full-grown ram, and one yearling ram, as a whole-offering;

⁸²one he-goat as a purification-offering;

⁸³and two bulls, five full-grown rams, five he-goats, and five yearling rams, as a shared-offering. This was the offering of Ahira son of Enan.

⁸⁴This was the gift from the chiefs of Israel for the dedication of the altar when it was anointed: twelve silver dishes, twelve silver tossing-bowls, and twelve gold saucers;

⁸⁵each silver dish weighed a hundred and thirty shekels, each silver tossing-bowl seventy shekels. The total weight of the silver vessels was two thousand four hundred shekels by the sacred standard.

⁸⁶There were twelve gold saucers full of incense, ten shekels each by the sacred standard: the total weight of the gold of the saucers was a hundred and twenty shekels.

⁸⁷The number of beasts for the whole-offering was twelve bulls, twelve full-grown rams, and twelve

yearling rams, with the prescribed grain-offerings, and twelve he-goats for the purification-offering.

⁸⁸The number of beasts for the shared-offering was twenty-four bulls, sixty full-grown rams, sixty he-goats, and sixty yearling rams. This was the gift for the dedication of the altar when it was anointed.

⁸⁹When Moses entered the Tent of Meeting to speak with the LORD, he heard the voice speaking from above the cover over the Ark of the Testimony from between the two cherubim: the voice spoke to him.

8¹ The LORD told Moses ² to say to Aaron: When you put the seven lamps in position, see that they shed their light forwards in front of the lampstand.

³Aaron did this: he positioned the lamps so as to shed light forwards in front of the lampstand, as the LORD had instructed Moses.

⁴The lampstand was made of beaten work in gold from stem to petals, made to match the pattern the LORD had shown Moses.

⁵The LORD said to Moses:

⁶Separate the Levites from the rest of the Israelites and cleanse them ritually.

⁷This is how the cleansing is to be done. Sprinkle lustral water over them; they are then to shave their whole bodies, wash their clothes, and so be cleansed.

⁸Next, they must take a young bull as a whole-offering with its prescribed grain-offering, flour mixed with oil, while you take a second young bull as a purification-offering.

⁹Bring the Levites before the Tent of Meeting and, when you have called the whole community of Israelites together,

¹⁰bring the Levites before the LORD, and let the Israelites lay their hands on the Levites heads.

¹¹Aaron must present the Levites before the LORD as a special gift from the Israelites, and they will be dedicated to the service of the LORD.

¹²The Levites must lay their hands on the heads of the bulls, one bull to be offered as a purification-offering and the other as a whole-offering to the LORD, to make expiation for the Levites.

¹³Then stand the Levites before Aaron and his sons, presenting them to the LORD as a special gift.

¹⁴You thus separate the Levites from the rest of the Israelites, and they are to be mine.

¹⁵After this, the Levites may enter the Tent of Meeting to serve in it, ritually cleansed and presented as a special gift;

¹⁶for out of all the Israelites they are assigned and dedicated to me. I have accepted them as mine in place of all that comes first from the womb, every first child among the Israelites;

¹⁷for every firstborn male creature, man or beast, among the Israelites is mine. On the day when I struck down every firstborn creature in Egypt, I consecrated all the firstborn of the Israelites to myself,

¹⁸and I have accepted the Levites in their place.

¹⁹I have assigned the Levites to Aaron and his sons, dedicated among the Israelites to perform the service of the Israelites in the Tent of Meeting and to make expiation for them; then no

calamity will befall the Israelites should they come close to the sanctuary.

²⁰ Moses and Aaron and the whole community of Israelites carried out all the commands the LORD had given to Moses for the dedication of the Levites.

²¹ The Levites purified themselves of sin and washed their clothes, and Aaron presented them as a dedicated gift before the LORD and made expiation for them, to cleanse them.

²² Then at last they went in to perform their service in the Tent of Meeting, before Aaron and his sons. Thus the commands the LORD had given to Moses concerning the Levites were all carried out.

²³ The LORD said to Moses,

²⁴ As regards the Levites, they are to begin their active work in the service of the Tent of Meeting at the age of twenty-five.

²⁵ At the age of fifty a Levite must retire from regular service and serve no longer.

²⁶ He may continue to assist his fellow-Levites in attendance in the Tent of Meeting, but no longer perform

regular service. That is how you are to arrange the duties of the Levites.

9¹ In the first month of the second year after they came out of Egypt, the LORD spoke to Moses in the wilderness of Sinai. He said,

² Let the Israelites prepare the Passover at the time appointed for it.

³ This is to be between dusk and dark on the fourteenth day of this month; keep it at this appointed time, observing every rule and custom proper to it.

⁴ So Moses told the Israelites to prepare the Passover,

⁵ and they prepared it on the fourteenth day of the first month, between dusk and dark, in the wilderness of Sinai. The Israelites did everything exactly as the LORD had instructed Moses.

⁶ It happened that some men were ritually unclean through contact with a dead body and so could not keep the Passover on the right day. They came that day before Moses and Aaron

⁷ and said, We are unclean through contact with a dead body. Must we therefore be debarred from presenting

the LORD's offering at its appointed time with the rest of the Israelites?

⁸Moses answered, Wait, and let me hear what command the LORD has for you.

⁹The LORD told Moses

¹⁰to say to the Israelites: If any one of you or of your descendants is ritually unclean through contact with a dead body, or if he is far away on a journey, he must keep a Passover to the LORD none the less.

¹¹But in that case he is to prepare the victim in the second month, between dusk and dark on the fourteenth day. It must be eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs;

¹²let nothing be left over till morning, and let no bone of it be broken. The Passover is to be kept exactly as the law prescribes.

¹³The man who, being ritually clean and not absent on a journey, neglects to keep the Passover, will be cut off from his father's kin, because he has not presented the LORD's offering at its appointed time. That man must accept responsibility for his sin.

¹⁴When an alien is settled among you, he also is to keep the Passover to the LORD, observing every rule and custom proper to it. The same statute applies to you all, to alien and native-born alike.

¹⁵ON the day when they set up the Tabernacle, that is the Tent of the Testimony, cloud covered it, and in the evening a brightness like fire appeared over it till morning.

¹⁶So it was always: the cloud covered it by day and a brightness like fire by night.

¹⁷Whenever the cloud lifted from the tent, the Israelites struck camp, and at the place where the cloud settled, there they pitched their camp.

¹⁸At the command of the LORD they struck camp, and at his command they encamped again, and continued in camp as long as the cloud rested over the Tabernacle.

¹⁹When the cloud stayed long over the Tabernacle, the Israelites kept the LORD's injunction and did not move;

²⁰and it was the same when the cloud continued over the Tabernacle only a few days: at the command of the LORD they

remained in camp, and at his command they struck camp.

²¹ There were also times when the cloud continued only from evening till morning, and in the morning, when the cloud lifted, they moved on. Whether by day or by night, they moved as soon as the cloud lifted.

²² Whether it was for a day or two, for a month or longer, whenever the cloud stayed long over the Tabernacle, the Israelites remained where they were and did not move on; they did so only when the cloud lifted.

²³ At the command of the LORD they encamped, and at his command they struck camp. They kept the LORD's injunction at the LORD's command, given through Moses.

10¹ The LORD said to Moses:
² Make two trumpets of beaten silver and use them for summoning the community and for breaking camp.

³ When both are sounded, the whole community is to muster before you at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting.

⁴If a single trumpet is sounded, the chiefs who are heads of the Israelite clans will muster.

⁵When a fanfare is sounded, those encamped on the east side are to move off.

⁶When a second fanfare is sounded, those encamped on the south are to move off. A fanfare is the signal to move off.

⁷When you convene the assembly, a trumpet-call must be sounded, not a fanfare.

⁸This sounding of the trumpets is the duty of the Aaronite priests; let it be a rule binding for all time on your descendants.

⁹When you go into battle against an invader and are hard pressed by him, sound a fanfare on the trumpets, and this will serve as a reminder of you before the LORD your God and you will be delivered from your enemies.

¹⁰On your festal days and at your appointed seasons and on the first day of every month, sound the trumpets over your whole-offerings and your shared-offerings; the trumpets will be

a reminder on your behalf before your God. I am the LORD your God.

¹¹In the second year, on the twentieth day of the second month, the cloud lifted from the Tabernacle of the Testimony,

¹²and the Israelites moved by stages from the wilderness of Sinai, until the cloud came to rest in the wilderness of Paran.

¹³The first time that they broke camp at the command of the LORD given through Moses,

¹⁴the standard of the division of Judah moved off in the lead with its tribal hosts: the host of Judah under Nahshon son of Amminadab,

¹⁵the host of Issachar under Nethanel son of Zuar,

¹⁶and the host of Zebulun under Eliab son of Helon.

¹⁷Then the Tabernacle was taken down, and its bearers, the sons of Gershon and Merari, moved off.

¹⁸Secondly, the standard of the division of Reuben moved off with its tribal hosts: the host of Reuben under Elizur son of Shedeur,

¹⁹ the host of Simeon under Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai,

²⁰ and the host of Gad under Eliasaph son of Reuel.

²¹ The Kohathites, the bearers of the holy objects, moved off next, and on their arrival found the Tabernacle set up.

²² Thirdly, the standard of the division of Ephraim moved off with its tribal hosts: the host of Ephraim under Elishama son of Ammihud,

²³ the host of Manasseh under Gamaliel son of Pedahzur,

²⁴ and the host of Benjamin under Abidan son of Gideoni.

²⁵ Lastly, the standard of the division of Dan, the rearguard of all the divisions, moved off with its tribal hosts: the host of Dan under Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai,

²⁶ the host of Asher under Pagiel son of Ocran,

²⁷ and the host of Naphtali under Ahira son of Enan.

²⁸ This was the order of march for the Israelites, mustered in their hosts, and in this order they broke camp.

²⁹ Moses said to Hobab his brother-in-law, son of Reuel the Midianite, We are setting out for the place which the LORD promised to give us. Come with us, and we shall deal generously with you, for the LORD has given an assurance of prosperity for Israel.

³⁰ But he replied, No, I would rather go to my own country and my own people.

³¹ Moses said, Do not leave us, I beg you; for you know where we ought to camp in the wilderness, and you will be our guide.

³² If you will go with us, then all the prosperity with which the LORD favours us we shall share with you.

³³ Then they moved off from the mountain of the LORD and journeyed for three days, and the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD kept three days' journey ahead of them to find them a place to rest.

³⁴ The cloud of the LORD was over them by day when they moved camp.

³⁵ Whenever the Ark set out, Moses said, Arise, LORD, and may your enemies be scattered; may those hostile to you flee at your approach.

³⁶Whenever it halted, he said, Rest, LORD of the countless thousands of Israel.

11 ¹THE people began complaining loudly to the LORD about their hardships, and when he heard he became angry. Fire from the LORD broke out among them, and raged on the outskirts of the camp.

²Moses, when appealed to by the people, interceded with the LORD, and the fire died down.

³They named that place Taberah, because fire from the LORD had burned among them.

⁴A mixed company of strangers had joined the Israelites, and these people began to be greedy for better things. Even the Israelites themselves with renewed weeping cried out, If only we had meat!

⁵Remember how in Egypt we had fish for the asking, cucumbers and water-melons, leeks and onions and garlic.

⁶Now our appetite is gone; wherever we look there is nothing except this manna.

⁷ (The manna looked like coriander seed, the colour of bdellium.

⁸ The people went about collecting it to grind in handmills or pound in mortars; they cooked it in a pot and made it into cakes, which tasted like butter-cakes.

⁹ When dew fell on the camp at night, the manna would fall with it.)

¹⁰ Moses heard all the people lamenting in their families at the opening of their tents. The LORD became very angry, and Moses was troubled,

¹¹ and said to the LORD, Why have you brought trouble on your servant? How have I displeased the LORD that I am burdened with all this people?

¹² Am I their mother? Have I brought them into the world, and am I called on to carry them in my arms, like a nurse with a baby, to the land promised by you on oath to their fathers?

¹³ Where am I to find meat to give them all? They pester me with their wailing and their Give us meat to eat.

¹⁴ This whole people is a burden too heavy for me; I cannot carry it alone.

¹⁵ If that is your purpose for me, then kill me outright: if I have found favour

with you, spare me this trouble afflicting me.

¹⁶The LORD answered Moses, Assemble for me seventy of Israel's elders, men known to you as elders and officers in the community; bring them to the Tent of Meeting, and there let them take their place with you.

¹⁷I shall come down and speak with you there. I shall withdraw part of the spirit which is conferred on you and bestow it on them, and they will share with you the burden of the people; then you will not have to bear it alone.

¹⁸And say to the people: Sanctify yourselves in readiness for tomorrow; you will have meat to eat. You wailed in the LORD's hearing; you said, If only we had meat! In Egypt we lived well. The LORD will give you meat and you will eat it.

¹⁹Not for one day only, nor for two days, nor five, nor ten, nor twenty,

²⁰but for a whole month you will eat it until it comes out at your nostrils and makes you sick; because you have rejected the LORD who is in your midst,

wailing in his presence and saying, Why did we ever come out of Egypt?

²¹ Moses said, Here am I with six hundred thousand men on the march around me, and you promise them meat to eat for a whole month!

²² How can the sheep and oxen be slaughtered that would be enough for them? If all the fish in the sea could be caught, would they be enough?

²³ The LORD replied, Is there a limit to the power of the LORD? You will now see whether or not my words come true.

²⁴ Moses went out and told the people what the LORD had said. He assembled seventy men from the elders of the people and stationed them round the Tent.

²⁵ Then the LORD descended in the cloud and spoke to him. He withdrew part of the spirit which had been conferred on Moses and bestowed it on the seventy elders; as the spirit alighted on them, they were seized by a prophetic ecstasy, for the first and only time.

²⁶ Two men, one named Eldad and the other Medad, who had been enrolled with the seventy, were left behind in the

camp. Though they had not gone out to the Tent, the spirit alighted on them none the less, and they were seized by prophetic ecstasy there in the camp.

²⁷ A young man ran and told Moses that Eldad and Medad were in an ecstasy in the camp,

²⁸ whereupon Joshua son of Nun, who had served since boyhood with Moses, broke in, Moses my lord, stop them!

²⁹ But Moses said to him, Are you jealous on my account? I wish that all the LORD's people were prophets and that the LORD would bestow his spirit on them all!

³⁰ Moses then rejoined the camp with the elders of Israel.

³¹ There sprang up a wind from the LORD, which drove quails in from the west, and they were flying all round the camp for the distance of a day's journey, three feet above the ground.

³² The people were busy gathering quails all that day and night, and all next day, and even those who got least gathered ten homers of them. They spread them out to dry all about the camp.

³³ But the meat was scarcely between their teeth, and they had not so much as bitten it, when the LORD's anger flared up against the people and he struck them with a severe plague.

³⁴ That place came to be called Kibroth-hattaavah, because there they buried the people who had been greedy for meat.

³⁵ From Kibroth-hattaavah the Israelites went on to Hazeroth, and while they were there,

12¹ Miriam and Aaron began to find fault with Moses. They criticized him for his Cushite wife (for he had married a Cushite woman),

² and they complained, Is Moses the only one by whom the LORD has spoken? Has he not spoken by us as well? -- though Moses was a man of great humility, the most humble man on earth. But the LORD heard them

³ (12: 2)

⁴ and at once said to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, Go out all three of you to the Tent of Meeting. When they went out,

⁵ the LORD descended in a pillar of cloud and, standing at the entrance

to the tent, he summoned Aaron and Miriam. The two of them came forward,
⁶and the LORD said, Listen to my words. If he were your prophet and nothing more, I would make myself known to him in a vision, I would speak with him in a dream.

⁷But my servant Moses is not such a prophet; of all my household he alone is faithful.

⁸With him I speak face to face, openly and not in riddles. He sees the very form of the LORD. How dare you speak against my servant Moses?

⁹With his anger still hot against them, the LORD left them;

¹⁰and as the cloud moved from the tent, there was Miriam, her skin diseased and white as snow. When Aaron, turning towards her, saw her skin diseased,

¹¹he said to Moses, My lord, do not make us pay the penalty of sin, foolish and wicked though we have been.

¹²Let her not be like something stillborn, whose flesh is half eaten away when it comes from the womb.

¹³So Moses cried, LORD, not this! Heal her, I pray.

¹⁴The LORD answered, Suppose her father had spat in her face, would she not have to remain in disgrace for seven days? Let her be confined outside the camp for seven days and then be brought back.

¹⁵So Miriam was shut outside for seven days, and the people did not strike camp until she was brought back.

¹⁶After that they moved on from Hazeroth and pitched camp in the wilderness of Paran.

13 ¹THE LORD said to Moses,
²Send men out to explore Canaan, the land which I am going to give to the Israelites; from each ancestral tribe send one man, a man of high rank.

³So at the LORD's command Moses sent them out from the wilderness of Paran, all of them leading men among the Israelites.

⁴These were their names: from the tribe of Reuben, Shammua son of Zaccur;

⁵from the tribe of Simeon, Shaphat son of Hori;

⁶from the tribe of Judah, Caleb son of Jephunneh;

⁷from the tribe of Issachar, Igal son of Joseph;

⁸from the tribe of Ephraim, Hoshea son of Nun;

⁹from the tribe of Benjamin, Palti son of Raphu;

¹⁰from the tribe of Zebulun, Gaddiel son of Sodi;

¹¹from the tribe of Joseph (that is from the tribe of Manasseh), Gaddi son of Susi;

¹²from the tribe of Dan, Ammiel son of Gemalli;

¹³from the tribe of Asher, Sethur son of Michael;

¹⁴from the tribe of Naphtali, Nahbi son of Vophsi;

¹⁵from the tribe of Gad, Geuel son of Machi.

¹⁶Those are the names of the men whom Moses sent to explore the land. But Moses named the son of Nun Joshua, instead of Hoshea.

¹⁷When Moses sent them to explore Canaan, he said, Make your way up by the Negeb, up into the hill-country,

¹⁸and see what the land is like, and whether the people who live there are strong or weak, few or many.

¹⁹See whether the country in which they live is easy or difficult, and whether their towns are open or fortified.

²⁰Is the land fertile or barren, and is it wooded or not? Go boldly in and bring some of its fruit. It was the season when the first grapes were ripe.

²¹They went up and explored the country from the wilderness of Zin as far as Rehob by Lebo-hamath.

²²Going up by the Negeb they came to Hebron, where Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, the descendants of Anak, were living. (Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt.)

²³They came to the wadi Eshcol, and there they cut a branch with a single bunch of grapes, which they carried on a pole between two of them; they also picked pomegranates and figs.

²⁴That place was named the wadi Eshcol from the bunch of grapes the Israelites cut there.

²⁵After forty days they returned from exploring the country

²⁶and, coming back to Moses and Aaron and the whole community of Israelites at Kadesh in the wilderness of Paran, they made their report, and showed them the fruit of the country.

²⁷They gave Moses this account: We made our way into the land to which you sent us. It is flowing with milk and honey, and here is the fruit it grows;

²⁸but its inhabitants are formidable, and the towns are fortified and very large; indeed, we saw there the descendants of Anak.

²⁹We also saw the Amalekites who live in the Negeb, Hittites, Jebusites, and Amorites who live in the hill-country, and the Canaanites who live by the sea and along the Jordan.

³⁰Caleb silenced the people for Moses. Let us go up at once and occupy the country, he said; we are well able to conquer it.

³¹But the men who had gone with him said, No, we cannot attack these people; they are too strong for us.

³²Their report to the Israelites about the land which they had explored was discouraging: The country we explored,

they said, will swallow up any who go to live in it. All the people we saw there are men of gigantic stature.

³³When we set eyes on the Nephilim (the sons of Anak belong to the Nephilim) we felt no bigger than grasshoppers; and that is how we must have been in their eyes.

14¹At this the whole Israelite community cried out in dismay and the people wept all night long.

²Everyone complained against Moses and Aaron: If only we had died in Egypt or in the wilderness! they said.

³Why should the LORD bring us to this land, to die in battle and leave our wives and our dependants to become the spoils of war? It would be better for us to go back to Egypt.

⁴And they spoke of choosing someone to lead them back there.

⁵Then Moses and Aaron flung themselves on the ground before the assembled community of the Israelites,

⁶and two of those who had explored the land, Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, tore their clothes,

⁷ and encouraged the whole community: The country we travelled through and explored, they said, is a very good land indeed.

⁸ If the LORD is pleased with us, he will bring us into this land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and give it to us.

⁹ But you must not act in defiance of the LORD. You need not fear the people of the country, for we shall devour them. They have lost the protection that they had: the LORD is with us. You have nothing to fear from them.

¹⁰ As the whole assembly threatened to stone them, the glory of the LORD appeared in the Tent of Meeting to all the Israelites.

¹¹ The LORD said to Moses, How much longer will this people set me at naught? How much longer will they refuse to trust me in spite of all the signs I have shown among them?

¹² I shall strike them with pestilence. I shall deny them their heritage, and you and your descendants I shall make into a nation greater and more numerous than they.

¹³But Moses answered the LORD, What if the Egyptians hear of it? You brought this people out of Egypt by your might.

¹⁴What if they tell the inhabitants of this land? They too have heard of you, LORD, that you are with this people and are seen face to face, that your cloud stays over them, and that you go before them in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night.

¹⁵If then you do put them all to death at one blow, the nations who have heard these reports about you will say,

¹⁶The LORD could not bring this people into the land which he promised them by oath; and so he destroyed them in the wilderness.

¹⁷Now let the LORD's might be shown in its greatness, true to your proclamation of yourself --

¹⁸The LORD, long-suffering, ever faithful, who forgives iniquity and rebellion, and punishes children to the third and fourth generation for the iniquity of their fathers, though he does not sweep them clean away.

¹⁹You have borne with this people from Egypt all the way here; forgive their

iniquity, I beseech you, as befits your great and constant love.

²⁰The LORD said, Your prayer is answered, and I pardon them.

²¹But as I live, and as the glory of the LORD fills the whole earth,

²²not one of all those who have seen my glory and the signs which I wrought in Egypt and in the wilderness shall see the country which I promised on oath to their fathers. Ten times they have challenged me and not obeyed my voice. None of those who have set me at naught shall see this land.

²³(14: 22)

²⁴But my servant Caleb showed a different spirit and remained loyal to me. Because of this, I shall bring him into the land in which he has already set foot, the territory of the Amalekites and the Canaanites who dwell in the Vale, and I shall put his descendants in possession of it. Tomorrow you must turn back and set out for the wilderness by way of the Red Sea.

²⁵(14: 24)

²⁶The LORD said to Moses and Aaron,

²⁷ How long must I tolerate the complaints of this wicked community? I have heard the Israelites making complaints against me.

²⁸ Tell them that this is the word of the LORD: As I live, I shall do to you the very things I have heard you say.

²⁹ Here in this wilderness your bones will lie, every one of you on the register aged twenty or more, because you have made these complaints against me.

³⁰ Not one of you will enter the land which I swore with uplifted hand should be your home, except only Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun.

³¹ Your dependants, who, you said, would become the spoils of war, those dependants I shall bring into the land you have rejected, and they will enjoy it.

³² But as for the rest of you, your bones will lie in this wilderness;

³³ your children will be wanderers in the wilderness forty years, paying the penalty of your wanton faithlessness till the last one of you dies there.

³⁴ Forty days you spent exploring the country, and forty years, a year for each day, you will spend paying the penalty

of your iniquities. You will know what it means to have me against you.

³⁵I, the LORD, have spoken. This I swear to do to all this wicked community who have combined against me. There will be an end of them here in this wilderness; here they will die.

³⁶The men whom Moses had sent to explore the land, and who came back and by their report set all the community complaining against him,

³⁷died of a plague before the LORD; they died of plague because they had made a bad report.

³⁸Of those who went to explore the land, Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh alone survived.

³⁹When Moses reported the LORD's words to all the Israelites, there was great lamentation.

⁴⁰Early next morning they set out and made for the heights of the hill-country, saying, Look, we are on our way up to the place the LORD spoke of. We admit that we have been wrong.

⁴¹But Moses replied, Must you persist in disobeying the LORD's command? No good will come of this.

⁴²Go no farther; you will not have the LORD with you, and your enemies will defeat you.

⁴³For in front of you are the Amalekites and Canaanites, and you will fall by the sword, because you have ceased to follow the LORD, and he will no longer be with you.

⁴⁴But they went on recklessly towards the heights of the hill-country, though neither the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD nor Moses moved from the camp;

⁴⁵and the Amalekites and Canaanites who lived in those hills came down to the attack and inflicted a crushing defeat on them at Hormah.

15 ¹THE LORD told Moses ²to say to the Israelites: When you enter the land which I am giving you to live in,

³make food-offerings to the LORD; they may be whole-offerings or any sacrifice made in fulfilment of a special vow or by way of freewill-offering or at one of the appointed seasons. When you thus make an offering of soothing odour from herd or flock to the LORD,

⁴ whoever presents the offering should add a grain-offering consisting of a tenth of an ephah of flour mixed with a quarter of a hin of oil.

⁵ Add to the whole-offering or shared-offering a quarter of a hin of wine as a drink-offering with each lamb sacrificed.

⁶ If the animal is a ram, the grain-offering should consist of two tenths of an ephah of flour mixed with a third of a hin of oil,

⁷ and the wine for the drink-offering a third of a hin; in this way you will make an offering of soothing odour to the LORD.

⁸ When you offer to the LORD a young bull, whether as a whole-offering or as a sacrifice to fulfil a special vow, or as a shared-offering,

⁹ add a grain-offering of three tenths of an ephah of flour mixed with half a hin of oil,

¹⁰ and for the drink-offering, half a hin of wine; the whole will thus be a food-offering of soothing odour to the LORD.

¹¹ This is what must be done in each case, for every bull or ram, lamb or kid,

¹²whatever the number of each that you offer.

¹³Every native Israelite must observe these rules whenever he offers a food-offering of soothing odour to the LORD.

¹⁴When an alien residing with you or permanently settled among you offers a food-offering of soothing odour to the LORD, he should do as you do.

¹⁵There is one and the same statute for you and for the resident alien, a rule binding for all time on your descendants; before the LORD you and the alien are alike.

¹⁶There must be one law and one custom for you and for the alien residing among you.

¹⁷The LORD told Moses

¹⁸to say to the Israelites: After you have entered the land into which I am bringing you,

¹⁹whenever you eat the bread of the country, set aside a contribution for the LORD.

²⁰Set aside a loaf made of your first kneading of dough, as you set aside the contribution from the threshing-floor.

²¹ You must give a contribution to the LORD from your first kneading of dough; this rule is binding on your descendants.

²² When through inadvertence you omit to carry out any of these commands which the LORD gave to Moses --

²³ any command whatever that the LORD gave you through Moses on that first day and thereafter and made binding on your descendants --

²⁴ if it be done inadvertently, unnoticed by the community, then the whole community must offer one young bull as a whole-offering, a soothing odour to the LORD, with its proper grain-offering and drink-offering according to custom; and they are to add one he-goat as a purification-offering.

²⁵ The priest must make expiation for the whole Israelite community, and they will be forgiven. The omission was inadvertent; and they have brought their offering, a food-offering to the LORD; they have made their purification-offering before the LORD for their inadvertence;

²⁶ the whole community of Israelites and the aliens residing among you will be

forgiven. The inadvertence was shared by the whole people.

²⁷ If it is an individual who sins inadvertently, he should present a yearling she-goat as a purification-offering,

²⁸ and the priest will make expiation before the LORD for that person, who will then be forgiven.

²⁹ For anyone who sins inadvertently, there must be one law for all, whether native Israelite or resident alien.

³⁰ But the person, be he native or alien, who sins presumptuously, insults the LORD; that person is to be cut off from the people.

³¹ Because he has brought the word of the LORD into contempt and violated his command, that person will be cut off completely; the guilt will be on his head alone.

³² During the time that the Israelites were in the wilderness, a man was found gathering sticks on the sabbath day.

³³ Those who had caught him in the act brought him to Moses and Aaron and all the community,

³⁴ and they kept him in custody, because it was not clearly known what was to be done with him.

³⁵ The LORD said to Moses, The man must be put to death; he must be stoned by the whole community outside the camp.

³⁶ So the whole community took him outside the camp, where he was stoned to death, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

³⁷ The LORD told Moses

³⁸ to say to the Israelites: Make tassels on the corners of your garments, you and your children's children. Into this tassel you are to work a violet thread,

³⁹ and whenever you see this in the tassel, you will remember all the LORD's commands and obey them, and not go your own wanton ways, led astray by your own hearts and eyes.

⁴⁰ This token is to ensure that you remember and obey all my commands, and keep yourselves holy, consecrated to your God.

⁴¹ I am the LORD your God who brought you out of Egypt to become your God. I am the LORD your God.

16¹ KORAH son of Izhar, son of Kohath, son of Levi, along with the Reubenites Dathan and Abiram sons of Eliab and On son of Peleth, challenged the authority of Moses.

²Siding with them in their revolt were two hundred and fifty Israelites, all chiefs of the community, conveners of assembly and men of good standing.

³They confronted Moses and Aaron and said, You take too much on yourselves. Each and every member of the community is holy and the LORD is among them. Why do you set yourselves up above the assembly of the LORD?

⁴When Moses heard this, he prostrated himself,

⁵and he said to Korah and all his company, Tomorrow morning the LORD will declare who is his, who is holy and who may present offerings to him. The man whom the LORD chooses may present them.

⁶This is what you must do, you, Korah, and all your company: you must take censers,

⁷and put fire in them and place incense on them before the LORD tomorrow. The

man whom the LORD then chooses is the man who is holy. You take too much on yourselves, you Levites.

⁸Moses said to Korah, Listen, you Levites.

⁹Is it not enough for you that the God of Israel has set you apart from the community of Israel, bringing you near him to maintain the service of the Tabernacle of the LORD and to stand before the community as their ministers?

¹⁰He has had you come near him, and all your brother Levites with you; now do you seek the priesthood as well?

¹¹That is why you and all your company have combined together against the LORD. What is Aaron that you should make these complaints against him?

¹²Moses sent to fetch Dathan and Abiram sons of Eliab, but they answered, We will not come.

¹³Is it not enough that you have brought us away from a land flowing with milk and honey to let us die in the wilderness? Must you also set yourself up as prince over us?

¹⁴What is more, you have not brought us into a land flowing with milk and

honey, nor have you given us fields and vineyards to inherit. Do you think you can hoodwink men like us? We are not coming.

¹⁵Moses became very angry, and said to the LORD, Take no notice of their murmuring. I have not taken from them so much as a single donkey; I have not wronged any of them.

¹⁶Moses said to Korah, Present yourselves before the LORD tomorrow, you and all your company, you and they and Aaron.

¹⁷Each man of you is to take his censer and put incense on it. Then you shall present them before the LORD with their two hundred and fifty censers, and you and Aaron shall also bring your censers.

¹⁸So each man took his censer, put fire in it, and placed incense on it. Moses and Aaron took their stand at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting,

¹⁹and Korah gathered his whole company together and faced them at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. Then the glory of the LORD appeared to the whole community,

²⁰and the LORD said to Moses and Aaron,

²¹Stand apart from them, so that I may make an end of them in a single moment.

²²But Moses and Aaron prostrated themselves and said, God, you God of the spirits of all mankind, if one man sins, will you be angry with the whole community?

²³But the LORD said to Moses,

²⁴Tell them all to stand back from the dwellings of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram.

²⁵Moses rose and went to Dathan and Abiram, and the elders of Israel followed him.

²⁶He said to the whole community, Stand well away from the tents of these wicked men; touch nothing of theirs, or you will be swept away because of all their sins.

²⁷So they moved away from the dwellings of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. Dathan and Abiram had come out and were standing at the entrance of their tents with their wives, their children, and their dependants.

²⁸ Moses said, By this you shall know that it is the LORD who sent me to do all I have done, and it was not my own heart that prompted me.

²⁹ If these men die a natural death, merely sharing the common fate of man, then the LORD has not sent me;

³⁰ but if the LORD works a miracle, and the ground opens its mouth and swallows them and all that is theirs, and they go down alive to Sheol, then you will know that these men have set the LORD at naught.

³¹ Hardly had Moses spoken when the ground beneath them split apart;

³² the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them and their homes -- all the followers of Korah and all their property.

³³ They went down alive into Sheol with all that they had; the earth closed over them, and they vanished from the assembly.

³⁴ At their cries all the Israelites around them fled. Look out! they shouted. The earth might swallow us.

³⁵ Fire came out from the LORD and consumed the two hundred and fifty men presenting the incense.

³⁶ Then the LORD said to Moses,

³⁷ Order Eleazar son of Aaron the priest to set aside the censers from the burnt remains, and scatter the fire from them a long way off, because they are holy.

³⁸ The censers of these men who sinned at the cost of their lives you shall make into beaten plates to overlay the altar; they are holy, because they have been presented before the LORD. Let them be a sign to the Israelites.

³⁹ Eleazar the priest took the bronze censers which the victims of the fire had presented, and they were beaten into plates to cover the altar,

⁴⁰ to be a reminder to the Israelites that no lay person, no one not descended from Aaron, should come forward to burn incense before the LORD, or his fate would be that of Korah and his company. All this was done as the LORD commanded Eleazar through Moses.

⁴¹ Next day the whole Israelite community raised complaints against Moses and Aaron and taxed them with

causing the death of some of the LORD's people.

⁴²As they gathered against Moses and Aaron, they turned towards the Tent of Meeting and saw that the cloud covered it, and the glory of the LORD appeared.

⁴³When Moses and Aaron came to the front of the Tent of Meeting,

⁴⁴the LORD said to them,

⁴⁵Stand well clear of this community, so that in a single moment I may make an end of them. They prostrated themselves,

⁴⁶and then Moses said to Aaron, Take your censer, put fire from the altar in it, set incense on it, and go with it quickly to the assembled community to make expiation for them. Wrath has gone forth already from the presence of the LORD; the plague has begun.

⁴⁷As Moses had directed him, Aaron took his censer, ran into the midst of the assembly, and found that the plague had indeed begun among the people. He put incense on the censer and made expiation for the people,

⁴⁸standing between the dead and the living, and the plague was stopped.

⁴⁹Fourteen thousand seven hundred died of it, in addition to those who had died for Korah's offence.

⁵⁰When Aaron came back to Moses at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting, the plague had stopped.

17 ¹The LORD said to Moses,
²Speak to the Israelites and get from them a staff for each tribe, one from every tribal chief, twelve in all, and write each man's name on his staff.

³On Levi's staff write Aaron's name, for there must be one staff for each head of a tribe.

⁴Put them all in the Tent of Meeting before the Testimony, where I meet you,
⁵and the staff of the man whom I choose will put forth buds. I shall rid myself of the complaints of these Israelites, who keep on complaining against you.

⁶Moses gave those instructions to the Israelites, and each of their chiefs handed him a staff for his tribe, twelve in all, and Aaron's staff among them.

⁷Moses laid them before the LORD in the Tent of the Testimony,

⁸and next day when he entered the tent, he found that Aaron's staff, the staff for the tribe of Levi, had budded. Indeed, it had put forth buds, blossomed, and produced ripe almonds.

⁹Moses then brought out the staffs from before the LORD and showed them to all the Israelites; they saw for themselves, and each man took his own staff.

¹⁰The LORD said to Moses, Put back Aaron's staff in front of the Testimony to be kept as a warning to rebels, so that you may rid me of their complaints, and then they will not die.

¹¹Moses did this, doing exactly as the LORD had commanded him.

¹²THE Israelites said to Moses, This is the end of us! We must perish, one and all!

¹³Everyone who goes near the Tabernacle of the LORD will die. Is this to be our final end?

18¹The LORD said to Aaron: You and your sons, together with the members of your father's tribe, are to be fully answerable for the sanctuary. You and your sons alone will be answerable for your priestly office;

²but admit your kinsmen of Levi, your father's tribe, to be attached to you and assist you while you and your sons are before the Tent of the Testimony.

³Let them be in attendance on you and fulfil all the duties of the Tent, but they must not go near the sacred vessels or the altar, otherwise they will die and you with them.

⁴They will be attached to you and be responsible for the maintenance of the Tent of Meeting in every detail. No lay person is to come near you,

⁵for you by yourselves will be responsible for the duties of the sanctuary and the altar, so that wrath may not fall again on the Israelites.

⁶It is I who have selected the Levites your kinsmen out of all the Israelites as a gift for you, made over to the LORD for the maintenance of the Tent of Meeting.

⁷But only you and your sons may fulfil the duties of your priestly office that concern the altar or lie within the curtain. This duty is yours; I bestow on you this gift of priestly service. Any person who is not a priest and who usurps it must be put to death.

⁸The LORD said to Aaron: I, the LORD, commit to your control the contributions made to me, that is all the holy-gifts of the Israelites. I give them to you and to your sons for your allotted portion due to you for all time.

⁹Out of the most holy gifts kept back from the altar-fire this part is to belong to you: every offering, whether grain-offering, purification-offering, or reparation-offering, rendered to me as a most holy gift, belongs to you and to your sons.

¹⁰You must eat it in a most holy place; every male may eat it. You are to regard it as holy.

¹¹This also is yours: the contribution from all such of their gifts as are presented as offerings dedicated by the Israelites. I give it to you and to your sons and daughters with you as a due for all time. Every person in your household who is ritually clean may eat it.

¹²I give you all the choicest of the oil, the choicest of the new wine and the corn, the firstfruits which are given to the LORD.

¹³The first-ripe fruits of all produce in the land which are brought to the LORD are to be yours. Everyone in your household who is ritually clean may eat them.

¹⁴Everything in Israel which has been devoted to God is to be yours.

¹⁵All the firstborn of man or animal which are brought to the LORD are to be yours. Notwithstanding, you must accept payment in redemption of every firstborn of man and of unclean beasts:

¹⁶at the end of one month you may redeem it at the fixed price of five shekels of silver by the sacred standard, at the rate of twenty gerahs to the shekel.

¹⁷You must not, however, allow the redemption of the firstborn of a cow, sheep, or goat; they are holy. You must fling their blood against the altar and burn their fat in sacrifice as a food-offering of soothing odour to the LORD;

¹⁸their flesh is yours, as are the breast of the dedicated portion and the right leg.

¹⁹All the dedicated portions, which the Israelites set aside for the LORD, I give to you and to your sons and daughters with you as a due for all time. This is a perpetual covenant of salt before the LORD with you and your descendants also.

²⁰The LORD said to Aaron: You are to have no holding in Israel, no share of land among them; I am your holding in Israel, I am your share.

²¹To the Levites I give every tithe in Israel to be their share, in return for the service they render in maintaining the Tent of Meeting.

²²In order that the Israelites may not henceforth approach the Tent and thus incur the penalty of death,

²³the Levites alone are to perform the service of the Tent and accept full responsibility for it. This rule is binding on your descendants for all time. They are to have no share of land among the Israelites,

²⁴because as their holding I give them the tithe which the Israelites set aside as a contribution to the LORD. Therefore I

say concerning them: They are to have no holding among the Israelites.

²⁵The LORD told Moses

²⁶to say to the Levites: When you receive from the Israelites the tithe which I give you from them as your share, you are to set aside from it the contribution to the LORD, a tithe of the tithe.

²⁷Your contribution will count for you as if it were corn from the threshing-floor and juice from the wine vat.

²⁸In this way you too will set aside the contribution due to the LORD out of all tithes which you receive from the Israelites, and you will give the LORD's contribution to Aaron the priest.

²⁹Out of all the gifts you receive you are to set aside the contribution due to the LORD; and the gift which you consecrate must be taken from the choicest of them.

³⁰Say to them also: When you have set aside the choicest part of your portion, what remains will count for you as the produce of the threshing-floor and the wine vat,

³¹ and you may eat it anywhere, you and your households. It is your payment for service in the Tent of Meeting.

³² When you have set aside its choicest part, you will incur no penalty in respect of it, and you will not be profaning the holy-gifts of the Israelites; so you will escape death.

19¹ THE LORD said to Moses and Aaron:

² This is a statute of the law which the LORD has ordained. Tell the Israelites to bring you a red cow without blemish or defect, one which has never borne a yoke.

³ Give it to Eleazar the priest, to be taken outside the camp and slaughtered to the east of it.

⁴ Eleazar the priest is to take some of the blood on his finger and sprinkle it seven times towards the front of the Tent of Meeting.

⁵ The cow must be burnt in his sight, skin, flesh, and blood, together with the offal.

⁶ The priest must then take cedar-wood, marjoram, and scarlet thread, and throw

them into the heart of the fire in which the cow is burning.

⁷ He must wash his clothes and bathe his body in water; after which he may enter the camp, but he remains ritually unclean till sunset.

⁸ The man who burnt the cow must wash his clothes and bathe his body in water; he also remains unclean till sunset.

⁹ Then a man who is clean is to collect the ashes of the cow and deposit them outside the camp in a clean place. They shall be reserved for use by the Israelite community in the water of ritual purification; for the cow is a purification-offering.

¹⁰ The man who collected the ashes of the cow must wash his clothes, and he remains unclean till sunset. This statute is to be binding for all time on the Israelites and on the alien living among them.

¹¹ Whoever touches a dead body is ritually unclean for seven days.

¹² He must get himself purified with the water of ritual purification on the third day and on the seventh day, and then he

is clean. If he is not purified both on the third day and on the seventh, he is not clean.

¹³Anyone who touches a dead person, that is the body of a person who has died, and does not purify himself, defiles the Tabernacle of the LORD; he is to be cut off from Israel. The water of purification has not been flung over him; he remains unclean, and his impurity is still upon him.

¹⁴When someone dies in a tent, this is the law: everyone who enters the tent and everyone already in it is ritually unclean for seven days,

¹⁵and every open vessel which has no covering tied over it is unclean.

¹⁶In the open, anyone who touches someone killed with a weapon or someone who has died naturally, or anyone who touches a human bone or a grave, is unclean for seven days.

¹⁷For such uncleanness, they must take some of the ash from the burnt mass of the purification-offering and add fresh water to it in a vessel.

¹⁸Then a person who is clean should take marjoram, dip it in the water, and

sprinkle the tent and all the vessels in it and all the people who were there, or anyone who has touched a human bone, a corpse (whether the person was killed or died naturally), or a grave.

¹⁹The one who is clean must sprinkle the one who is unclean on the third day and on the seventh; on the seventh day he is to purify him; then the one who is unclean must wash his clothes and bathe in water, and at sunset he will be clean.

²⁰If anyone who is unclean does not get himself purified, that person is to be cut off from the assembly, because he has defiled the sanctuary of the LORD. As long as the water of purification has not been flung over him, he is unclean.

²¹This rule is to be binding on you for all time. The man who sprinkles the water of purification must also wash his clothes, and whoever touches the water is unclean till sunset.

²²Whatever the unclean man touches is unclean, and anyone who touches it will be unclean till sunset.

20¹ IN the first month the whole community of Israel arrived in the wilderness of Zin and stayed some time

at Kadesh. Miriam died and was buried there.

²As the community was without water, the people gathered against Moses and Aaron.

³They disputed with Moses. If only we had perished when our brothers perished before the LORD! they said.

⁴Why have you brought the LORD's assembly into this wilderness for us and our livestock to die here?

⁵Why did you make us come up from Egypt to land us in this terrible place, where nothing will grow, neither grain nor figs nor vines nor pomegranates? There is not even water to drink.

⁶Moses and Aaron went from the assembly to the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, where they prostrated themselves, and the glory of the LORD appeared to them.

⁷The LORD said to Moses,

⁸Take your staff, and then with Aaron your brother assemble the community, and in front of them all command the rock to yield its waters. Thus you will produce water for the community out of

the rock, for them and their livestock to drink.

⁹Moses took his staff from before the LORD, as he had been ordered.

¹⁰He with Aaron assembled the people in front of the rock, and said to them, Listen, you rebels. Must we get water for you out of this rock?

¹¹Moses raised his hand and struck the rock twice with his staff. Water gushed out in abundance and they all drank, men and animals.

¹²But the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, You did not trust me so far as to uphold my holiness in the sight of the Israelites; therefore you will not lead this assembly into the land I am giving them.

¹³Such were the waters of Meribah, where the people disputed with the LORD and through which his holiness was upheld.

¹⁴FROM Kadesh Moses sent envoys to the king of Edom: This message is from your brother Israel. You know all the hardships we have encountered,

¹⁵how our ancestors went down to Egypt, and we lived there for many

years. The Egyptians ill-treated us and our fathers before us,

¹⁶and we cried to the LORD for help. He listened to us, sent an angel, and brought us out of Egypt. Now we are here at Kadesh, a town on your frontier.

¹⁷Grant us, we ask, passage through your country. We shall not trespass on field or vineyard, nor drink from your wells. We shall keep to the king's highway, not turning off to right or left until we have crossed your territory.

¹⁸But the Edomites answered, You shall not cross our land. If you do, we shall march out and attack you.

¹⁹The Israelites said, But we shall keep to the main road. If we and our flocks drink your water, we shall pay you for it. Ours is a trifling request: we would simply cross your land on foot.

²⁰But the Edomites refused, and marched out to oppose them with a large army in full strength.

²¹Since the Edomites would not allow Israel to cross their frontier, Israel turned and went a different way.

²²The whole community of Israel set out from Kadesh and came to Mount Hor.

²³ There, near the frontier of Edom, the LORD said to Moses and Aaron,

²⁴ Aaron is now to be gathered to his father's kin. He will not enter the land which I am giving to the Israelites, because over the waters of Meribah you both rebelled against my command.

²⁵ Take Aaron and his son Eleazar, and go up Mount Hor.

²⁶ Strip Aaron of his robes and invest Eleazar his son with them, for Aaron is to be taken from you: he will die there.

²⁷ Moses did as the LORD had commanded: in full view of the whole community they went up Mount Hor,

²⁸ where Moses stripped Aaron of his robes and invested his son Eleazar with them. Aaron died there on the mountaintop. When Moses and Eleazar came down from the mountain,

²⁹ the whole Israelite community saw that Aaron had died, and all the people mourned for thirty days.

21 ¹ When the Canaanite king of Arad, who lived in the Negeb, heard that the Israelites were coming by way of Atharim, he gave battle and took some of the Israelites prisoner.

²Israel made this vow to the LORD, If you deliver this people into our power, we will utterly destroy their towns.

³The LORD listened to Israel and delivered up the Canaanites to them. Israel destroyed them and their towns, and the place became known as Hormah.

⁴From Mount Hor they left by way of the Red Sea to march round the flank of Edom. But on the way the people grew impatient

⁵and spoke against God and Moses. Why have you brought us up from Egypt, they said, to die in the desert where there is neither food nor water? We are heartily sick of this miserable fare.

⁶Then the LORD sent venomous snakes among them, and they bit the Israelites so that many of them died.

⁷The people came to Moses and said, We sinned when we spoke against the LORD and you. Plead with the LORD to rid us of the snakes. Moses interceded for the people,

⁸and the LORD told him to make a serpent and erect it as a standard, so that anyone who had been bitten could look at it and recover.

⁹So Moses made a bronze serpent and erected it as a standard, in order that anyone bitten by a snake could look at the bronze serpent and recover.

¹⁰The Israelites continued their journey and encamped at Oboth.

¹¹From there they moved on and encamped at Iye-abarim in the wilderness on the eastern frontier of Moab.

¹²When they moved from there they encamped by the wadi Zared.

¹³From the Zared they moved on and encamped by the farther side of the Arnon in the wilderness which extends into Amorite territory, for the Arnon was the Moabite frontier, the frontier between Moab and the Amorites.

¹⁴That is why the Book of the Wars of the LORD speaks of Waheb in Suphah and the wadis: Arnon

¹⁵and the watershed of the wadis that falls away towards the dwellings at Ar and slopes towards the frontier of Moab.

¹⁶From there they went on to Be-er: this is the well where the LORD said to Moses, Gather the people together and I shall give them water.

¹⁷ It was then that Israel sang this song: Spring up, O well! Greet it with song,

¹⁸ the well dug by the princes, laid open by the leaders of the people with sceptre and staff, a gift from the wilderness.

¹⁹ From Be-er they proceeded to Nahaliel, and from Nahaliel to Bamoth;

²⁰ then from Bamoth to the valley in the Moabite country below the summit of Pisgah overlooking Jeshimon.

²¹ Israel sent envoys to Sihon the Amorite king with this request:

²² Grant us passage through your country. We shall not trespass on field or vineyard, nor drink from your wells. We shall keep to the king's highway until we have crossed your territory.

²³ But Sihon refused Israel passage through his territory; he mustered his whole army and marched out to oppose Israel in the wilderness. He advanced as far as Jahaz and gave battle,

²⁴ but Israel put them to the sword, and occupied their land from the Arnon to the Jabbok, the territory of the Ammonites, where the country became difficult.

²⁵ Israel seized all those Amorite towns and settled in them, that is in Heshbon and all its dependent villages.

²⁶ Heshbon was the capital of the Amorite king Sihon, who had fought against the former king of Moab, and stripped him of all his territory as far as the Arnon.

²⁷ Therefore the bards say: Come to Heshbon! Let it be rebuilt! Let Sihon's capital be restored!

²⁸ For fire blazed out from Heshbon and flames from Sihon's city. It devoured Ar of Moab, and swept the heights of Arnon.

²⁹ Woe betide you, Moab; people of Kemosh, it is the end of you. He has made his sons fugitives and his daughters captives of Sihon the Amorite king.

³⁰ From Heshbon to Dibon their very embers are burnt out and they are extinct, while the fire spreads onward to Medeba.

³¹ Thus Israel occupied the territory of the Amorites.

³² After Moses had sent men to reconnoitre Jazer, the Israelites captured

it together with its dependent villages and drove out the Amorites there.

³³They then turned and advanced along the road to Bashan. King Og of Bashan, with his whole army, took the field against them at Edrei,

³⁴but the LORD said to Moses, Do not be afraid of him. I have delivered him into your hands, with all his people and his land. Deal with him as you dealt with Sihon the Amorite king living in Heshbon.

³⁵So they put him to the sword with his sons and all his people, until there was no survivor left, and they took possession of his land.

22¹THE Israelites moved on and encamped in the lowlands of Moab on the farther side of the Jordan opposite Jericho.

²Balak son of Zippor saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites,

³and Moab was in terror of the people because there were so many of them. The Moabites were overcome with fear at the sight of them;

⁴and they said to the elders of Midian, This horde will soon eat up everything

round us as an ox eats up the new grass in the field. Balak son of Zippor, who was at that time king of Moab,

⁵ sent a deputation to summon Balaam son of Beor, who was at Pethor by the Euphrates in the land of the Amavites, with this message, A whole nation has just arrived from Egypt: they cover the face of the country and are settling at my very door.

⁶ Come at once and lay a curse on them, because they are too many for me. I may then be able to defeat them and drive them out of the country. I know that those whom you bless are blessed, and those whom you curse are cursed.

⁷ The elders of Moab and Midian took the fees for augury with them, and coming to Balaam they gave him Balak's message.

⁸ Spend this night here, he replied, and I shall give you whatever answer the LORD gives me. So the Moabite chiefs stayed with Balaam.

⁹ God came to Balaam and asked him, Who are these men with you?

¹⁰Balaam replied, Balak son of Zippor king of Moab has sent them to me and he says,

¹¹A people which has just come out of Egypt is covering the face of the country. Come at once and put a curse on them for me; then I may be able to give battle and drive them away.

¹²God said to Balaam, You are not to go with them or curse the people, because they are to be blessed.

¹³So when Balaam rose in the morning he said to Balak's chiefs, Go back to your own country; the LORD has refused to let me go with you.

¹⁴The Moabite chiefs took their leave and went back to Balak, and reported to him that Balaam had refused to come with them.

¹⁵Balak sent a second embassy, larger and more high-powered than the first.

¹⁶When they came to Balaam they said, This is the message from Balak son of Zippor: Let nothing stand in the way of your coming to me.

¹⁷I shall confer great honour upon you and do whatever you ask me. But

you must come and put a curse on this people for me.

¹⁸Balaam gave this answer to Balak's messengers: Even if Balak were to give me all the silver and gold in his palace, I could not disobey the command of the LORD my God in anything, small or great.

¹⁹But stay here for this night, as the others did, that I may learn what more the LORD may have to say to me.

²⁰During the night God came to Balaam and said to him, If these men have come to summon you, then rise and go with them, but do only what I tell you.

²¹When morning came Balaam rose, saddled his donkey, and went with the Moabite chiefs.

²²But God was angry because Balaam was going, and as he came riding on his donkey, accompanied by his two servants, the angel of the LORD took his stand in the road to bar his way.

²³When the donkey saw the angel standing in the road with his sword drawn, she turned off the road into the fields, and Balaam beat her to bring her back on to the road.

²⁴The angel of the LORD then stood where the road ran through a hollow, with enclosed vineyards on either side.

²⁵The donkey saw the angel and, squeezing herself against the wall, she crushed Balaam's foot against it, and again he beat her.

²⁶The angel of the LORD moved on farther and stood in a narrow place where there was no room to turn to either right or left.

²⁷When the donkey saw the angel, she lay down under Balaam. At that Balaam lost his temper and beat the donkey with his staff.

²⁸The LORD then made the donkey speak, and she said to Balaam, What have I done? This is the third time you have beaten me.

²⁹Balaam answered, You have been making a fool of me. If I had had a sword with me, I should have killed you on the spot.

³⁰But the donkey answered, Am I not still the donkey which you have ridden all your life? Have I ever taken such a liberty with you before? He said, No.

³¹ Then the LORD opened Balaam's eyes: he saw the angel of the LORD standing in the road with his sword drawn, and he bowed down and prostrated himself.

³² The angel said to him, What do you mean by beating your donkey three times like this? I came out to bar your way, but you made straight for me,

³³ and three times your donkey saw me and turned aside. If she had not turned aside, I should by now have killed you, while sparing her.

³⁴ I have done wrong, Balaam replied to the angel of the LORD. I did not know that you stood confronting me in the road. But now, if my journey displeases you, I shall turn back.

³⁵ The angel of the LORD said to Balaam, Go with the men; but say only what I tell you. So Balaam went on with Balak's chiefs.

³⁶ When Balak heard that Balaam was coming, he went out to meet him as far as Ar of Moab by the Arnon on his frontier.

³⁷ Balak said to Balaam, Did I not send time and again to summon you? Why did

you not come? Did you think that I could not do you honour?

³⁸Balaam replied, I have come, as you see. But now that I am here, what power have I of myself to say anything? It is only whatever word God puts into my mouth that I can speak.

³⁹So Balaam went with Balak till they came to Kiriath-huzoth,

⁴⁰and Balak slaughtered cattle and sheep and sent portions to Balaam and to the chiefs who were with him.

⁴¹In the morning Balak took Balaam and led him up to Bamoth-baal, from where he could see the full extent of the Israelite host.

23¹ Then Balaam said to Balak, Build me here seven altars and prepare for me seven bulls and seven rams.

²Balak followed Balaam's instructions; after offering a bull and a ram on each altar,

³he said to him, I have prepared the seven altars, and I have offered the bull and the ram on each altar. Balaam answered, You stand here beside your sacrifice, and let me go off by myself. It may be that the LORD will meet me.

Whatever he reveals to me, I shall tell you. He went off to a height, where God met him.

⁴ (23: 3)

⁵ The LORD put words into Balaam's mouth and said, Go back to Balak, and speak as I tell you.

⁶ He went back, and found Balak standing by his sacrifice, and with him all the Moabite chiefs.

⁷ Then Balaam uttered his oracle: From Aram, from the mountains of the east, Balak king of Moab has brought me: Come, lay a curse on Jacob for me, he said. Come, denounce Israel.

⁸ How can I curse someone God has not cursed, how denounce someone the LORD has not denounced?

⁹ From the rocky heights I see them, I watch them from the rounded hills. I see a people that dwells apart, that has not made itself one with the nations.

¹⁰ Who can count the host of Jacob or number the myriads of Israel? Let me die as those who are righteous die; grant that my end may be as theirs!

¹¹ Balak said, What is this you have done? I sent for you to put a curse on

my enemies, and what you have done is to bless them.

¹²Balaam replied, I can but keep to the words which the LORD puts into my mouth.

¹³Balak then said to him, Come with me now to another place from which you will see them, though not the full extent of them; you will not see them all. Curse them for me from there.

¹⁴So he took him to the Field of the Watchers on the summit of Pisgah, where he built seven altars and offered a bull and a ram on each altar.

¹⁵Balaam said to Balak, You stand beside your sacrifice; I shall meet the LORD over there.

¹⁶The LORD met Balaam and put words into his mouth, and said, Go back to Balak, and speak as I tell you.

¹⁷He went, and found him standing beside his sacrifice with the Moabite chiefs. Balak asked what the LORD had said,

¹⁸and Balaam uttered his oracle: Up, Balak, and listen: hear what I am charged to say, son of Zippor.

¹⁹ God is not a mortal that he should lie, not a man that he should change his mind. Would he speak, and not make it good? What he proclaims, will he not fulfil?

²⁰ I have received a command to bless; I shall bless, and I cannot gainsay it.

²¹ He has discovered no iniquity in Jacob and has seen no mischief in Israel. The LORD their God is with them, acclaimed among them as King.

²² What its curving horns are to the wild ox, God is to them, who brought them out of Egypt.

²³ Surely there is no divination in Jacob, and no augury in Israel; now it is said to Jacob and to Israel, See what God has wrought!

²⁴ Behold a people rearing up like a lioness, rampant like a lion; he will not couch till he has devoured the prey and drunk the blood of the slain.

²⁵ Then Balak said to Balaam, You will not put a curse on them; then at least do not bless them.

²⁶ He answered, Did I not warn you that I must do whatever the LORD tells me?

²⁷ Balak said, Come, let me take you to another place; perhaps God will be pleased to let you curse them for me there.

²⁸ So he took Balaam to the summit of Peor overlooking Jeshimon,

²⁹ and Balaam told him to build seven altars for him there and prepare seven bulls and seven rams.

³⁰ Balak did as Balaam had said, and he offered a bull and a ram on each altar.

24 ¹ But now that Balaam knew that the LORD wished him to bless Israel, he did not go and resort to divination as before. He turned towards the desert,

² and before his eyes he saw Israel encamped tribe by tribe; and, the spirit of God coming on him,

³ he uttered his oracle: The word of Balaam son of Beor, the word of the man whose sight is clear,

⁴ the word of him who hears the words of God, who with opened eyes sees in a trance the vision from the Almighty:

⁵ Jacob, how fair are your tents, Israel, your encampments,

⁶like long palm groves, like gardens by a river, like aloe trees planted by the LORD, like cedars beside the waters!

⁷The water in his vessels shall overflow, and his seed shall be like great waters so that his king may be taller than Agag, and his kingdom lifted high.

⁸What its curving horns are to the wild ox, God is to him, who brought him out of Egypt; he will devour hostile nations, crunch their bones, and break their backs.

⁹When he reclines he couches like a lion or like a lioness; who dares to rouse him? Blessed be those who bless you, and let them who curse you be accursed!

¹⁰At that Balak's anger was aroused against Balaam; beating his hands together, he cried, It was to curse my enemies that I summoned you, and three times you have persisted in blessing them.

¹¹Off with you at once to your own place! I promised to confer great honour upon you, but now the LORD has kept this honour from you.

¹²Balaam answered, But I said to your messengers:

¹³Were Balak to give me all the silver and gold in his palace, I could not disobey the command of the LORD by doing anything of my own will, good or bad. What the LORD says to me, that is what I must say.

¹⁴Now I am going to my own people; but first, let me warn you what this people will do to yours in the days to come.

¹⁵Then he uttered his oracle: The word of Balaam son of Beor, the word of the man whose sight is clear,

¹⁶the word of him who hears the words of God, who shares the knowledge of the Most High, who with opened eyes sees in a trance the vision from the Almighty:

¹⁷I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near: a star will come forth out of Jacob, a comet will arise from Israel. He will smite the warriors of Moab, and beat down all the sons of Sheth.

¹⁸Edom will be his by conquest and Seir, his enemy, will become his. Israel will do valiant deeds;

¹⁹Jacob will trample them down, the last survivor from Ar will he destroy.

²⁰He saw Amalek and uttered his oracle: First of all the nations was Amalek, but his end will be utter destruction.

²¹He saw the Kenites and uttered his oracle: Your refuge, though it seems secure, your nest, though set on the mountain crag,

²²is doomed, Cain, to be burnt, when Asshur takes you captive.

²³He uttered his oracle: Alas, who are these assembling in the north,

²⁴invaders from the region of Kittim? They will lay waste Asshur; they will lay Eber waste: he too will perish utterly.

²⁵Then Balaam arose and returned home, and Balak also went on his way.

25 ¹WHEN the Israelites were in Shittim, the men began to have intercourse with Moabite women,

²who invited them to the sacrifices offered to their gods. The Israelites ate the sacrificial food and prostrated themselves before the gods of Moab;

³they joined in the worship of the Baal of Peor. This aroused the anger of the LORD,

⁴ who said to Moses, Take all the leaders of the people and hurl them down to their death before the LORD in the full light of day, that the fury of my anger may turn away from Israel.

⁵ Moses gave this order to the judges of Israel: Each of you put to death those of his tribe who have joined in the worship of the Baal of Peor.

⁶ One of the Israelites brought a Midianite woman into his family in open defiance of Moses and all the community of Israel, while they were weeping by the entrance of the Tent of Meeting.

⁷ When Phinehas son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the priest, saw him, he got up from the assembly and took a spear,

⁸ and went into the nuptial tent after the Israelite, where he transfixes the two of them, the Israelite and the woman, pinning them together. Then the plague which had attacked the Israelites was brought to a stop;

⁹ but twenty-four thousand had already died.

¹⁰ The LORD said to Moses,

¹¹ Phinehas son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the priest, has turned my wrath away

from the Israelites; he displayed among them the same jealous anger that moved me, and therefore I did not exterminate the Israelites in my jealous anger.

¹²Make known that I hereby grant him my covenant pledge of prosperity:

¹³he and his descendants after him shall enjoy the priesthood under a covenant for all time, because he showed his zeal for his God and made expiation for the Israelites.

¹⁴The name of the Israelite struck down with the Midianite woman was Zimri son of Salu, a chief in a Simeonite family,

¹⁵and the Midianite woman's name was Cozbi daughter of Zur, who was the tribal head of an ancestral house in Midian.

¹⁶The LORD said to Moses,

¹⁷Make the Midianites suffer as they made you suffer with their wives, and strike them down; their wives were your undoing at Peor and in the affair of Cozbi their sister, the daughter of a Midianite chief, who was struck down at the time of the plague that resulted from Peor.

¹⁸(25: 17)

26 ¹ AFTER the plague the LORD said to Moses and Eleazar the priest, son of Aaron,

² Make a census of the whole community of Israel by fathers families, recording everyone in Israel aged twenty years and upwards fit for military service.'

³ Moses and Eleazar the priest collected them all in the lowlands of Moab by the Jordan near Jericho,

⁴ all who were twenty years of age and upwards, as the LORD had commanded Moses. These were the Israelites who came out of Egypt.

⁵ Reubenites (Reuben was Israel's eldest son): Enoch, the Enochite family; Pallu, the Palluite family;

⁶ Hezron, the Hezronite family; Carmi, the Carmite family.

⁷ These were the Reubenite families: the number in their list was forty-three thousand seven hundred and thirty.

⁸ Son of Pallu: Eliab.

⁹ Sons of Eliab: Nemuel, Dathan, and Abiram. These were the same Dathan and Abiram, conveners of the community, who defied Moses and Aaron

and joined the company of Korah in defying the LORD.

¹⁰Then the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them up with Korah, and so their company died, while fire burnt up the two hundred and fifty men, and they became a warning.

¹¹The Korahites, however, did not die.

¹²Simeonites, by their families: Nemuel, the Nemuelite family; Jamin, the Jaminite family; Jachin, the Jachinite family;

¹³Zerah, the Zarhite family; Saul, the Saulite family.

¹⁴These were the Simeonite families; the number in their list was twenty-two thousand two hundred.

¹⁵Gadites, by their families: Zephon, the Zephonite family; Haggi, the Haggite family; Shuni, the Shunite family;

¹⁶Ozni, the Oznite family; Eri, the Erite family;

¹⁷Arod, the Arodite family; Areli, the Arelite family.

¹⁸These were the Gadite families; the number in their list was forty thousand five hundred.

¹⁹The sons of Judah were Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez, and Zerah; Er and Onan died in Canaan.

²⁰Judahites, by their families: Shelah, the Shelanite family; Perez, the Perezite family; Zerah, the Zarhite family.

²¹Perezites: Hezron, the Hezronite family; Hamul, the Hamulite family.

²²These were the families of Judah; the number in their list was seventy-six thousand five hundred.

²³Issacharites, by their families: Tola, the Tolaite family; Pua, the Puite family;

²⁴Jashub, the Jashubite family; Shimron, the Shimronite family.

²⁵These were the families of Issachar; the number in their list was sixty-four thousand three hundred.

²⁶Zebulunites, by their families: Sered, the Sardite family; Elon, the Elonite family; Jahleel, the Jahleelite family.

²⁷These were the Zebulunite families; the number in their list was sixty thousand five hundred.

²⁸Josephites, by their families: Manasseh and Ephraim.

²⁹Manassites: Machir, the Machirite family. Machir was the father of Gilead: Gilead, the Gileadite family.

³⁰Gileadites: Jeezer, the Jeezerite family; Helek, the Helekite family;

³¹Asriel, the Asrielite family; Shechem, the Shechemite family;

³²Shemida, the Shemidaite family; Hopher, the Hopherite family.

³³Zelophehad son of Hopher had no sons, only daughters; their names were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.

³⁴These were the families of Manasseh; the number in their list was fifty-two thousand seven hundred.

³⁵Ephraimites, by their families: Shuthelah, the Shuthalhite family; Becher, the Bachrite family; Tahan, the Tahanite family.

³⁶Shuthalhites: Eran, the Eranite family.

³⁷These were the Ephraimite families; the number in their list was thirty-two thousand five hundred. These were the Josephites, by families.

³⁸ Benjamites, by their families: Bela, the Belaite family; Ashbel, the Ashbelite family; Ahiram, the Ahiramite family;

³⁹ Shupham, the Shuphamite family; Hupham, the Huphamite family.

⁴⁰ Belaites: Ard and Naaman. Ard, the Ardite family; Naaman, the Naamite family.

⁴¹ These were the Benjamite families; the number in their list was forty-five thousand six hundred.

⁴² Danites, by their families: Shuham, the Shuhamite family. These were the families of Dan by their families;

⁴³ the number in the list of the Shuhamite family was sixty-four thousand four hundred.

⁴⁴ Asherites, by their families: Imna, the Imnite family; Ishvi, the Ishvite family; Beriah, the Beriite family.

⁴⁵ Beriite families: Heber, the Heberite family; Malchiel, the Malchielite family.

⁴⁶ The daughter of Asher was named Serah.

⁴⁷ These were the Asherite families; the number in their list was fifty-three thousand four hundred.

⁴⁸ Naphtalites, by their families:
Jahzeel, the Jahzeelite family; Guni, the
Gunitite family;

⁴⁹ Jezer, the Jezerite family; Shillem,
the Shillemite family.

⁵⁰ These were the Naphtalite families
by their families; the number in their list
was forty-five thousand four hundred.

⁵¹ The total in the Israelite lists was
six hundred and one thousand seven
hundred and thirty.

⁵² The LORD said to Moses,

⁵³ The land is to be apportioned among
these tribes according to the number of
names recorded.

⁵⁴ To the larger group give a larger
share of territory and to the smaller a
smaller; a share will be given to each
in proportion to its size as shown in the
census.

⁵⁵ The land, however, is to be
apportioned by lot, the lots being cast for
the territory by families in the father's
line,

⁵⁶ and shares apportioned by lot
between the larger families and the
smaller.

⁵⁷ The lists of Levi, by families: Gershon, the Gershonite family; Kohath, the Kohathite family; Merari, the Merarite family.

⁵⁸ These were the families of Levi: the Libnite, Hebronite, Mahlite, Mushite, and Korahite families. Kohath was the father of Amram;

⁵⁹ Amram's wife was named Jochebed daughter of Levi, born to him in Egypt. She bore to Amram Aaron, Moses, and their sister Miriam.

⁶⁰ Aaron's sons were Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.

⁶¹ Nadab and Abihu died because they had presented illicit fire before the LORD.

⁶² In the lists of Levi the number of males, aged one month and upwards, was twenty-three thousand. They were recorded separately from the other Israelites because no holding was allotted to them among the Israelites.

⁶³ These were the lists prepared by Moses and Eleazar the priest when they made a census of the Israelites in the lowlands of Moab by the Jordan near Jericho.

⁶⁴ Among them there was not a single one of the Israelites whom Moses and Aaron the priest had recorded in the wilderness of Sinai;

⁶⁵ for the LORD had said they should all die in the wilderness. None of them was still living except Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun.

27 ¹ A claim was presented by the daughters of Zelophehad son of Hopher, son of Gilead, son of Machir, son of Manasseh, son of Joseph. Their names were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.

² They appeared before Moses, Eleazar the priest, the chiefs, and all the community at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting, and spoke as follows:

³ Our father died in the wilderness. But he was not among the company of Korah which combined together against the LORD; he died for his own sin and left no sons.

⁴ Is it right that, because he had no son, our father's name should disappear from his family? Give us our holding on the same footing as our father's brothers.

⁵ Moses brought their case before the LORD,

⁶ who said to him,

⁷ The claim of the daughters of Zelophehad is good: you must allow them to inherit on the same footing as their father's brothers, and let their father's holding pass to them.

⁸ Intimate this to the Israelites: When a man dies leaving no son, his holding is to pass to his daughter.

⁹ If he has no daughter, give it to his brothers.

¹⁰ If he has no brothers, give it to his father's brothers.

¹¹ If his father had no brothers, then give possession to the nearest survivor in his family, and he will inherit. This is to be a legal precedent for the Israelites, as the LORD has commanded Moses.

¹² The LORD said to Moses, Go up this mountain, Mount Abarim, and view the land which I have given to the Israelites.

¹³ Then, when you have seen it, you too will be gathered to your father's kin as was your brother Aaron;

¹⁴ for you and Aaron disobeyed my command when the community disputed

with me in the wilderness of Zin: you did not uphold my holiness before them at the waters. These were the waters of Meribah-by-Kadesh in the wilderness of Zin.

¹⁵Then Moses said to the LORD,

¹⁶Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all mankind, appoint a man over the community

¹⁷to go out and come in at their head, to lead them out and bring them home, so that the community of the LORD may not be like sheep without a shepherd.

¹⁸The LORD answered, Take Joshua son of Nun, a man powerful in spirit; lay your hand on him

¹⁹and have him stand before Eleazar the priest and all the community. Give him his commission in their presence,

²⁰and delegate some of your authority to him, so that the entire Israelite community will obey him.

²¹He must present himself before Eleazar the priest, who will obtain a decision for him by consulting the Urim before the LORD; at his word they are to go out and come home, both Joshua and the whole community of the Israelites.

²² Moses did as the LORD had commanded him. He took Joshua, presented him to Eleazar the priest and the whole community,

²³ laid his hands on him, and gave him his commission, as instructed by the LORD.

28 ¹ THE LORD told Moses ² to say to the Israelites: See that my offerings, the food for the food-offering of soothing odour, are presented to me at the appointed time.

³ Tell them: This is the food-offering which you are to present to the LORD: the regular daily whole-offering of two yearling rams without blemish;

⁴ one you must sacrifice in the morning and the second between dusk and dark.

⁵ The grain-offering is to be a tenth of an ephah of flour mixed with a quarter of a hin of oil of pounded olives.

⁶ (This was the regular whole-offering instituted at Mount Sinai, a soothing odour, a food-offering to the LORD.)

⁷ The wine for the proper drink-offering is to be a quarter of a hin to each ram; you are to pour out this strong drink

in the holy place as an offering to the LORD.

⁸You are to sacrifice the second ram between dusk and dark, with the same grain-offering as at the morning sacrifice and with the proper drink-offering; it is a food-offering of soothing odour to the LORD.

⁹For the sabbath day: two yearling rams without blemish, a grain-offering of two tenths of an ephah of flour mixed with oil, and the proper drink-offering.

¹⁰This whole-offering, presented every sabbath, is in addition to the regular whole-offering and the proper drink-offering.

¹¹On the first day of every month present a whole-offering to the LORD, consisting of two young bulls, one ram, and seven yearling rams without blemish.

¹²The grain-offering is to be three tenths of flour mixed with oil for each bull, two tenths of flour mixed with oil for the full-grown ram,

¹³and one tenth of flour mixed with oil for each young ram. This is a whole-

offering, a food-offering of soothing odour to the LORD.

¹⁴The proper drink-offering is half a hin of wine for each bull, a third for the full-grown ram, and a quarter for each young ram. This is the whole-offering to be made, month by month, throughout the year.

¹⁵Further, one he-goat is to be sacrificed as a purification-offering to the LORD, in addition to the regular whole-offering and the proper drink-offering.

¹⁶The Passover of the LORD is to be held on the fourteenth day of the first month,

¹⁷and on the fifteenth day there is to be a pilgrim-feast; for seven days you must eat only unleavened bread.

¹⁸On the first day there must be a sacred assembly; you must not do your daily work.

¹⁹As a food-offering, a whole-offering to the LORD, you will present two young bulls, one ram, and seven yearling rams, all without blemish.

²⁰Offer the proper grain-offerings of flour mixed with oil, three tenths for each bull, two tenths for the ram,

²¹ and one tenth for each of the seven young rams;

²² and as a purification-offering, one he-goat to make expiation for you.

²³ All these you must offer in addition to the morning whole-offering, which is the regular sacrifice.

²⁴ Repeat this daily till the seventh day, presenting food as a food-offering of soothing odour to the LORD, in addition to the regular whole-offering and the proper drink-offering.

²⁵ On the seventh day there will be a sacred assembly; you must not do your daily work.

²⁶ On the day of Firstfruits, when you bring to the LORD your grain-offering from the new crop at your feast of Weeks, there is to be a sacred assembly; you must not do your daily work.

²⁷ Bring a whole-offering as a soothing odour to the LORD: two young bulls, one full-grown ram, and seven yearling rams.

²⁸ The proper grain-offering will be of flour mixed with oil, three tenths for each bull, two tenths for the one ram,

²⁹ and a tenth for each of the seven young rams,

³⁰ and there must be one he-goat as a purification-offering to make expiation for you;

³¹ they must all be without blemish. All these are to be offered in addition to the regular whole-offering with the proper grain-offering and drink-offering.

29 ¹ On the first day of the seventh month hold a sacred assembly; you must not do your daily work. It is to be a day of acclamation.

² You are to sacrifice a whole-offering as a soothing odour to the LORD: one young bull, one full-grown ram, and seven yearling rams, without blemish.

³ Their proper grain-offering is flour mixed with oil, three tenths for the bull, two tenths for the one ram,

⁴ and one tenth for each of the seven young rams,

⁵ and there will be one he-goat as a purification-offering to make expiation for you.

⁶ This is in addition to the monthly whole-offering and the regular whole-offering with their proper grain-offerings

and drink-offerings according to custom; it is a food-offering of soothing odour to the LORD.

⁷On the tenth day of this seventh month hold a sacred assembly, when you are to mortify yourselves. You must do no work.

⁸You are to bring a whole-offering to the LORD as a soothing odour: one young bull, one full-grown ram, and seven yearling rams, everything without blemish.

⁹The proper grain-offering is flour mixed with oil, three tenths for the bull, two tenths for the one ram,

¹⁰and one tenth for each of the seven young rams,

¹¹and there will be one he-goat as a purification-offering, in addition to the expiatory sin-offering and the regular whole-offering, with the proper grain-offering and drink-offering.

¹²On the fifteenth day of the seventh month hold a sacred assembly. You must not do your daily work, but for seven days keep a pilgrim-feast to the LORD.

¹³As a whole-offering, a food-offering of soothing odour to the LORD, you

are to bring thirteen young bulls, two full-grown rams, and fourteen yearling rams, everything without blemish.

¹⁴The proper grain-offering is flour mixed with oil, three tenths for each of the thirteen bulls, two tenths for each of the two rams,

¹⁵and one tenth for each of the fourteen young rams,

¹⁶and there will be one he-goat as a purification-offering, in addition to the regular whole-offering with the proper grain-offering and drink-offering.

¹⁷On the second day: twelve young bulls, two full-grown rams, and fourteen yearling rams, without blemish,

¹⁸together with the proper grain-offerings and drink-offerings for bulls, full-grown rams, and young rams, as prescribed according to their number,

¹⁹and there will be one he-goat as a purification-offering, in addition to the regular whole-offering with the proper grain-offering and drink-offering.

²⁰On the third day: eleven bulls, two full-grown rams, and fourteen yearling rams, without blemish,

²¹ together with the proper grain-offerings and drink-offerings for bulls, full-grown rams, and young rams, as prescribed according to their number,

²² and there will be one he-goat as a purification-offering, in addition to the regular whole-offering with the proper grain-offering and drink-offering.

²³ On the fourth day: ten bulls, two full-grown rams, and fourteen yearling rams, without blemish,

²⁴ together with the proper grain-offerings and drink-offerings for bulls, full-grown rams, and young rams, as prescribed according to their number,

²⁵ and there will be one he-goat as a purification-offering, in addition to the regular whole-offering with the proper grain-offering and drink-offering.

²⁶ On the fifth day: nine bulls, two full-grown rams, and fourteen yearling rams, without blemish,

²⁷ together with the proper grain-offerings and drink-offerings for bulls, full-grown rams, and young rams, as prescribed according to their number,

²⁸ and there will be one he-goat as a purification-offering, in addition to the

regular whole-offering with the proper grain-offering and drink-offering.

²⁹On the sixth day: eight bulls, two full-grown rams, and fourteen yearling rams, without blemish,

³⁰together with the proper grain-offerings and drink-offerings for bulls, full-grown rams, and young rams, as prescribed according to their number,

³¹and there will be one he-goat as a purification-offering, in addition to the regular whole-offering with the proper grain-offering and drink-offering.

³²On the seventh day: seven bulls, two full-grown rams, and fourteen yearling rams, without blemish,

³³together with the proper grain-offerings and drink-offerings for bulls, full-grown rams, and young rams, as prescribed according to their number,

³⁴and there will be one he-goat as a purification-offering, in addition to the regular whole-offering with the proper grain-offering and drink-offering.

³⁵The eighth day keep as a closing ceremony; you must not do your daily work.

³⁶As a whole-offering, a food-offering of soothing odour to the LORD, you must bring one bull, one full-grown ram, and seven yearling rams, without blemish,

³⁷together with the proper grain-offerings and drink-offerings for bulls, full-grown rams, and young rams, as prescribed according to their number,

³⁸and there will be one he-goat as a purification-offering, in addition to the regular whole-offering with the proper grain-offering and drink-offering.

³⁹These are the sacrifices which you are to offer to the LORD at the appointed seasons, in addition to the votive offerings, the freewill-offerings, the whole-offerings, the grain-offerings, the drink-offerings, and the shared-offerings.

⁴⁰Moses passed everything on to the Israelites exactly as the LORD had commanded him.

30¹MOSES spoke to the heads of the Israelite tribes and said: This is the LORD's command:

²When a man makes a vow to the LORD or by an oath puts himself under a binding obligation, he must not break

his word. Every word he has spoken, he must make good.

³When a woman, still young and living in her father's house, makes a vow to the LORD or puts herself under a binding obligation,

⁴if her father hears of it and keeps silence, then any such vow or obligation is valid.

⁵But if her father disallows it when he hears of it, none of her vows or her obligations is valid; the LORD will absolve her, because her father has disallowed it.

⁶If the woman is married when she is under a vow or a binding obligation rashly uttered,

⁷then if her husband hears of it and keeps silence when he hears, her vow or her obligation by which she has bound herself is valid.

⁸If, however, her husband disallows it when he hears of it and repudiates the vow which she has taken upon herself or the rash utterance with which she has bound herself, then the LORD will absolve her.

⁹Every vow by which a widow or a divorced woman has bound herself is valid.

¹⁰But if it is in her husband's house that a woman makes a vow or puts herself under a binding obligation by an oath,

¹¹and her husband, hearing of it, keeps silence and does not disallow it, then every vow and every obligation under which she has put herself is valid;

¹²but if her husband clearly repudiates them when he hears of them, then nothing that she has uttered, whether it is a vow or an obligation, is valid. Her husband has repudiated them, and the LORD will absolve her.

¹³The husband can confirm or repudiate any vow or any oath by which a woman binds herself to mortification.

¹⁴If he maintains silence day after day, he thereby confirms any vow or any obligation under which she has put herself: he confirms them, because he kept silence at the time when he heard them.

¹⁵If he repudiates them some time after he has heard them, he is to be held responsible for her default.

¹⁶Such are the decrees which the LORD gave to Moses concerning a husband and his wife, and a father and his daughter still young and living in her father's house.

31 ¹THE LORD said to Moses,
²You are to exact vengeance for Israel on the Midianites. After that you will be gathered to your father's kin.

³Moses addressed the people: Let men among you be drafted for active service; they are to fall on Midian and exact vengeance in the LORD's name.

⁴Send out a thousand men from each of the tribes of Israel.

⁵So men were called up from the clans of Israel, a thousand from each tribe, twelve thousand in all, drafted for active service.

⁶Moses sent out this force, a thousand from each tribe, with Phinehas son of Eleazar the priest, who was in charge of the sacred equipment and of the trumpets to give the signal for the battle cry.

⁷They made war on Midian as the LORD had commanded Moses, and slew every male.

⁸In addition to those slain in battle they killed the five kings of Midian -- Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba -- and they put to death also Balaam son of Beor.

⁹The Israelites took the Midianites' women and dependants captive, and carried off all their herds, flocks, and property.

¹⁰They set fire to all the towns in which they lived, and all their encampments.

¹¹They collected the spoil and plunder, both man and beast,

¹²and brought it all -- captives, plunder, and spoil -- to Moses and Eleazar the priest and to the whole Israelite community at the camp in the lowlands of Moab by the Jordan over against Jericho.

¹³Moses and Eleazar the priest and all the chiefs of the community went to meet them outside the camp.

¹⁴Moses spoke angrily to the officers of the army, the commanders of units of a thousand and of a hundred, who were returning from the campaign:

¹⁵Have you spared all the women? he said.

¹⁶Remember, it was they who, on Balaam's departure, set about seducing the Israelites into disloyalty to the LORD in the affair at Peor, so that the plague struck the community of the LORD.

¹⁷Now kill every male child, and kill every woman who has had intercourse with a man,

¹⁸but you may spare for yourselves every woman among them who has not had intercourse.

¹⁹You yourselves, every one of you who has taken life and every one who has touched the dead, must remain outside the camp for seven days. Purify yourselves and your captives on the third day and on the seventh day,

²⁰and purify also every piece of clothing, every article made of hide, everything woven of goats hair, and everything made of wood.'

²¹Eleazar the priest said to the soldiers returning from battle, This is a statute of the law which the LORD has ordained through Moses.

²²Anything which will stand fire, whether gold, silver, copper, iron, tin, or lead, you must pass through fire

and then it will be clean. Other things must be purified by the water of ritual purification; whatever cannot stand fire is to be passed through the water.

²³ (31: 22)

²⁴ On the seventh day wash your clothes and be clean; after that you may re-enter the camp.

²⁵ The LORD said to Moses,

²⁶ You and Eleazar the priest and the heads of families in the community must count everything that has been captured, whether human beings or animals,

²⁷ and divide them equally between the fighting men who went on the campaign and the rest of the community.

²⁸ Levy a tribute for the LORD: from the combatants it is to be one out of every five hundred, whether human beings, cattle, donkeys, or sheep,

²⁹ to be taken out of their share and given to Eleazar the priest as a contribution for the LORD.

³⁰ Out of the Israelites share it is to be one out of every fifty taken, whether human beings or cattle, donkeys, or sheep, all the animals, to be given to the

Levites who are in charge of the LORD's Tabernacle.'

³¹ Moses and Eleazar the priest did as the LORD had commanded Moses.

³² These were the spoils which remained of the plunder taken by the fighting men: six hundred and seventy-five thousand sheep,

³³ seventy-two thousand cattle,

³⁴ sixty-one thousand donkeys;

³⁵ and of persons, thirty-two thousand young women who had had no intercourse with a man.

³⁶ The half share of those who took part in the campaign was thus three hundred and thirty-seven thousand five hundred sheep,

³⁷ the tribute for the LORD from these being six hundred and seventy-five;

³⁸ thirty-six thousand cattle, the tribute being seventy-two;

³⁹ thirty thousand five hundred donkeys, the tribute being sixty-one;

⁴⁰ and sixteen thousand persons, the tribute being thirty-two.

⁴¹ Moses gave to Eleazar the priest the tribute levied for the LORD, as the LORD had commanded him.

⁴²The share of the community, being the half share for the Israelites which Moses separated from that of the combatants, was three hundred and thirty-seven thousand five hundred sheep,

⁴³(31: 42)

⁴⁴thirty-six thousand cattle,

⁴⁵thirty thousand five hundred donkeys,

⁴⁶and sixteen thousand persons.

⁴⁷Moses took one out of every fifty, whether man or animal, from the half share of the Israelites, and gave it to the Levites who were in charge of the LORD's Tabernacle, as the LORD had commanded him.

⁴⁸Then the officers who had commanded the forces on the campaign, the commanders of units of a thousand and of a hundred, came to Moses

⁴⁹and said to him, Sir, we have checked the roll of the fighting men who were under our command, and not one of them is missing.

⁵⁰So we have brought the gold ornaments, the armlets, bracelets, signet rings, ear-rings, and pendants that each man has found, to offer them

before the LORD as expiation for our lives.

⁵¹ Moses and Eleazar the priest received this gold from the commanders of units of a thousand and of a hundred, all of it craftsman's work,

⁵² and the gold thus given as a contribution to the LORD weighed sixteen thousand seven hundred and fifty shekels;

⁵³ for every man in the army had taken plunder.

⁵⁴ Moses and Eleazar the priest received the gold from the commanders of units of a thousand and of a hundred, and brought it to the Tent of Meeting that the LORD might remember Israel.

32¹ The Reubenites and the Gadites owned a very large amount of livestock, and when they saw that the land of Jazer and Gilead was good grazing country,

² they came to Moses and Eleazar the priest and to the chiefs of the community and said,

³ Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh, Sebam, Nebo, and Beon,

⁴ the region which the LORD has subdued before the advance of the Israelite community, is grazing country, and livestock is our main possession.

⁵ If we have found favour with you, sir, then let this country be given to us as our possession, and do not make us cross the Jordan.

⁶ Moses demanded, Are your kinsmen to go into battle while you Gadites and Reubenites stay here?

⁷ How dare you discourage the Israelites from crossing over to the land which the LORD has given them?

⁸ This is what your fathers did when I sent them out from Kadesh-barnea to view the land.

⁹ They went up as far as the wadi Eshcol and viewed the land, and on their return so discouraged the Israelites that they would not enter the land which the LORD had given them.

¹⁰ The LORD's anger was aroused that day, and he solemnly swore:

¹¹ Because they have not loyally followed me, none of the men aged twenty or more who came up out of

Egypt will see the land which I promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

¹²This meant all except Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite and Joshua son of Nun; they followed the LORD with their whole heart.

¹³In his anger the LORD made Israel wander in the wilderness for forty years until that whole generation was gone which had done what was wrong in his eyes.

¹⁴You are now following in your fathers footsteps, a fresh brood of sinful men to fire the LORD's anger once more against Israel.

¹⁵If you refuse to follow him, he will again abandon this whole people in the wilderness and you will be the cause of their destruction.'

¹⁶Presently they came forward with this offer: We shall build pens for our livestock here and towns for our dependants.

¹⁷Then we can be drafted as a fighting force to go at the head of the Israelites until we have brought them to their destination. Meanwhile our dependants

can live in the fortified towns, safe from the natives of the land.

¹⁸We shall not return to our homes until every Israelite is settled in possession of his own holding;

¹⁹we shall not claim any share of the land with them over the Jordan and beyond, because our holding has already been allotted to us on this side, east of Jordan.

²⁰Moses answered, If you stand by your promise, if in the presence of the LORD you are drafted for battle,

²¹and the whole draft crosses the Jordan in front of the LORD and remains there until the LORD has driven out his enemies,

²²and the land has been subdued before him, then you may come back and be quit of your obligation to the LORD and to Israel; and this land will be your holding in the sight of the LORD.

²³But I warn you, if you fail to do all this, you will have sinned against the LORD, and your sin will find you out.

²⁴Build towns for your dependants and folds for your sheep; but carry out your promise.

²⁵The Gadites and Reubenites answered Moses, Sir, we are your servants and shall do as you command.

²⁶Our dependants and wives, our flocks and all our animals will remain here in the towns of Gilead;

²⁷but we, all who have been drafted for active service with the LORD, shall cross the river and fight, according to your command.

²⁸Moses gave instructions to Eleazar the priest and Joshua son of Nun and to the heads of the families in the Israelite tribes.

²⁹He said, If the Gadites and Reubenites, all who have been drafted for battle before the LORD, cross the Jordan with you, then when the land falls into your hands, you are to give them Gilead for their holding.

³⁰But if they fail to cross as drafted troops with you, then they will have to acquire land alongside you in Canaan.

³¹The Gadites and Reubenites said in response, Sir, the LORD has spoken, and we shall obey.

³²Once we have been drafted, we shall cross over before the LORD into Canaan;

but we shall have our holding here on this side of Jordan.

³³ So Moses assigned to the Gadites, the Reubenites, and half the tribe of Manasseh son of Joseph the kingdoms of Sihon king of the Amorites and King Og of Bashan, the whole land with its towns and the country round them.

³⁴ The Gadites rebuilt Dibon, Ataroth, Aroer,

³⁵ Atroth-shophan, Jazer, Jogbehah,

³⁶ Beth-nimrah, and Beth-haran, all of them fortified towns with folds for their sheep.

³⁷ The Reubenites rebuilt Heshbon, Elealeh, Kiriathaim,

³⁸ Nebo, Baal-meon (whose names were changed), and Sibmah; these were the names they gave to the towns they restored.

³⁹ The sons of Machir son of Manasseh invaded Gilead, took it, and drove out the Amorite inhabitants;

⁴⁰ Moses then assigned Gilead to Machir son of Manasseh, and he made his home there.

⁴¹ Jair son of Manasseh attacked and took the tent-villages of Ham and called them Havvoth-jair.

⁴² Nobah attacked and took Kenath and its villages, and gave it his own name, Nobah.

33¹ THESE are the stages in the journey of the Israelites, when they were led by Moses and Aaron in their tribal hosts out of Egypt.

² Moses recorded their starting-points stage by stage as the LORD commanded him. These are their stages from one starting-point to the next.

³ The Israelites left Rameses on the fifteenth day of the first month, the day after the Passover; they marched out defiantly in full view of all the Egyptians,

⁴ while the Egyptians were burying all the firstborn struck down by the LORD as a judgement on their gods.

⁵ The Israelites left Rameses and encamped at Succoth.

⁶ They left Succoth and encamped at Etham on the edge of the wilderness.

⁷ They left Etham, turned back near Pi-hahiroth on the east of Baal-zephon, and encamped before Migdol.

⁸They left Pi-hahiroth, and passed through the Sea into the wilderness; they marched for three days through the wilderness of Etham, and encamped at Marah.

⁹They left Marah and came to Elim; in Elim there were twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees, so they encamped there.

¹⁰They left Elim and encamped by the Red Sea.

¹¹They left the Red Sea and encamped in the wilderness of Sin.

¹²They left the wilderness of Sin and encamped at Dophkah.

¹³They left Dophkah and encamped at Alush.

¹⁴They left Alush and encamped at Rephidim, where there was no water for the people to drink.

¹⁵They left Rephidim and encamped in the wilderness of Sinai.

¹⁶They left the wilderness of Sinai and encamped at Kibroth-hattaavah.

¹⁷They left Kibroth-hattaavah and encamped at Hazeroth.

¹⁸They left Hazeroth and encamped at Rithmah.

¹⁹They left Rithmah and encamped at Rimmon-parez.

²⁰They left Rimmon-parez and encamped at Libnah.

²¹They left Libnah and encamped at Rissah.

²²They left Rissah and encamped at Kehelathah.

²³They left Kehelathah and encamped at Mount Shapher.

²⁴They left Mount Shapher and encamped at Haradah.

²⁵They left Haradah and encamped at Makheloth.

²⁶They left Makheloth and encamped at Tahath.

²⁷They left Tahath and encamped at Tarah.

²⁸They left Tarah and encamped at Mithcah.

²⁹They left Mithcah and encamped at Hashmonah.

³⁰They left Hashmonah and encamped at Moseroth.

³¹They left Moseroth and encamped at Bene-jaakan.

³²They left Bene-jaakan and encamped at Hor-haggidgad.

³³They left Hor-haggidgad and encamped at Jotbathah.

³⁴They left Jotbathah and encamped at Ebronah.

³⁵They left Ebronah and encamped at Ezion-geber.

³⁶They left Ezion-geber and encamped in the wilderness of Zin, that is Kadesh.

³⁷They left Kadesh and encamped on Mount Hor on the frontier of Edom.

³⁸Aaron the priest went up Mount Hor at the command of the LORD and there he died, on the first day of the fifth month in the fortieth year after the Israelites came out of Egypt;

³⁹when he died there he was a hundred and twenty-three years old.

⁴⁰The Canaanite king of Arad, who lived in the Canaanite Negeb, heard that the Israelites were coming.

⁴¹They left Mount Hor and encamped at Zalmonah.

⁴²They left Zalmonah and encamped at Punon.

⁴³They left Punon and encamped at Oboth.

⁴⁴They left Oboth and encamped at Iye-abarim on the frontier of Moab.

⁴⁵They left Iyim and encamped at Dibon-gad.

⁴⁶They left Dibon-gad and encamped at Almon-diblathaim.

⁴⁷They left Almon-diblathaim and encamped in the mountains of Abarim east of Nebo.

⁴⁸They left the mountains of Abarim and encamped in the lowlands of Moab by the Jordan near Jericho.

⁴⁹Their camp beside the Jordan extended from Beth-jeshimoth to Abel-shittim in the lowlands of Moab.

⁵⁰In the lowlands of Moab by the Jordan opposite Jericho the LORD told Moses

⁵¹to say this to the Israelites: You will soon be crossing the Jordan to enter Canaan.

⁵²You must drive out all its inhabitants as you advance, destroy all their stone carved figures and their images of cast metal, and lay their shrines in ruins.

⁵³You are to take possession of the land and settle there, for I have given the land for you to occupy.

⁵⁴You must divide it by lot among your families, each taking its own share of territory, the larger family a larger share

and the small family a smaller. It will be assigned to them according to the fall of the lot, each tribe and family taking its own territory.

⁵⁵But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land as you advance, any whom you leave in possession will become like a barbed hook in your eye and a thorn in your side. They will continually dispute your possession of the land,

⁵⁶and what I meant to do to them I shall do to you.

34 ¹The LORD said to Moses,
²Give these instructions to the Israelites: Soon you will be entering Canaan. This is the land assigned to you as your portion, the land of Canaan thus defined by its frontiers.

³Your southern border will start from the wilderness of Zin, where it marches with Edom, and run southwards from the end of the Dead Sea on its eastern side.

⁴It will then turn from the south up the ascent of Akrabbim and pass by Zin, and its southern limit will be Kadesh-barnea. It will proceed by Hazar-addar to Azmon

⁵and from Azmon turn towards the wadi of Egypt, and its limit will be the sea.

⁶Your western frontier will be the Great Sea and the seaboard; this will be your frontier to the west.

⁷This will be your northern frontier: you will draw a line from the Great Sea to Mount Hor

⁸and from Mount Hor to Lebo-hamath, and the limit of the frontier will be Zedad.

⁹From there it will run to Ziphron, and its limit will be Hazar-enan; this will be your frontier to the north.

¹⁰To the east you will draw a line from Hazar-enan to Shepham;

¹¹it will run down from Shepham to Riblah east of Ain, continuing until it strikes the ridge east of the sea of Kinnereth.

¹²The frontier will then run down to the Jordan and its limit will be the Dead Sea. The land defined by these frontiers will be your land.

¹³Moses gave these instructions to the Israelites: This is the land which you are to assign by lot as holdings; it is the land

which the LORD has commanded to be given to nine tribes and a half tribe.

¹⁴For the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh have already taken possession of their holdings, family by family.

¹⁵These two and a half tribes have received their holding here beyond the Jordan, east of Jericho, towards the sunrise.

¹⁶The LORD said to Moses,

¹⁷These are the men who are to assign the land for you: Eleazar the priest and Joshua son of Nun.

¹⁸You must also take one chief from each tribe to assign the land.

¹⁹These are their names: from the tribe of Judah: Caleb son of Jephunneh;

²⁰from the tribe of Simeon: Samuel son of Ammihud;

²¹from the tribe of Benjamin: Elidad son of Kislou;

²²from the tribe of Dan: the chief Bukki son of Jogli;

²³from the Josephites: from Manasseh, the chief Hanniel son of Ephod;

²⁴and from Ephraim, the chief Kemuel son of Shiphtan;

²⁵ from Zebulun: the chief Elizaphan son of Parnach;

²⁶ from Issachar: the chief Paltiel son of Azzan;

²⁷ from Asher: the chief Ahihud son of Shelomi;

²⁸ from Naphtali: the chief Pedahel son of Ammihud.

²⁹ These were the men whom the LORD appointed to assign the holdings in the land of Canaan.

35 ¹ THE LORD spoke to Moses in the lowlands of Moab by the Jordan near Jericho. He said:

² Tell the Israelites to set aside towns in their holdings as homes for the Levites, and give them also the common land surrounding the towns.

³ They are to live in the towns, and keep their animals, their herds, and all their livestock on the common land.

⁴ The land of the towns which you give the Levites will extend from the centre of the town outwards for a thousand cubits in each direction.

⁵ Starting from the town the eastern boundary will measure two thousand cubits, the southern two thousand,

the western two thousand, and the northern two thousand, with the town in the centre. They will have this as the common land adjoining their towns.

⁶When you give the Levites their towns, six of them are to be cities of refuge, in which the homicide may take sanctuary; and you are to give them forty-two other towns.

⁷The total number of towns to be given to the Levites, each with its common land, is forty-eight.

⁸When you set aside these towns out of the territory of the Israelites, you should allot more from a larger tribe and less from a smaller; each tribe must give towns to the Levites in proportion to the portion assigned to it.

⁹The LORD told Moses

¹⁰to say to the Israelites: When you cross the Jordan into Canaan,

¹¹you are to designate certain cities to be places of refuge, in which the homicide who has inadvertently killed a man may take sanctuary.

¹²These cities will be places of refuge from the dead man's next-of-kin, so that

the homicide is not put to death without a trial before the community.

¹³The cities appointed as places of refuge are to be six in number,

¹⁴three east of the Jordan and three in Canaan.

¹⁵These six cities will be places of refuge, so that any man who has taken life inadvertently, whether he be Israelite, resident alien, or temporary settler, may take sanctuary in one of them.

¹⁶If anyone strikes his victim with anything made of iron, and he dies, then he is a murderer: the murderer must be put to death.

¹⁷If a man has a stone in his hand capable of causing death and strikes another man and he dies, he is a murderer: the murderer must be put to death.

¹⁸If a man has a wooden thing in his hand capable of causing death, and strikes another man and he dies, he is a murderer: the murderer must be put to death.

¹⁹The dead man's next-of-kin is to put the murderer to death; he is to put him to death because he attacked his victim.

²⁰If the homicide sets upon a man openly and deliberately or aims a missile at him of set purpose and he dies,

²¹or if in enmity he falls upon him with his bare hands and he dies, then the assailant must be put to death; he is a murderer. The next-of-kin is to put the murderer to death because he attacked his victim.

²²If the homicide has attacked anyone on the spur of the moment, not being his enemy,

²³or has hurled a missile at him not of set purpose, or if without looking he has thrown a stone capable of causing death and it hits someone, then if that person dies, provided the attacker was not his enemy and was not harming him of set purpose,

²⁴the community is to judge between the attacker and the next-of-kin according to these rules.

²⁵The community must protect the homicide from the vengeance of the kinsman and take him back to the city of

refuge where he had taken sanctuary. He must stay there till the death of the duly anointed high priest.

²⁶If the homicide ever goes beyond the boundaries of the city where he has taken sanctuary,

²⁷and the next-of-kin finds him outside and kills him, then the next-of-kin is not guilty of murder.

²⁸The homicide must remain in the city of refuge till the death of the high priest; after the death of the high priest he may go back to his own holding.

²⁹These will be for you legal precedents for all time wherever you live.

³⁰The homicide may be put to death as a murderer only on the testimony of witnesses; the testimony of a single witness is not enough to bring him to his death.

³¹You should not accept payment for the life of a homicide guilty of a capital offence; he must be put to death.

³²You should not accept a payment from a man who has taken sanctuary in a city of refuge, allowing him to go back before the death of the high priest and live at large.

³³You must not defile your land by bloodshed. Blood defiles the land; no expiation can be made on behalf of the land for blood shed on it, except by the blood of him who shed it.

³⁴You must not make the land which you inhabit unclean, the land in which I dwell; for I, the LORD, dwell among the Israelites.

36 ¹THE heads of the fathers' families of Gilead son of Machir, son of Manasseh, one of the families of the sons of Joseph, approached Moses and the chiefs, heads of families in Israel, and addressed them.

²The LORD commanded you, sir, they said, to distribute the land by lot to the Israelites, and you were also commanded to give the portion of our brother Zelophehad to his daughters.

³Now if any of them should be married to a husband from another Israelite tribe, her share would be lost to the portion of our fathers and be added to that of the tribe into which she marries, and so part of our allotted portion would be lost.

⁴When the jubilee year comes round in Israel, her share would be added to the share of the tribe into which she marries, and it would be permanently lost to the portion of our fathers' tribe.'

⁵Instructed by the LORD, Moses gave the Israelites this ruling: The tribe of the sons of Joseph is right.

⁶This is the LORD's command for the daughters of Zelophehad: They may marry whom they please, but only within a family of their father's tribe.

⁷No portion in Israel shall pass from one tribe to another, but every Israelite shall retain his father's portion.

⁸Any woman of an Israelite tribe who is an heiress may marry a man from any family in her father's tribe. Thus each of the Israelites shall retain the portion of his forefathers.

⁹No portion shall pass from one tribe to another, but every tribe in Israel shall retain its own share.

¹⁰The daughters of Zelophehad acted in accordance with the LORD's command to Moses;

¹¹ Mahlah, Tirzah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Noah, the daughters of Zelophehad, married sons of their father's brothers.

¹² They married within the families of the sons of Manasseh son of Joseph, and their portion remained with the tribe of their father's family.

¹³ These are the commandments and the decrees which the LORD issued to the Israelites through Moses in the lowlands of Moab by the Jordan near Jericho.

Deuteronomy

1 ¹THESE are the words that Moses addressed to all Israel in the wilderness beyond the Jordan, that is to say, in the Arabah opposite Suph, between Paran on the one side and Tophel, Laban, Hazeroth, and Dizahab on the other.

²(The journey from Horeb through the hill-country of Seir to Kadesh-barnea takes eleven days.)

³On the first day of the eleventh month of the fortieth year, Moses repeated to the Israelites all the commands that the LORD had given him for them.

⁴This was after the defeat of Sihon king of the Amorites who ruled in Heshbon, and the defeat at Edrei of King Og of Bashan who ruled in Ashtaroth,

⁵and it was beyond the Jordan, in Moab, that Moses resolved to expound this law. These were his words.

⁶The LORD our God speaking to us at Horeb said, You have stayed at this mountain long enough;

⁷ up, break camp, and make for the hill-country of the Amorites, and pass on to all their neighbours in the Arabah, in the hill-country, in the Shephelah, in the Negeb, and on the coast: in short, all Canaan and the Lebanon as far as the Great River, the Euphrates.

⁸ I have laid the land open before you; go in and occupy it, the land which the LORD swore to give to your forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and to their descendants after them.

⁹ At that time I said to you, You are too heavy a burden for me to bear unaided.

¹⁰ The LORD your God has so increased you that today you are as numerous as the stars in the heavens.

¹¹ May the LORD, the God of your forefathers, increase your numbers a thousand times and bless you as he promised!

¹² How can I bear unaided the heavy burden you are to me, and put up with your complaints?

¹³ Choose men of wisdom, understanding, and repute for each of your tribes, and I shall set them in authority over you.

¹⁴Your answer was, What you propose to do is good.

¹⁵So I took leading men of your tribes, men of wisdom and repute, and set them in authority over you, some as commanders over units of a thousand, of a hundred, of fifty, or of ten, and others as officers, for each of your tribes.

¹⁶At that time also I gave your judges this command: Hear the cases that arise among your kinsmen and judge fairly between one person and another, whether fellow-countryman or resident alien.

¹⁷You must be impartial and listen to high and low alike: have no fear of your fellows, for judgement belongs to God. But should any case be too difficult for you, refer it to me and I shall hear it.

¹⁸At the same time I instructed you in all your duties.

¹⁹We set out from Horeb, in obedience to the orders of the LORD our God, and made our way through that vast and terrible wilderness, as you found it to be, on the way to the hill-country of the Amorites. When we came to Kadesh-barnea,

²⁰I said to you, You have reached the hill-country of the Amorites which the LORD our God is giving us.

²¹The LORD your God has now laid the land open before you. Go forward and occupy it in fulfilment of the promise which the LORD the God of your forefathers made you; do not be afraid or discouraged.

²²But you all came to me and said, Let us send men ahead to explore the country and report back to us about the route we should take and the towns we shall find.

²³I approved of the plan and picked twelve of your number, one from each tribe.

²⁴They set out and made their way up into the hill-country which they reconnoitred as far as the wadi of Eshcol.

²⁵They collected samples of the fruit of the country to bring back to us, and in their report they said: It is a rich land that the LORD our God is giving us.

²⁶However, you refused to go up, rebelling against the command of the LORD your God,

²⁷ muttering treason in your tents and saying, It was because the LORD hated us that he brought us out of Egypt to hand us over to the Amorites to be wiped out.

²⁸ What shall we find up there? Our kinsmen have discouraged us by their report of a people bigger and taller than we are, and of great cities with fortifications towering to the sky. Besides, they saw the descendants of the Anakim there.

²⁹ I said to you, You must not dread them or be afraid.

³⁰ The LORD your God, who goes at your head, will fight for you; he will do again what you saw him do for you in Egypt

³¹ and in the wilderness. You saw there how the LORD your God carried you all the way to this place, as a father carries his son.

³² In spite of this you persisted in not trusting the LORD your God,

³³ who went ahead on the journey to find a place for your camp. He went in fire by night and in a cloud by day to show you the route you should take.

³⁴When the LORD heard your complaints, he was angry and solemnly swore:

³⁵Not one of these men, this wicked generation, will see the good land which I swore to give your forefathers,

³⁶none except Caleb son of Jephunneh; he will see it, and to him and his descendants I shall give the land on which he has set foot, because he followed the LORD loyally.

³⁷On your account the LORD was angry with me also and said, Neither will you yourself go in there;

³⁸only Joshua son of Nun, who is in attendance on you, will go. Support him, for he will put Israel in possession of that land.

³⁹Your dependants who, you thought, would become spoils of war, and your children who do not yet know good from evil, they will enter; I shall give it to them, and they are to occupy it.

⁴⁰You yourselves must turn and set out for the wilderness making towards the Red Sea.

⁴¹You answered me, We have sinned against the LORD; we ourselves shall

go up and make the attack just as the LORD our God commanded us. Every man of you, thinking it an easy thing to invade the hill-country, fastened on his weapons.

⁴²But the LORD said to me, Warn them not to go up and fight, for I shall not be with them, and the enemy will defeat them.

⁴³I told you this, but you would not listen; you rebelled against the LORD's command and defiantly went up to the hill-country.

⁴⁴Then the Amorites living there came out against you and swarmed after you like bees; they crushed you at Hormah in Seir.

⁴⁵When you came back you wept before the LORD, but he would not hear you or listen to you.

⁴⁶That is why you remained in Kadesh as long as you did.

2¹When we turned and set out for the wilderness, making towards the Red Sea as the LORD had instructed me, we spent many days marching round the hill-country of Seir.

²Then the LORD said to me,

³You have been marching round these hills long enough; turn northwards.

⁴Give the people this charge: You are about to pass through the territory of your kinsmen, the descendants of Esau, who live in Seir. Although they are afraid of you, be very careful

⁵not to quarrel with them; for I shall not give you any of their land, not so much as a foot's breadth: I have given the hill-country of Seir to Esau as a possession.

⁶You may purchase food from them to eat and buy water to drink.

⁷The LORD your God has blessed you in everything you have undertaken. He has watched over your journey through this great wilderness; these forty years the LORD your God has been with you, and you have gone short of nothing.

⁸So we went on past our kinsmen, the descendants of Esau who live in Seir, and along the road of the Arabah which comes from Elath and Ezion-geber, and we turned and went in the direction of the wilderness of Moab.

⁹There the LORD warned me, Do not harass the Moabites or provoke them

to battle, for I shall not give you any of their land as a possession. I have given Ar to the descendants of Lot as a possession.

¹⁰(Formerly the Emim lived there --

¹¹a great and numerous people, as tall as the Anakim. The Rephaim also were reckoned as Anakim, but the Moabites called them Emim.

¹²The Horites lived in Seir at one time, but the descendants of Esau occupied their territory: they exterminated them as they advanced and settled in their place, just as Israel did in the territory which the LORD gave them.)

¹³Come, cross the wadi of the Zared, said the LORD. So we went across.

¹⁴The journey from Kadesh-barnea to the crossing of the Zared lasted thirty-eight years, until the entire generation of fighting men had passed away, as the LORD had sworn that they would.

¹⁵The LORD's hand was against them, and he rooted them out of the camp to the last man.

¹⁶When the last of the fighting men among the people had died,

¹⁷ the LORD spoke to me.

¹⁸ Today, he said, you are to cross by Ar which lies on the frontier of Moab,

¹⁹ and when you reach the territory of the Ammonites, you must not harass them or provoke them to battle, for I shall not give you any Ammonite land as a possession; I have assigned it to the descendants of Lot.

²⁰ (This also is reckoned as the territory of the Rephaim, who lived there at one time; but the Ammonites called them Zamzummim.

²¹ They were a great and numerous people, as tall as the Anakim, but the LORD destroyed them as the Ammonites advanced and occupied their territory,

²² just as he had done for Esau's descendants who lived in Seir. As they advanced, he destroyed the Horites so that they occupied their territory and took possession instead of them: so it is to this day.

²³ It was Caphtorites from Caphtor who destroyed the Avvim who lived in the hamlets near Gaza, and settled in the land instead of them.)

²⁴ Come, move on and cross the wadi of the Arnon, for I have delivered Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon, and his territory into your hands. Begin the conquest; engage him in battle.

²⁵ Today I shall start to put the fear and dread of you into all the peoples under heaven; if they so much as hear a rumour of you, they will quake and tremble before you.

²⁶ From the wilderness of Kedemoth I sent envoys to King Sihon of Heshbon with the following overtures:

²⁷ Grant us passage through your country: we shall keep to the highway, trespassing neither to right nor to left,

²⁸ and we shall pay you the full price for the food we eat and the water we drink.

²⁹ The descendants of Esau who live in Seir granted us passage, and so did the Moabites in Ar. We shall simply pass through your land on foot, until we cross the Jordan to the land which the LORD our God is giving us.

³⁰ But King Sihon of Heshbon refused to grant us passage; for the LORD your God had made him stubborn and obstinate, in

order that he and his land might become subject to you, as it is to this day.

³¹ The LORD said to me, Come, I have begun to deliver Sihon and his territory into your hands. Begin the conquest; occupy his land.

³² When Sihon with all his people marched out to oppose us in battle at Jahaz,

³³ the LORD our God delivered him into our hands; we killed him along with his sons and all his army.

³⁴ We captured all his towns at that time and put to death under solemn ban everyone in them, men, women, and dependants; we left no survivors.

³⁵ We carried off the cattle as spoil and plundered the towns we captured.

³⁶ From Aroer on the edge of the wadi of the Arnon and the town in the wadi, as far as Gilead, no town had walls too lofty for us; the LORD our God laid everything open to us.

³⁷ But you avoided the territory of the Ammonites, both the parts along the wadi of the Jabbok and their towns in the hills, thus fulfilling all that the LORD our God had commanded.

3¹ Next we turned and advanced along the road to Bashan. King Og of Bashan came out with his whole army to give battle at Edrei.

²The LORD assured me, Do not be afraid of him, for I have delivered him into your hands, with all his people and his land. Deal with him as you dealt with King Sihon of the Amorites who lived in Heshbon.

³So the LORD our God also delivered King Og of Bashan into our hands, with all his people. We slaughtered them and left him no survivor,

⁴and at the same time we captured all his towns; there was not one town that we did not take from them. In all we captured sixty towns, the whole region of Argob, the kingdom of Og in Bashan;

⁵all these were fortified towns with high walls and barred gates; in addition we took a great many open settlements.

⁶In every town we put to death under solemn ban all the men, women, and dependants, as we did to King Sihon of Heshbon.

⁷All the cattle and the spoil from the towns we carried off for ourselves.

⁸At that time we seized from the two Amorite kings beyond the Jordan the territory that runs from the wadi of the Arnon to Mount Hermon

⁹(the mountain that the Sidonians call Sirion and the Amorites Senir),

¹⁰all the towns of the tableland, and the whole of Gilead and Bashan as far as Salcah and Edrei, towns in the kingdom of Og in Bashan.

¹¹(Only King Og of Bashan remained, as the sole survivor of the Rephaim. His sarcophagus of basalt was over thirteen feet long and six feet wide, and it may still be seen in the Ammonite town of Rabbah.)

¹²When at that time we occupied this territory, I assigned to the Reubenites and Gadites the land beyond Aroer on the wadi of the Arnon and half the hill-country of Gilead with its towns,

¹³while the rest of Gilead and the whole of Bashan the kingdom of Og, all the region of Argob, I assigned to half the tribe of Manasseh. (All Bashan used to be called the land of the Rephaim.

¹⁴Jair son of Manasseh captured all the region of Argob as far as the

Geshurite and Maacathite border. There are tent-villages in Bashan still bearing his name, Havvoth-jair.)

¹⁵To Machir I assigned Gilead,

¹⁶and to the Reubenites and the Gadites I assigned land from Gilead to the wadi of the Arnon, that is to the middle of the wadi; its territory ran to the wadi of the Jabbok, the Ammonite frontier,

¹⁷and included the Arabah, with the Jordan and land adjacent, from Kinnereth to the sea of the Arabah, that is the Dead Sea, below the watershed of Pisgah on the east.

¹⁸At that time I gave you this command: Since the LORD your God has given you this land to occupy, let all your fighting men be drafted and cross at the head of their fellow-Israelites.

¹⁹Only your wives and dependants and your livestock -- I know you have much livestock -- may remain in the towns I have given you.

²⁰This you are to do until the LORD gives your kinsfolk security as he has given it to you, and until they too occupy the land which the LORD your God is

giving them on the other side of the Jordan; then you may each return to the possession I have given you.

²¹ Also at that time I gave Joshua this charge: You have seen for yourself all that the LORD your God has done to these two kings; he will do the same to all the kingdoms into which you are about to cross.

²² Do not be afraid of them, for the LORD your God himself will fight for you.

²³ It was then I made this plea to the LORD:

²⁴ LORD God, I said, you have begun to show to your servant your great power and your strong hand: what god is there in heaven or on earth who can match your works and mighty deeds?

²⁵ Let me cross over, I beg, and see that good land which lies on the other side of the Jordan, and the fine hill-country and the Lebanon.

²⁶ But because of you the LORD angrily brushed me aside and would not listen. Enough! he answered. Say no more about this.

²⁷ Go to the top of Pisgah and look west and north, south and east; look well at

what you see, for you will not cross this river Jordan.

²⁸Give Joshua his commission, support and strengthen him, for he will lead this people across, and he will put them in possession of the land you see before you.

²⁹So we remained in the glen opposite Beth-peor.

4¹AND now, Israel, listen to the statutes and laws which I am about to teach you; obey them, so that you may live and go in to occupy the land which the LORD the God of your forefathers is giving you.

²You must not add anything to the charge I decree or take anything away from it; you must carry out the commandments of the LORD your God which I lay upon you.

³You saw for yourselves what the LORD did at Baal-peor; the LORD your God destroyed from among you everyone who went over to the Baal of Peor,

⁴but you who held fast to the LORD your God are all alive today.

⁵I have taught you statutes and laws, as the LORD my God commanded me;

see that you keep them when you go into and occupy the land.

⁶Observe them carefully, for thereby you will display your wisdom and understanding to other peoples. When they hear about all these statutes, they will say, What a wise and understanding people this great nation is!

⁷What great nation has a god close at hand as the LORD our God is close to us whenever we call to him?

⁸What great nation is there whose statutes and laws are so just, as is all this code of laws which I am setting before you today?

⁹But take care: keep careful watch on yourselves so that you do not forget the things that you have seen with your own eyes; do not let them pass from your minds as long as you live, but teach them to your children and to your children's children.

¹⁰You must never forget the day when you stood before the LORD your God at Horeb, and the LORD said to me, Assemble the people for me; I shall make them hear my words and they will learn to fear me all their lives in the

land, and they will teach their children to do so.

¹¹ Then you came near and stood at the foot of the mountain, which was ablaze with fire to the very skies, and there was dark cloud and thick mist.

¹² When the LORD spoke to you from the heart of the fire you heard a voice speaking, but you saw no form; there was only a voice.

¹³ He announced to you the terms of his covenant, bidding you observe the Ten Commandments, which he wrote on two stone tablets.

¹⁴ At the same time the LORD charged me to teach you statutes and laws which you should observe in the land into which you are about to cross to occupy it.

¹⁵ On the day when the LORD spoke to you from the heart of the fire at Horeb, you saw no form of any kind; so take good care

¹⁶ not to fall into the infamous practice of making for yourselves carved images in the form of any statue of a man or woman,

¹⁷ or of any animal on earth or bird that flies in the air,

¹⁸or of anything that creeps on the ground or of any fish in the waters under the earth.

¹⁹Nor must you raise your eyes to the heavens and look up to the sun, the moon, and the stars, all the host of heaven, and be led astray to bow down to them in worship; the LORD your God assigned these for all the peoples everywhere under heaven.

²⁰But you are the people whom the LORD brought out of Egypt, from the smelting furnace, and took for his own possession, as you are to this day.

²¹The LORD was angry with me on your account and solemnly swore that I should not cross the Jordan or enter the good land which the LORD your God is about to give you as your holding.

²²I myself am to die in this country; I shall not cross the Jordan, but you are about to cross and occupy that good land.

²³Take care that you do not forget the covenant which the LORD your God made with you; do not make for yourselves a carved image in any form; the LORD your God has forbidden it.

²⁴For the LORD your God is a devouring fire, a jealous God.

²⁵When you have children and grandchildren and have grown old in the land, if you then fall into the infamous practice of making carved images in any form, doing what is wrong in the eyes of the LORD your God and provoking him to anger,

²⁶I summon heaven and earth to witness against you this day: you will soon perish from upon the land which you are to occupy after crossing the Jordan. You will not enjoy long life in it; you will be swept away.

²⁷The LORD will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations to which the LORD will lead you.

²⁸There you will serve gods made by human hands out of wood and stone, gods that can neither see nor hear, eat nor smell.

²⁹But should you from there seek the LORD your God, you will find him, if it is with all your heart and soul that you search.

³⁰When you are in distress and all those things happen to you, you will in days to come turn back to the LORD your God and obey him.

³¹The LORD your God is a merciful God; he will never fail you or destroy you; he will not forget the covenant with your forefathers which he guaranteed by oath.

³²Search into days gone by, long before your time, beginning at the day when God created man on earth; search from one end of heaven to the other, and ask if any deed as mighty as this has been seen or heard.

³³Did any people ever hear the voice of a god speaking from the heart of the fire, as you heard it, and remain alive?

³⁴Or did a god ever attempt to come and take a nation for himself away from another nation, with a challenge, and with signs, portents, and wars, with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, and with great deeds of terror, like all you saw the LORD your God do for you in Egypt?

³⁵You have had sure proof that the LORD is God; there is none other.

³⁶From heaven he let you hear his voice for your instruction, and on earth he let you see his great fire, and from the heart of the fire you heard his words.

³⁷Because he loved your fathers and chose their children after them, he in his own person brought you out of Egypt by his great strength,

³⁸so that he might drive out before you nations greater and more powerful than you and bring you in to give you their land in possession, as it is to this day.

³⁹Be sure to bear in mind this day that the LORD is God in heaven above and on earth below; there is none other.

⁴⁰You must keep his statutes and his commands which I give you today; so all will be well with you and with your children after you, and you will enjoy long life in the land which the LORD your God is giving you for all time.

⁴¹Then Moses set apart three cities in the east beyond the Jordan

⁴²to be places of refuge for the homicide who kills someone without malice aforethought. If he took sanctuary in one of these cities his life would be safe.

⁴³The cities were: Bezer-in-the-wilderness on the tableland for the Reubenites, Ramoth in Gilead for the Gadites, and Golan in Bashan for the Manassites.

⁴⁴This is the code of laws which Moses laid down for the Israelites.

⁴⁵These are the precepts, the statutes, and the laws which Moses proclaimed to the Israelites, when they had come out of Egypt

⁴⁶and were beyond the Jordan in the valley opposite Beth-peor in the land of Sihon king of the Amorites who lived in Heshbon. Moses and the Israelites had defeated him when they came out of Egypt

⁴⁷and had occupied his territory and the territory of King Og of Bashan, the two Amorite kings east of the Jordan.

⁴⁸The territory ran from Aroer on the wadi of the Arnon to Mount Sirion, that is Hermon;

⁴⁹it included all the Arabah beyond the Jordan, as far as the sea of the Arabah below the watershed of Pisgah.

5¹MOSES summoned all Israel and said to them: Israel, listen to the

statutes and the laws which I proclaim to you this day. Learn them, and be careful to observe them.

²The LORD our God made a covenant with us at Horeb.

³It was not with our forefathers that the LORD made this covenant, but with us, all of us who are alive and are here this day.

⁴The LORD spoke with you face to face on the mountain out of the heart of the fire.

⁵I stood between the LORD and you at that time to report the words of the LORD; for you were afraid of the fire and did not go up the mountain. The LORD said:

⁶I am the LORD your God who brought you out of Egypt, out of that land where you lived as slaves.

⁷You must have no other gods beside me.

⁸You are not to make a carved image for yourself, nor the likeness of anything in the heavens above, or on the earth below, or in the waters under the earth.

⁹You must not worship or serve them; for I am the LORD your God, a jealous

God, punishing children for the sins of their parents to the third and fourth generations of those who reject me.

¹⁰But I keep faith with thousands, those who love me and keep my commandments.

¹¹You shall not make wrong use of the name of the LORD your God; the LORD will not leave unpunished anyone who misuses his name.

¹²Observe the sabbath day and keep it holy as the LORD your God commanded you.

¹³You have six days to labour and do all your work;

¹⁴but the seventh day there is a sabbath of the LORD your God; that day you must not do any work, neither you, nor your son or your daughter, your slave or your slave-girl, your ox, your donkey, or any of your cattle, or the alien residing among you, so that your slaves and slave-girls may rest as you do.

¹⁵Bear in mind that you were slaves in Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, and for that reason

the LORD your God has commanded you to keep the sabbath day.

¹⁶Honour your father and your mother, as the LORD your God commanded you, so that you may enjoy long life, and it will be well with you in the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

¹⁷Do not commit murder.

¹⁸Do not commit adultery.

¹⁹Do not steal.

²⁰Do not give baseless evidence against your neighbour.

²¹Do not lust after your neighbour's wife; do not covet your neighbour's household, his land, his slave, his slave-girl, his ox, his donkey, or anything that belongs to him.

²²These commandments the LORD spoke in a loud voice to your whole assembly on the mountain out of the fire, the cloud, and the thick mist; then he said no more. He wrote them on two stone tablets, which he gave to me.

²³When you heard the voice out of the darkness, while the mountain was ablaze with fire, all the heads of your tribes and the elders came to me

²⁴ and said, The LORD our God has indeed shown us his glory and his great power, and we have heard his voice from the heart of the fire: today we have seen that people may still live after God has spoken with them.

²⁵ But why should we now risk death, for this great fire will devour us? If we hear the voice of the LORD our God again, we shall die.

²⁶ Is there any creature like us who has heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the fire and remained alive?

²⁷ Go near and listen to all that the LORD our God says to you, and report to us whatever the LORD our God says; we shall listen and obey.

²⁸ When the LORD heard these words which you spoke to me, he said, I have heard what this people has said to you; every word they have spoken is right.

²⁹ Would that they may always be of a mind to fear me and observe my commandments, so that all will be well with them and their children for ever!

³⁰ Go, and tell them to return to their tents,

³¹ but you yourself stand here beside me; I will set forth to you all the commandments, statutes, and laws which you are to teach them to observe in the land which I am about to give them to occupy.

³² You must be careful to do as the LORD your God has commanded you; do not deviate from it to right or to left.

³³ You must conform to all the LORD your God commands you, if you would live and prosper and remain long in the land you are to occupy.

6¹ These are the commandments, statutes, and laws which the LORD your God commanded me to teach you to observe in the land into which you are crossing to occupy it, a land flowing with milk and honey,

² so that you may fear the LORD your God and keep all his statutes and commandments which I am giving you, both you, your children, and your descendants all your days, that you may enjoy long life.

³ If you listen, Israel, and are careful to observe them, you will prosper and

increase greatly as the LORD the God of your forefathers promised you.

⁴Hear, Israel: the LORD is our God, the LORD our one God;

⁵and you must love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

⁶These commandments which I give you this day are to be remembered and taken to heart;

⁷repeat them to your children, and speak of them both indoors and out of doors, when you lie down and when you get up.

⁸Bind them as a sign on your hand and wear them as a pendant on your forehead;

⁹write them on the doorposts of your houses and on your gates.

¹⁰The LORD your God will bring you into the land which he swore to your forefathers Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that he would give you, a land of large, fine towns which you did not build,

¹¹houses full of good things which you did not provide, cisterns hewn from the rock but not by you, and vineyards and olive groves which you did not plant.

When he brings you in and you have all you want to eat,

¹²see that you do not forget the LORD who brought you out of Egypt, out of that land of slavery.

¹³You are to fear the LORD your God; serve him alone, and take your oaths in his name.

¹⁴You must not go after other gods, gods of the nations around you;

¹⁵if you do, the anger of the LORD your God who is among you will be roused against you, and he will sweep you off the face of the earth, for the LORD your God is a jealous God.

¹⁶You must not put the LORD your God to the test as you did at Massah.

¹⁷You must diligently keep the commandments of the LORD your God and the precepts and statutes which he gave you.

¹⁸You must do what is right and good in the eyes of the LORD, so that all may go well with you, and you may enter and occupy the good land which the LORD promised on oath to your forefathers;

¹⁹then, as the LORD promised, you will drive out all your enemies before you.

²⁰When in time to come your son asks you, What is the meaning of the precepts, statutes, and laws which the LORD our God gave you?

²¹say to him, We were Pharaoh's slaves in Egypt, and the LORD brought us out of Egypt with his strong hand.

²²He harrowed the Egyptians including Pharaoh and all his court with mighty signs and portents, as we saw for ourselves.

²³But he led us out from there to bring us into the land and give it to us as he had promised to our forefathers.

²⁴The LORD commanded us to observe all these statutes and to fear the LORD our God; it will be for our own good at all times, and he will continue to preserve our lives.

²⁵For us to be in the right we should keep all these commandments before the LORD our God, as he has commanded us to do.

7¹WHEN the LORD your God brings you into the land which you are about to enter to occupy it, when he drives out many nations before you -- Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites,

Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, seven nations more numerous and powerful than you --

²and when the LORD your God delivers them into your power for you to defeat, you must exterminate them. You must not make an alliance with them or spare them.

³You must not intermarry with them, giving your daughters to their sons or taking their daughters for your sons,

⁴because if you do, they will draw your children away from the LORD to serve other gods. Then the anger of the LORD will be roused against you and he will soon destroy you.

⁵But this is what you must do to them: pull down their altars, break their sacred pillars, hack down their sacred poles, and burn their idols,

⁶for you are a people holy to the LORD your God, and he has chosen you out of all peoples on earth to be his special possession.

⁷It was not because you were more numerous than any other nation that the LORD cared for you and chose you, for you were the smallest of all nations;

⁸it was because the LORD loved you and stood by his oath to your forefathers, that he brought you out with his strong hand and redeemed you from the place of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

⁹Know then that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God; with those who love him and keep his commandments he keeps covenant and faith for a thousand generations,

¹⁰but those who defy and reject him he repays with destruction: he will not be slow to requite any who reject him.

¹¹You are to observe these commandments, statutes, and laws which I give you this day, and keep them.

¹²Because you listen to these laws and are careful to observe them, the LORD your God will observe the sworn covenant he made with your forefathers and will keep faith with you.

¹³He will love you, bless you, and increase your numbers. He will bless the fruit of your body and the fruit of your soil, your grain and new wine and oil, the young of your herds and lambing

flocks, in the land which he swore to your forefathers he would give you.

¹⁴You will be blessed above every other nation; neither among your people nor among your cattle will there be an impotent male or a barren female.

¹⁵The LORD will keep you free from all sickness; he will not bring on you any of the foul diseases of Egypt which you have experienced; but he will bring them on all who are hostile to you.

¹⁶You are to devour all the nations which the LORD your God is giving over to you. Show none of them mercy, so that you do not serve their gods; that is the snare which awaits you.

¹⁷You may say to yourselves, These nations outnumber us; how can we drive them out?

¹⁸You need have no fear of them; only bear in mind what the LORD your God did to Pharaoh and the whole of Egypt,

¹⁹the great challenge which you yourselves witnessed, the signs and portents, the strong hand and the outstretched arm by which the LORD your God brought you out. So will he

deal with all the nations of whom you are afraid.

²⁰Moreover he will spread panic among them until all who are left and are in hiding will perish before you.

²¹Feel no dread of them, for the LORD your God is among you, a great and terrible God.

²²Little by little he will drive out these nations before you. You cannot exterminate them quickly, for fear the wild beasts become too numerous for you.

²³The LORD your God will deliver these nations over to you and throw them into utter confusion until they are wiped out.

²⁴He will put their kings into your hands, and you must wipe out their name from under heaven. No one will be able to withstand you; you will destroy them.

²⁵Their idols you must destroy by fire; you are not to covet the silver and gold on them and take it for yourselves; you might be ensnared by it, and these things are an abomination to the LORD your God.

²⁶You must not introduce any abominable idol into your houses and thus bring yourselves under solemn ban along with it. You shall hold it loathsome and abominable, for it is proscribed under the ban.

8¹You must carefully observe every command I give you this day so that you may live and increase in numbers and enter and occupy the land which the LORD promised on oath to your forefathers.

²Remember the whole way by which the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness to humble and test you, and to discover whether or not it was in your heart to keep his commandments.

³So he afflicted you with hunger and then fed you on manna which neither you nor your fathers had known before, to teach you that people cannot live on bread alone, but that they live on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD.

⁴The clothes on your backs did not wear out, nor did your feet blister, all these forty years.

⁵Take to heart this lesson: that the LORD your God was disciplining you as a father disciplines his son.

⁶Keep the commandments of the LORD your God, conforming to his ways and fearing him.

⁷The LORD your God is bringing you to a good land, a land with streams, springs, and underground waters gushing out in valley and hill,

⁸a land with wheat and barley, vines, fig trees, and pomegranates, a land with olive oil and honey.

⁹It is a land where you will never suffer any scarcity of food to eat, nor want for anything, a land whose stones are iron ore and from whose hills you will mine copper.

¹⁰When you have plenty to eat, bless the LORD your God for the good land he has given you.

¹¹See that you do not forget the LORD your God by failing to keep his commandments, laws, and statutes which I give you this day.

¹²When you have plenty to eat and live in fine houses of your own building,

¹³when your herds and flocks, your silver and gold, and all your possessions increase,

¹⁴do not become proud and forget the LORD your God who brought you out of Egypt, out of that land of slavery;

¹⁵he led you through the vast and terrible wilderness infested with venomous snakes and scorpions, a thirsty, waterless land where he caused water to flow for you from the flinty rock;

¹⁶he fed you in the wilderness with manna which your fathers had never known, to humble and test you, and in the end to make you prosper.

¹⁷Nor must you say to yourselves, My own strength and energy have gained me this wealth.

¹⁸Remember the LORD your God; it is he who gives you strength to become prosperous, so fulfilling the covenant guaranteed by oath with your forefathers, as he does to this day.

¹⁹If you forget the LORD your God and go after other gods, serving them and bowing down to them, I give you a

solemn warning this day that you will certainly be destroyed.

²⁰Because of your disobedience to the LORD your God, you will be destroyed as surely as were the nations whom the LORD destroyed at your coming.

9¹Hear, Israel; this day you will be crossing the Jordan to go in and occupy the territory of nations greater and more powerful than you, and great cities with fortifications towering to the sky.

²They are a great and tall people, the descendants of the Anakim, of whom you know, for you have heard it said, Who can withstand the sons of Anak?

³Know then this day that it is the LORD your God himself who crosses at your head as a devouring fire; it is he who will subdue them and destroy them as you advance; you will drive them out and soon overwhelm them, as he promised you.

⁴When the LORD your God drives them out before you, do not say to yourselves, It is because of our merits that the LORD has brought us in to occupy this land.

⁵It is not because of your merit or your integrity that you are entering their land to occupy it; it is because of the wickedness of these nations that the LORD your God is driving them out before you, and to fulfil the promise which the LORD made on oath to your forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

⁶Know that it is not because of any merit of yours that the LORD your God is giving you this good land to occupy; indeed, you are a stubborn people.

⁷Remember, and never forget, how you angered the LORD your God in the wilderness: from the day you left Egypt until you came to this place you have defied the LORD.

⁸Even at Horeb you roused the LORD's anger, and the LORD in his wrath was ready to destroy you.

⁹When I went up the mountain to receive the stone tablets, the tablets of the covenant which the LORD made with you, I remained on the mountain forty days and forty nights without food or drink.

¹⁰Then the LORD gave me the two stone tablets written with the finger of

God, and on them were all the words the LORD had spoken to you from the heart of the fire, on the mountain during the day of the assembly.

¹¹At the end of forty days and forty nights the LORD gave me the two stone tablets, the tablets of the covenant,

¹²and said to me, Go down from the mountain at once, because your people whom you brought out of Egypt have committed a monstrous act: they have lost no time in turning from the way which I commanded them to follow, and have cast for themselves a metal image.

¹³The LORD said to me, I have observed this people and I find them a stubborn people.

¹⁴Let me be, and I shall destroy them and blot out their name from under heaven; and I shall make you a nation more powerful and numerous than they.

¹⁵I went back down the mountain; it was ablaze, and I had the two tablets of the covenant in my hands.

¹⁶When I saw how you had sinned against the LORD your God and had made for yourselves a cast image of a

bull-calf, losing no time in turning from the way the LORD had told you to follow,

¹⁷I flung down the two tablets which I held and shattered them in the sight of you all.

¹⁸Then, as before, I lay prostrate before the LORD, forty days and forty nights without food or drink, on account of all the sin that you had committed, and because, in doing what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD, you had provoked him to anger.

¹⁹I was in dread of the LORD's anger and the wrath with which he threatened to destroy you; but once again the LORD listened to me.

²⁰The LORD was greatly incensed with Aaron also and would have killed him; so I interceded for him at that time.

²¹I took the calf, that sinful object you had made, and burnt it and pounded it, grinding it until it was as fine as dust; then I flung its dust into the torrent that flowed down from the mountain.

²²At Taberah also you roused the LORD's anger, and at Massah, and at Kibroth-hattaavah.

²³ Again, when the LORD sent you from Kadesh-barnea with orders to advance and occupy the land which he was giving you, you defied the LORD your God and did not trust him or obey him.

²⁴ You were defiant from the day that the LORD first knew you.

²⁵ Forty days and forty nights I lay prostrate before the LORD because he had threatened to destroy you;

²⁶ I prayed to the LORD and said, LORD God, do not destroy your people, your own possession, whom you redeemed by your great power and brought out of Egypt by your strong hand.

²⁷ Remember your servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and overlook the stubbornness of this people, their wickedness, and their sin;

²⁸ otherwise the people in the land from which you led us will say, It is because the LORD was not able to bring them into the land which he promised them and because he hated them, that he has led them out to let them die in the wilderness.

²⁹ But they are your people, your own possession, whom you brought

out by your great strength, by your outstretched arm.

10¹ AT that time the LORD said to me, Cut for yourself two stone tablets like the former ones, and make also a wooden chest, an ark. Come up to me on the mountain,

² and I shall write on the tablets the words that were on the first tablets, which you broke; you are to put them into the ark.

³ When I had made an ark of acacia-wood and cut two stone tablets like the first, I went up the mountain taking the tablets in my hands.

⁴ Then in the same writing as before, the LORD wrote down the Ten Commandments which he had spoken to you from the heart of the fire, at the mountain on the day of the assembly, and the LORD gave them to me.

⁵ I came back down the mountain, and as the LORD had commanded I put the tablets in the ark I had made, and there they have remained ever since.

⁶ (The Israelites journeyed by stages from Beeroth-bene-jaakan to Moserah.

Aaron died and was buried there; and his son Eleazar succeeded him as priest.

⁷From there they travelled to Gudgodah and from Gudgodah to Jotbathah, a land of many wadis.

⁸At that time the LORD set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD, to be in attendance on the LORD and minister to him, and to bless in his name, as they have done to this day.

⁹That is why the Levites have no holding of ancestral land like their kinsmen; the LORD is their holding, as he promised them.)

¹⁰I remained on the mountain forty days and forty nights, as I did before, and once again the LORD listened to me; he consented not to destroy you.

¹¹The LORD said to me, Set out now at the head of the people so that they may enter and occupy the land which I swore to give to their forefathers.

¹²What then, Israel, does the LORD your God ask of you? Only this: to fear the LORD your God, to conform to all his ways, to love him, and to serve him with all your heart and soul.

¹³This you will do by observing the commandments of the LORD and his statutes which I give you this day for your good.

¹⁴To the LORD your God belong heaven itself, the highest heaven, the earth and everything in it;

¹⁵yet the LORD was attached to your forefathers by his love for them, and he chose their descendants after them. Out of all nations you were his chosen people, as you are this day.

¹⁶So now you must circumcise your hearts and not be stubborn any more,

¹⁷for the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great, mighty, and terrible God. He is no respecter of persons; he is not to be bribed;

¹⁸he secures justice for the fatherless and the widow, and he shows love towards the alien who lives among you, giving him food and clothing.

¹⁹You too must show love towards the alien, for you once lived as aliens in Egypt.

²⁰You are to fear the LORD your God, serve him, hold fast to him, and take your oaths in his name.

²¹ He is your proud boast, your God who has done for you these great and terrible things which you saw for yourselves.

²² When your forefathers went down into Egypt they were only seventy strong, but now the LORD your God has made you as countless as the stars in the heavens.

11 ¹ Love the LORD your God and keep for all time the charge he laid upon you, his statutes, laws, and commandments.

² This day you know the discipline of the LORD, though your children who have neither known nor experienced it do not; you know his great power, his strong hand and outstretched arm,

³ the signs he worked and his deeds in Egypt against Pharaoh the king and his whole country,

⁴ and what he did to the Egyptian army, its horses and chariots, when he caused the waters of the Red Sea to engulf them as they pursued you. In this way the LORD completely destroyed them, and so things remain to this day.

⁵You know what he did for you in the wilderness as you journeyed to this place,

⁶and what he did to Dathan and Abiram, sons of Eliab the Reubenite, when the earth opened its mouth and swallowed them in the midst of all Israel, together with their households, their tents, and every living thing in their company.

⁷It was you who saw for yourselves all the great work which the LORD did.

⁸Observe all the commands I give you this day, so that you may have the strength to enter and occupy the land into which you are about to cross,

⁹and so that you may enjoy long life in the land which the LORD swore to your forefathers to give them and their descendants, a land flowing with milk and honey.

¹⁰The land which you are about to enter and occupy is not like the land of Egypt from which you have come, where, after sowing your seed, you regulated the water by means of your foot as in a vegetable garden.

¹¹ But the land into which you are about to cross to occupy it is a land of mountains and valleys watered by the rain of heaven.

¹² It is a land which the LORD your God tends and on which his eye rests from one year's end to the next.

¹³ If you pay heed to the commandments which I give you this day, to love the LORD your God and serve him with all your heart and soul,

¹⁴ then I shall send rain for your land in season, both autumn and spring rains, and you will gather your corn and new wine and oil,

¹⁵ and I shall provide pasture in the fields for your cattle: you will have all you want to eat.

¹⁶ Take care not to be led astray in your hearts, and not to turn aside and serve and worship other gods,

¹⁷ or the LORD's anger will be roused against you: he will shut up the heavens and there will be no rain, your soil will not yield its harvest, and you will quickly perish from upon the good land which the LORD is giving you.

¹⁸Take these commandments of mine to heart and keep them in mind. Bind them as a sign on your hands and wear them as a pendant on your foreheads.

¹⁹Teach them to your children, and speak of them indoors and out of doors, when you lie down and when you get up.

²⁰Write them on the doorposts of your houses and on your gates.

²¹Then you will live long, you and your children, in the land which the LORD swore to your forefathers to give them, for as long as the heavens are above the earth.

²²If you diligently keep all these commandments that I now charge you to observe, loving the LORD your God, conforming to his ways, and holding fast to him,

²³the LORD will drive out all these nations before you and you will occupy the territory of nations greater and more powerful than you are.

²⁴Every place where you set foot will be yours. Your borders will run from the wilderness to the Lebanon, and from the river, the Euphrates, to the western sea.

²⁵ No one will be able to withstand you; the LORD your God will put the fear and dread of you on the whole land on which you set foot, as he promised you.

²⁶ See, this day I offer you the choice of a blessing or a curse:

²⁷ the blessing if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God which I give you this day;

²⁸ the curse if you do not obey the commandments of the LORD your God, but turn from the way that I command you this day and go after other gods of whom you have had no experience.

²⁹ When the LORD your God brings you into the land which you are entering to occupy, there on Mount Gerizim you shall pronounce the blessing and on Mount Ebal the curse.

³⁰ (These mountains are on the other side of the Jordan, close to Gilgal beside the terebinth of Moreh, beyond the road to the west which lies in the territory of the Canaanites of the Arabah.)

³¹ You are about to cross the Jordan to enter and occupy the land which the LORD your God is giving you. Occupy it and settle in it,

³²and be careful to observe all the statutes and laws which I have set before you this day.

12¹THESE are the statutes and laws which you must be careful to observe in the land which the LORD the God of your forefathers is giving you to occupy all your earthly life.

²You are to demolish completely all the sanctuaries where the nations whom you are dispossessing worship their gods, whether on high mountains or on hills or under every spreading tree.

³Pull down their altars, break their sacred pillars, burn their sacred poles, and hack down the idols of their gods, and thus blot out the name of them from the place.

⁴You must not adopt such practices in the worship of the LORD your God;

⁵instead you are to resort to the place which the LORD your God will choose out of all your tribes to receive his name that it may dwell there. Come there

⁶and bring your whole-offerings and sacrifices, your tithes and contributions, your vows and freewill-offerings, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks.

⁷You are to eat there before the LORD your God; so you will find joy in whatever you undertake, you and your families, because the LORD your God has blessed you.

⁸You are not to act as we act here today, everyone doing as he pleases,

⁹for till now you have not reached the resting-place, the territory which the LORD your God is giving you.

¹⁰When you cross the Jordan and settle in the land which the LORD your God allots you as your holding, when he grants you peace from all your enemies on every side, and you live in security,

¹¹then you must bring everything that I command you to the place which the LORD your God chooses as a dwelling for his name -- your whole-offerings and sacrifices, your tithes and contributions, and all the choice gifts that you have vowed to the LORD.

¹²You will rejoice in the presence of the LORD your God with your sons and daughters, your male and female slaves, and the Levites who live in your settlements because they have no holding, no ancestral portion among you.

¹³See that you do not offer your whole-offerings in any sanctuary at random,

¹⁴but offer them only at the place which the LORD will choose in one of your tribes, and there you must do all I command you.

¹⁵On the other hand, you may freely slaughter for food in any of your settlements, as the LORD your God blesses you. Clean and unclean alike may eat it, as they would eat the meat of gazelle or deer.

¹⁶But on no account may you partake of the blood; you are to pour it out on the ground like water.

¹⁷In your settlements you may not eat the tithe of your grain and new wine and oil, any of the firstborn of your cattle and sheep, any of the gifts that you vow, or any of your freewill-offerings and contributions;

¹⁸these you must eat in the presence of the LORD your God in the place that the LORD your God will choose -- you, your sons and daughters, your male and female slaves, and the Levites living in your settlements; so you will find joy

before the LORD your God in all that you undertake.

¹⁹Be careful not to neglect the Levites as long as you live in your land.

²⁰When the LORD your God enlarges your territory, as he has promised, and you say to yourselves, I should like to eat meat, because you have a craving for it, then you may freely eat it.

²¹If the place where the LORD your God will choose to set his name is too far away, then you may slaughter a beast from the herds or flocks which the LORD has given you and freely eat it in your settlements as I command you.

²²You may eat it as you would the meat of gazelle or deer; both clean and unclean alike may eat it.

²³But you must strictly refrain from partaking of the blood, because the blood is the life; you must not eat the life with the flesh.

²⁴You must not consume it; you must pour it out on the ground like water.

²⁵If you abstain from it, all will be well with you and your children after you; for you will be doing what is right in the eyes of the LORD.

²⁶ But such holy-gifts as you may have and the gifts you have vowed you must bring to the place which the LORD will choose.

²⁷ You must present your whole-offerings, both the flesh and the blood, on the altar of the LORD your God; but of your shared-offerings you are to eat the flesh, while the blood is to be poured on the altar of the LORD your God.

²⁸ See that you listen, and do all that I command you, and then it will go well with you and your children after you for ever; for you will be doing what is good and right in the eyes of the LORD your God.

²⁹ When, as you advance, the LORD your God exterminates the nations whose country you are entering to occupy, you will take their place and settle in their land.

³⁰ After they have been destroyed, take care that you are not ensnared into their ways. Do not enquire about their gods, saying, How used these nations to serve their gods? I too shall do the same.

³¹ You must not do for the LORD your God what they do, for all that they do

for their gods is hateful and abominable to the LORD. Even their sons and their daughters they burn in honour of their gods.

³²See that you carry out exactly what I command you: you must not add anything to it or take anything away from it.

13¹ Should a prophet or a pedlar of dreams appear among you and offer you a sign or a portent,

²and call on you to go after other gods whom you have not known and to worship them, even if the sign or portent should come true

³do not heed the words of that prophet or dreamer. The LORD your God is testing you to discover whether you love him with all your heart and soul.

⁴It is the LORD your God you must follow and him you must fear; you must keep his commandments and obey him, serve him and hold fast to him.

⁵As for that prophet or dreamer, he must be put to death for preaching rebellion against the LORD your God who brought you out of Egypt and redeemed you from that land of slavery; he has

tried to lead you astray from the path which the LORD your God commanded you to take. You must get rid of this wickedness from your midst.

⁶If your brother, your father's son or your mother's son, or your son or daughter, your beloved wife, or your dearest friend should entice you secretly to go and serve other gods -- gods of whom neither you nor your fathers have had experience,

⁷gods of the people round about you, near or far, at one end of the land or the other --

⁸then you must not consent or listen. Show none of them mercy, neither spare nor shield them;

⁹you are to put them to death, your own hand being the first to be raised against them, and then all the people are to follow.

¹⁰Stone them to death, because they tried to lead you astray from the LORD your God who brought you out of Egypt, out of that land where you were slaves.

¹¹All Israel when they hear of it will be afraid; never again will anything as wicked as this be done among you.

¹²When you hear that miscreants have appeared in any of the towns which the LORD your God is giving you to occupy, and have led its inhabitants astray by calling on them to serve other gods whom you have not known,

¹³(13: 12)

¹⁴then you are to investigate the matter carefully. If, after diligent examination, the report proves to be true and it is confirmed that this abominable thing has been done among you,

¹⁵you must put the inhabitants of that town to the sword, and lay the town under solemn ban together with everything in it.

¹⁶Gather all its goods into the public square and burn both town and goods as a complete offering to the LORD your God; and let it remain a mound of ruins and never be rebuilt.

¹⁷Nothing out of all that has been laid under the ban must be found in your possession; in this way the LORD may turn from his fierce anger and show you compassion; and in his compassion he will make you grow as he swore to your forefathers,

¹⁸provided that you obey the LORD your God and keep all his commandments which I give you this day, doing only what is right in the eyes of the LORD your God.

14 ¹YOU ARE the children of the LORD your God: you must not gash yourselves or shave your forelocks in mourning for the dead.

²You are a people holy to the LORD your God, and he has chosen you out of all peoples on earth to be his special possession.

³You must not eat any abominable thing.

⁴These are the animals you may eat: ox, sheep, goat,

⁵buck, gazelle, roebuck, ibex, white-rumped deer, long-horned antelope, and rock-goat.

⁶You may eat any hoofed animal which has cloven hoofs and also chews the cud;

⁷those which only chew the cud or only have cloven hoofs you must not eat. These are: the camel, the hare, and the rock-badger, because they chew the cud

but do not have cloven hoofs; they are unclean for you;

⁸and the pig, because it has cloven hoofs but does not chew the cud, it is unclean for you. You are not to eat their flesh or even touch their dead carcasses.

⁹Of creatures that live in water these may be eaten: all that have fins and scales;

¹⁰but you may not eat any that have neither fins nor scales; they are unclean for you.

¹¹You may eat any clean bird.

¹²These are the birds you may not eat: the griffon-vulture, the black vulture, the bearded vulture,

¹³the kite, every kind of falcon,

¹⁴every kind of crow,

¹⁵the desert-owl, the short-eared owl, the long-eared owl, every kind of hawk,

¹⁶the tawny owl, the screech-owl, the little owl,

¹⁷the horned owl, the osprey, the fisher-owl,

¹⁸the stork, the various kinds of cormorant, the hoopoe, and the bat.

¹⁹All swarming winged creatures are unclean for you; they may not be eaten.

²⁰You may eat any clean winged creature.

²¹You must not eat anything that has died a natural death. You may give it to aliens residing among you, and they may eat it, or you may sell it to a foreigner; but you are a people holy to the LORD your God. Do not boil a kid in its mother's milk.

²²Year by year you are to set aside a tithe of all the produce of your sowing, of everything that grows on the land.

²³You must eat it in the presence of the LORD your God in the place which he will choose as a dwelling for his name -- the tithe of your grain and new wine and oil, and the firstborn of your cattle and sheep, so that for all time you may learn to fear the LORD your God.

²⁴When the LORD your God has blessed you with prosperity, and the place where he will choose to set his name is too far away and the journey too great for you to carry your tithe,

²⁵then you may convert it into money. Tie up the money and take it with you to the place which the LORD your God will choose.

²⁶There you may spend it as you choose on cattle or sheep, wine or strong drink, or anything else you please, and there feast with rejoicing, both you and your family, in the presence of the LORD your God.

²⁷Also, the Levites who live in your settlements must not suffer neglect at your hands, for they have no holding of ancestral land among you.

²⁸At the end of every third year you are to bring out all the tithe of your produce for that year and leave it in your settlements

²⁹so that the Levites, who have no holding of ancestral land among you, and the aliens, orphans, and widows in your settlements may come and have plenty to eat. If you do this the LORD your God will bless you in everything to which you set your hand.

15¹At the end of every seventh year you must make a remission of debts.

²This is how it is to be made: everyone who holds a pledge shall return the pledge of the person indebted to him. He must not press a fellow-countryman

for repayment, for the LORD's year of remission has been declared.

³You may press foreigners; but if it is a fellow-countryman that holds anything of yours, you must renounce all claim on it.

⁴There will never be any poor among you if only you obey the LORD your God by carefully keeping these commandments which I lay upon you this day; for the LORD your God will bless you with great prosperity in the land which he is giving you to occupy as your holding.

⁵(15: 4)

⁶When the LORD your God blesses you, as he promised, you will lend to people of many nations, but you yourselves will borrow from none; you will rule many nations, but none will rule you.

⁷When in any of your settlements in the land which the LORD your God is giving you one of your fellow-countrymen becomes poor, do not be hard-hearted or close-fisted towards him in his need.

⁸Be open-handed towards him and lend him on pledge as much as he needs.

⁹See that you do not harbour the villainous thought that the seventh year, the year of remission, is near, and look askance at your needy countryman and give him nothing. If you do, he will appeal to the LORD against you, and you will be found guilty of sin.

¹⁰Give freely to him and do not begrudge him your bounty, because it is for this very bounty that the LORD your God will bless you in everything that you do or undertake.

¹¹The poor will always be with you in your land, and that is why I command you to be open-handed towards any of your countrymen there who are in poverty and need.

¹²Should a fellow-Hebrew, be it a man or a woman, sell himself to you as a slave, he is to serve you for six years. In the seventh year you must set him free,

¹³and when you set him free, do not let him go empty-handed.

¹⁴Give to him lavishly from your flock, from your threshing-floor and your winepress. Be generous to him, as the LORD your God has blessed you.

¹⁵ Bear in mind that you were slaves in Egypt and the LORD your God redeemed you; that is why I am giving you this command today.

¹⁶ If, however, a slave is content to be with you and says, I shall not leave you; I love you and your family,

¹⁷ then take an awl and pierce through his ear to the door, and he will be your slave for life. Treat a slave-girl in the same way.

¹⁸ Do not resent it when you have to set him free, for his six years' service to you has been worth twice the wage of a hired man. Then the LORD your God will bless you in everything you do.

¹⁹ You must dedicate to the LORD your God every male firstborn of your herds and flocks. You must not plough with the firstborn of your cattle or shear the firstborn of your sheep.

²⁰ Year by year you and your household must eat them in the presence of the LORD your God, in the place which the LORD will choose.

²¹ If any animal has a defect, if it is lame or blind or has any other serious

defect, you may not sacrifice it to the LORD your God.

²²Eat it in your settlements; both clean and unclean alike may eat it as they would the meat of gazelle or deer.

²³But on no account may you partake of its blood; you must pour it out on the ground like water.

16¹ OBSERVE the month of Abib and celebrate the Passover to the LORD your God, for it was in that month that the LORD your God brought you out of Egypt by night.

²Slaughter an animal from flock or herd as a Passover victim to the LORD your God in the place which he will choose as a dwelling for his name.

³You must eat nothing leavened with it; for seven days you must eat unleavened bread, the bread of affliction, because you came out of Egypt in urgent haste. Thus as long as you live you are to commemorate the day of your coming out of Egypt.

⁴No leaven must be seen in all your territory for seven days, nor must any of the flesh which you have slaughtered

in the evening of the first day remain overnight till morning.

⁵You may not slaughter the Passover victim in any of the settlements which the LORD your God is giving you,

⁶but only in the place which he will choose as a dwelling for his name; there you are to slaughter the Passover victim in the evening as the sun goes down, the time of your coming out of Egypt.

⁷Cook it and eat it in the place which the LORD your God will choose, and then next morning set off back to your tents.

⁸For six days you must eat unleavened loaves, and on the seventh day hold a closing ceremony in honour of the LORD your God; you must do no work.

⁹Seven weeks should be counted off: start counting them from the time when the sickle is put to the standing grain;

¹⁰then celebrate the pilgrim-feast of Weeks to the LORD your God and offer a freewill-offering in proportion to the blessing that the LORD your God has given you.

¹¹Rejoice before the LORD your God, with your sons and daughters, your male and female slaves, the Levites

who live in your settlements, and the aliens, fatherless, and widows among you. Rejoice in the place which the LORD your God will choose as a dwelling for his name

¹²and keep in mind that you were slaves in Egypt. You are to be careful to observe all these statutes.

¹³After you bring in the produce from your threshing-floor and winepress, you are to celebrate the pilgrim-feast of Booths for seven days.

¹⁴Rejoice at your feast with your sons and daughters, your male and female slaves, the Levites, aliens, fatherless, and widows living in your settlements.

¹⁵For seven days you are to celebrate this feast to the LORD your God in the place which he will choose, when the LORD your God gives you his blessing in all your harvest and in all your work; you shall keep the feast with joy.

¹⁶Three times a year all your males must come into the presence of the LORD your God in the place which he will choose: at the pilgrim-feasts of Unleavened Bread, of Weeks, and of Booths. No one may come into

the presence of the LORD without an offering;

¹⁷ each of you is to bring such a gift as he can in proportion to the blessing which the LORD your God has given you.

¹⁸ In every settlement which the LORD your God is giving you, you must appoint for yourselves judges and officers, tribe by tribe, and they will dispense true justice to the people.

¹⁹ You must not pervert the course of justice or show favour or accept a bribe; for bribery makes the wise person blind and the just person give a crooked answer.

²⁰ Justice, and justice alone, must be your aim, so that you may live and occupy the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

²¹ Do not plant any kind of tree as a sacred pole beside the altar of the LORD your God which you will build,

²² nor erect a sacred pillar; for all such are hateful to the LORD your God.

17 ¹ You must not sacrifice to the LORD your God a bull or sheep that has any defect or serious blemish,

for that would be abominable to the LORD your God.

²Should there be found among you, in any of the settlements which the LORD your God is giving you, a man or woman who does what is wrong in the eyes of the LORD your God, by violating his covenant

³and going to serve other gods, prostrating himself before them or before the sun and moon and all the host of heaven -- a thing that I have forbidden --

⁴then, if it is reported to you or you hear of it, make careful enquiry. If the report proves to be true, and it is confirmed that this abominable thing has been done in Israel,

⁵then bring the man or woman who has done this wicked deed to the gate of the town to be stoned to death.

⁶Sentence of death is to be carried out on the testimony of two or of three witnesses: no one must be put to death on the testimony of a single witness.

⁷The first stones are to be thrown by the witnesses and then all the people

must follow; so you will get rid of the wickedness in your midst.

⁸When the issue in any lawsuit that is disputed in your courts is beyond your competence, whether it be a case of accidental or premeditated homicide, civil rights, or personal injury, then resort without delay to the place which the LORD your God will choose.

⁹Appear before the levitical priests or the judge then in office and seek guidance; they will give you the verdict.

¹⁰Act on the pronouncement which they make from the place chosen by the LORD, and see that you carry out all their instructions.

¹¹Act on the instruction they give you, or on the precedent they cite; do not deviate from the decision they hand down to you, either to right or to left.

¹²Anyone who presumes to reject the decision either of the priest ministering there to the LORD your God, or of the judge, is to be put to death; thus you will purge Israel of wickedness.

¹³Then all the people when they hear of it will be afraid, and never again show such presumption.

¹⁴After you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving you, and have occupied it and settled there, if you then say, Let us appoint a king over us, as all the surrounding nations do,

¹⁵you must appoint as king the man whom the LORD your God will choose. You must appoint over you a man of your own people; you must not appoint a foreigner, one who is not of your own people.

¹⁶He must not acquire numerous horses, or send men to Egypt to obtain more horses, for the LORD said to you: You are never to go back that way.

¹⁷Your king must not acquire numerous wives and so be led astray, or amass for himself silver and gold in great quantities.

¹⁸When he has ascended the throne of the kingdom, he is to make a copy of this law in a book at the dictation of the levitical priests.

¹⁹He is to have it by him and read from it all his life, so that he may learn to fear the LORD his God and keep all the words of this law and observe these statutes.

²⁰ Thus he will avoid alienation from his fellow-countrymen through pride, and not deviate from these commandments to right or to left; then he and his sons will reign long in Israel.

18¹ The levitical priests, the whole tribe of Levi, are to have no holding of ancestral land in Israel; they are to eat the food-offerings of the LORD as their share.

² They will have no holding among their fellow-countrymen; the LORD is their holding, as he promised them.

³ This is to be the customary due of the priests from those of the people who offer sacrifice, whether a bull or a sheep: the shoulder, the cheeks, and the stomach are to be given to the priests.

⁴ Give them also the firstfruits of your grain and new wine and oil, and the first fleece at the shearing of your flock.

⁵ For it was they whom the LORD your God chose from all your tribes to attend on the LORD and to minister in the name of the LORD, both they and their sons for all time.

⁶ When a Levite from any settlement in Israel where he may be resident comes

to the place which the LORD will choose, if he comes in the eagerness of his heart⁷ and ministers in the name of the LORD his God, like all his fellow-Levites who attend on the LORD there,

⁸he is to have an equal share of food with them, besides what he may inherit from his father's family.

⁹After you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving you, do not learn to imitate the abominable practices of those other nations.

¹⁰Let no one be found among you who makes his son or daughter pass through fire, no augur or soothsayer or diviner or sorcerer,

¹¹no one who casts spells or traffics with ghosts and spirits, and no necromancer.

¹²Those who do such things are abominable to the LORD, and it is on account of these abominable practices that the LORD your God is driving them out before you.

¹³You must be undivided in your service of the LORD your God.

¹⁴These nations whose place you are taking listen to soothsayers and augurs,

but the LORD your God does not permit you to do this.

¹⁵The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; it is to him you must listen.

¹⁶All this follows from your request to the LORD your God at Horeb on the day of the assembly. There you said, Let us not hear again the voice of the LORD our God, nor see this great fire again, or we shall die.

¹⁷Then the LORD said to me, What they have said is right.

¹⁸I shall raise up for them a prophet like you, one of their own people, and I shall put my words into his mouth. He will declare to them whatever I command him;

¹⁹if anyone refuses to listen to the words which he will speak in my name I shall call that person to account.

²⁰But the prophet who presumes to utter in my name what I have not commanded him, or who speaks in the name of other gods -- that prophet must be put to death.

²¹ If you wonder, How are we to recognize a word that the LORD has not uttered?

²² here is the answer: When a word spoken by a prophet in the name of the LORD is not fulfilled and does not come true, it is not a word spoken by the LORD. The prophet has spoken presumptuously; have no fear of him.

19¹ WHEN the LORD your God exterminates the nations whose land he is giving you, and you take their place and settle in their towns and houses,

² you are to set apart three cities in the land which he is giving you to occupy.

³ Divide into three districts the territory which the LORD your God is giving you as a holding, and determine where each city shall lie. These are to be places in which homicides may take sanctuary.

⁴ This is the kind of homicide who may take sanctuary there and save his life: one who strikes another accidentally and with no malice aforethought;

⁵ for instance, the man who goes into a wood with another to fell trees, and as he swings the axe to cut a tree the head

glances off the tree, hits the other man, and kills him. The homicide may take sanctuary in any one of these cities, and his life is to be safe.

⁶Otherwise, when the dead man's next-of-kin on whom lies the duty of vengeance pursued him in the heat of temper, he might overtake him if the distance were great, and take his life, although the homicide was not liable to the death penalty because there had been no previous enmity on his part.

⁷That is why I command you to set apart three cities.

⁸If the LORD your God enlarges your territory, as he promised on oath to your forefathers, and gives you the whole land which he promised to them,

⁹because you keep all the commandments that I am laying down today and carry them out by loving the LORD your God and by conforming to his ways for all time, then you shall add three more cities of refuge to these three.

¹⁰Let no innocent blood be shed in the land which the LORD your God is

allotting to you, or blood-guilt will fall on you.

¹¹When one person has a feud with another, and lies in wait for him, attacks him, and strikes him a fatal blow, and then takes sanctuary in one of these cities,

¹²the elders of his own town must send to fetch him and hand him over to the next-of-kin to be put to death.

¹³You are to show him no mercy, but rid Israel of the guilt of innocent blood; then all will be well with you.

¹⁴Do not move your neighbour's boundary stone, fixed by the men of former times in the holding which you will occupy in the land the LORD your God is giving you for your possession.

¹⁵A single witness may not give evidence against anyone in the matter of any crime or sin which he may have committed: a charge must be established on the evidence of two or of three witnesses.

¹⁶When a malicious witness comes forward to accuse a person of a crime,

¹⁷the two parties to the dispute must appear in the presence of the LORD,

before the priests or the judges then in office;

¹⁸if, after careful examination by the judges, he is proved to be a false witness giving false evidence against his fellow,

¹⁹treat him as he intended to treat his fellow. You must rid yourselves of this wickedness.

²⁰The rest of the people when they hear of it will be afraid, and never again will anything as wicked as this be done among you.

²¹You must show no mercy: life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot!

20¹WHEN you take the field against your enemies and are faced by horses and chariots, a force greater than yours, you need have no fear of them, for the LORD your God, who brought you up from Egypt, will be with you.

²Then when fighting impends, the priest must come forward and address the army in these words:

³Hear, Israel! Now that you are about to join battle with your enemy, do not lose heart or be afraid; do not let alarm

affect you, and do not give way to panic in face of them.

⁴The LORD your God accompanies you to fight for you against your enemy and give you the victory.

⁵The officers are to say to the army: Any man who has built a new house and has not dedicated it should go back to his house; otherwise he may die in battle and another man dedicate it.

⁶Any man who has planted a vineyard and has not begun to use it should go back home; otherwise he may die in battle and another man get the use of it.

⁷Any man who has pledged himself to take a woman in marriage and has not taken her should go back home; otherwise he may die in battle and another man take her.

⁸The officers must also say to the army: Let anyone who is afraid and has lost heart go back home; or his faint-heartedness may affect his comrades.

⁹When the officers have finished addressing the army, commanders will assume command.

¹⁰When you advance on a town to attack it, make an offer of peace.

¹¹If the offer is accepted and the town opens its gates to you, then all the people who live there are to be put to forced labour and work for you.

¹²If the town does not make peace with you but gives battle, you are to lay siege to it

¹³and, when the LORD your God delivers it into your hands, put every male in it to the sword;

¹⁴but you may take the women, the dependants, and the livestock for yourselves, and plunder everything else in the town. You may enjoy the use of the spoil from your enemies which the LORD your God gives you.

¹⁵That is how you are to deal with towns at a great distance, as opposed to those which belong to nations near at hand.

¹⁶In the towns of these nations whose land the LORD your God is giving you as your holding, you must not leave a soul alive.

¹⁷As the LORD your God commanded you, you must destroy them under

solemn ban -- Hittites, Amorites,
Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, Jebusites
--

¹⁸so that they may not teach you to imitate the abominable practices they have carried on for their gods, and so cause you to sin against the LORD your God.

¹⁹When in the course of war you lay siege to a town for a long time in order to take it, do not destroy its trees by taking an axe to them, for they provide you with food; you must not cut them down. The trees of the field are not people, that you should besiege them.

²⁰But you may destroy or cut down any trees that you know do not yield food, and use them in siege-works against the town that is at war with you, until it falls.

21 ¹When a murder victim is found lying in open country, in the land which the LORD your God is giving you to occupy, and it is not known who struck the blow,

²your elders and your judges are to come out and measure the distance to the surrounding towns to establish which is nearest.

³The elders of that town are to take a heifer that has never been put to work or worn a yoke,

⁴and bring it down to a wadi where there is a stream that never runs dry and the ground is never tilled or sown, and there in the wadi they are to break its neck.

⁵The priests, the sons of Levi, are then to come forward; for the LORD your God has chosen them to minister to him and to bless in the name of the LORD, and their voice shall be decisive in all cases of dispute and assault.

⁶All the elders of the town nearest to the dead body will then wash their hands over the heifer whose neck has been broken in the wadi,

⁷and solemnly declare: Our hands did not shed this blood, nor did we witness the bloodshed.

⁸Accept expiation, O LORD, for your people Israel whom you redeemed, and do not let the guilt of innocent blood rest upon your people Israel: let this bloodshed be expiated on their behalf.

⁹Thus, by doing what is right in the eyes of the LORD, you will rid yourselves of the guilt of innocent blood.

¹⁰When you go to battle against your enemies and the LORD your God delivers them into your hands and you take some of them captive,

¹¹then if you see a comely woman among the prisoners and are attracted to her, you may take her as your wife.

¹²Bring her into your house; there she must shave her head, pare her nails,

¹³and discard the clothes which she had when captured. For a full month she is to stay in your house mourning for her father and mother. After that you may have intercourse with her, and be man and wife.

¹⁴But if you no longer find her pleasing, let her go free. You must not sell her or treat her harshly, since you have had your will with her.

¹⁵When a man has two wives, one loved and the other unloved, if they both bear him sons, and the son of the unloved wife is the elder,

¹⁶then, when the day comes for him to divide his property among his sons, he

must not treat the son of the loved wife as his firstborn in preference to his true firstborn, the son of the unloved wife.

¹⁷ He must recognize the rights of his firstborn, the son of the unloved wife, and give him a double share of all that he possesses; for he was the firstfruits of his manhood, and the right of the firstborn is his.

¹⁸ When a man has a son who is rebellious and out of control, who does not obey his father and mother, or take heed when they punish him,

¹⁹ then his father and mother are to lay hold of him and bring him out to the elders of the town at the town gate,

²⁰ and say, This son of ours is rebellious and out of control; he will not obey us, he is a wastrel and a drunkard.

²¹ Then all the men of the town must stone him to death, and you will thereby rid yourselves of this wickedness. All Israel when they hear of it will be afraid.

²² When someone is convicted of a capital offence and is put to death, and you hang him on a gibbet,

²³ his body must not remain there overnight; it must be buried on the same

day. Anyone hanged is accursed in the sight of God, and the land which the LORD your God is giving you as your holding must not be polluted.

22¹ SHOULD you see a fellow-countryman's ox or sheep straying, do not ignore it; you must take it back to him.

²If the owner is not a near neighbour and you do not know who he is, bring the animal to your own house and keep it with you until he claims it; then give it back to him.

³Do the same with his donkey or his cloak or anything else that your fellow-countryman loses. You may not ignore it.

⁴Should you see your fellow-countryman's donkey or ox lying on the road, do not ignore it; you must help him to raise it to its feet.

⁵No woman may wear an article of man's clothing, nor may a man put on woman's dress; for those who do these things are abominable to the LORD your God.

⁶When you come upon a bird's nest by the road, in a tree or on the ground,

with fledgelings or eggs in it and the mother bird on the nest, do not take both mother and young.

⁷ Let the mother bird go free, and take only the young; then you will prosper and enjoy long life.

⁸ When you build a new house, put a parapet along the roof, or you will bring the guilt of bloodshed on your house if anyone should fall from it.

⁹ You are not to sow two kinds of seed between your vine rows, or the full yield will be forfeit, both the yield of the seeds you sow and the fruit of the vineyard.

¹⁰ You are not to plough with an ox and a donkey yoked together.

¹¹ You are not to wear clothes woven with two kinds of yarn, wool and flax together.

¹² Make twisted tassels on the four corners of the garment which you wrap round you.

¹³ When a man takes a wife and, after intercourse, turns against her

¹⁴ and brings trumped-up charges against her, giving her a bad name and saying, I took this woman and slept with

her and did not find proof of virginity in her,

¹⁵ then the girl's father and mother should take the proof of her virginity to the elders of the town at the town gate.

¹⁶ The girl's father will say to the elders, I gave my daughter in marriage to this man, and he has turned against her.

¹⁷ He has trumped up a charge and said, I have not found proofs of virginity in your daughter. Here are the proofs. They must then spread the cloth before the elders of the town.

¹⁸ The elders must take the man and punish him:

¹⁹ they are to fine him a hundred pieces of silver because he has given a bad name to a virgin of Israel, and the money is to be handed over to the girl's father. She will remain his wife: he will not be free to divorce her all his days.

²⁰ If, on the other hand, the accusation turns out to be true, no proof of the girl's virginity being found,

²¹ then they must bring her out to the door of her father's house and the men of her town will stone her to death. She has committed an outrage in Israel by

playing the prostitute in her father's house: you must rid yourselves of this wickedness.

²²When a man is discovered lying with a married woman, both are to be put to death, the woman as well as the man who lay with her: you must purge Israel of this wickedness.

²³When a virgin is pledged in marriage to a man, and another man encounters her in the town and lies with her,

²⁴bring both of them out to the gate of that town and stone them to death; the girl because, although she was in the town, she did not cry for help, and the man because he violated another man's wife: you must rid yourselves of this wickedness.

²⁵But if it is out in the country that the man encounters and rapes such a girl, then the man alone is to be put to death because he lay with her.

²⁶Do nothing to the girl; no guilt deserving of death attaches to her: this case is like that of a man who attacks another and murders him:

²⁷the man came upon her in the country and, though the girl may have

cried for help, there was no one to come to her rescue.

²⁸When a man encounters a virgin who is not yet betrothed and forces her to lie with him, and they are discovered,

²⁹then the man who lies with her must give the girl's father fifty pieces of silver, and she will be his wife because he has violated her. He is not free to divorce her all his days.

³⁰A man must not take his father's wife: he must not bring shame on his father.

23¹ No man whose testicles have been crushed or whose organ has been cut off may become a member of the assembly of the LORD.

²No descendant of an irregular union, even down to the tenth generation, may become a member of the assembly of the LORD.

³No Ammonite or Moabite, even down to the tenth generation, may become a member of the assembly of the LORD. They must never become members of the assembly of the LORD

⁴because they did not meet you with food and water on your journey

from Egypt, and because they hired Balaam son of Beor from Pethor in Aram-naharaim to curse you.

⁵The LORD your God refused to listen to Balaam and turned the curse into a blessing for you, because the LORD your God loved you.

⁶As long as you live you are not to seek their welfare or their good.

⁷Do not regard an Edomite as an abomination, for he is your own kin; nor an Egyptian, for you were aliens in his land.

⁸The third generation of children born to them may become members of the assembly of the LORD.

⁹When you are encamped against an enemy, you must be careful to avoid any foulness.

¹⁰When one of your number is unclean because of an emission of seed at night, he must go outside the camp; he may not come into it.

¹¹Towards evening he is to wash himself in water, and at sunset he may re-enter the camp.

¹²You must have a sign outside the camp showing where you can withdraw to relieve yourself.

¹³As part of your equipment you are to have a trowel, and when you squat outside, you are to scrape a hole with it and then turn and cover your excrement.

¹⁴For the LORD your God moves with your camp, to keep you safe and to hand over your enemies as you advance, and your camp must be kept holy for fear that he should see something offensive and go with you no farther.

¹⁵You must not surrender to his master a slave who has taken refuge with you.

¹⁶Let him stay with you anywhere he chooses in any one of your settlements, wherever suits him best; you must not force him.

¹⁷No Israelite woman may become a temple-prostitute, nor may an Israelite man.

¹⁸You must not allow a common prostitute's fee, or the pay of a male prostitute, to be brought into the house of the LORD your God in fulfilment of any vow, for both of them are abominable to the LORD your God.

¹⁹You are not to exact interest on anything you lend to a fellow-countryman, whether money or food or anything else on which interest can be charged.

²⁰You may exact interest on a loan to a foreigner but not on a loan to a fellow-countryman, and then the LORD your God will bless you in all you undertake in the land which you are entering to occupy.

²¹When you make a vow to the LORD your God, do not put off its fulfilment; otherwise the LORD your God will require satisfaction from you and you will be guilty of sin.

²²If you choose not to make a vow, you will not be guilty of sin;

²³but if you voluntarily make a vow to the LORD your God, mind what you say and do what you have promised.

²⁴When you go into another man's vineyard, you may eat as many grapes as you wish to satisfy your hunger, but you may not put any into your basket.

²⁵When you go into another man's standing grain, you may pluck ears to

rub in your hands, but you may not put a sickle to the standing crop.

24¹ If a man has taken a woman in marriage, but she does not win his favour because he finds something offensive in her, and he writes her a certificate of divorce, gives it to her, and dismisses her,

² and if after leaving his house she goes off to become the wife of another man,

³ and this second husband turns against her and writes her a certificate of divorce, gives it to her, and dismisses her, or dies after making her his wife,

⁴ then her first husband who had dismissed her is not free to take her to be his wife again; for him she has become unclean. This would be abominable to the LORD, and you must not bring sin upon the land which the LORD your God is giving you as your holding.

⁵ When a man is newly married, he is not to be liable for military service or any other public duty. He must remain at home exempt from service for one year and be happy with the wife he has taken.

⁶No one may take millstones, or even the upper millstone alone, in pledge; that would be taking a life in pledge.

⁷When a man is found to have kidnapped a fellow-countryman, an Israelite, and to have treated him harshly or sold him, he must suffer the death penalty, and so you will rid yourselves of this wickedness.

⁸Be careful how you act in all cases of virulent skin disease; be careful to observe all that the levitical priests tell you; you must obey the instructions I gave them.

⁹Keep in mind what the LORD your God did to Miriam as you journeyed from Egypt.

¹⁰When you make any loan to anyone, do not enter his house to take a pledge from him.

¹¹Wait outside, and the person whose creditor you are must bring the pledge out to you.

¹²If he is a poor man, do not sleep in the cloak he has pledged.

¹³Return it to him at sunset so that he may sleep in it and bless you; then it will

be counted to your credit in the sight of the LORD your God.

¹⁴You must not keep back the wages of a man who is poor and needy, whether a fellow-countryman or an alien living in your country in one of your settlements.

¹⁵Pay him his wages on the same day before sunset, for he is poor and he relies on them: otherwise he may appeal to the LORD against you, and you will be guilty of sin.

¹⁶Parents are not to be put to death for their children, nor children for their parents; each one may be put to death only for his own sin.

¹⁷You must not deprive aliens and the fatherless of justice or take a widow's cloak in pledge.

¹⁸Bear in mind that you were slaves in Egypt and the LORD your God redeemed you from there; that is why I command you to do this.

¹⁹When you reap the harvest in your field and overlook a sheaf, do not go back to pick it up; it is to be left for the alien, the fatherless, and the widow, so that the LORD your God may bless you in all that you undertake.

²⁰When you beat your olive trees, do not strip them afterwards; what is left is for the alien, the fatherless, and the widow.

²¹When you gather the grapes from your vineyard, do not glean afterwards; what is left is for the alien, the fatherless, and the widow.

²²Keep in mind that you were slaves in Egypt; that is why I command you to do this.

25 ¹When two go to law and present themselves for judgement, the judges are to try the case; they must acquit the innocent and condemn the guilty.

²If the guilty party is sentenced to be flogged, the judge is to have him lie down and be beaten in his presence; the number of lashes will correspond to the gravity of the offence.

³They may give him forty strokes, but not more; otherwise, if they go farther and exceed this number, your fellow-countryman will have been publicly degraded.

⁴You are not to muzzle an ox while it is treading out the grain.

⁵When brothers live together and one of them dies without leaving a son, his widow is not to marry outside the family. Her husband's brother is to have intercourse with her; he should take her in marriage and do his duty by her as her husband's brother.

⁶The first son she bears will perpetuate the dead brother's name so that it may not be blotted out from Israel.

⁷But if the man is unwilling to take his brother's wife, she must go to the elders at the town gate and say, My husband's brother refuses to perpetuate his brother's name in Israel; he will not do his duty by me.

⁸At this the elders of the town should summon him and reason with him. If he still stands his ground and says, I refuse to take her,

⁹his brother's widow must go up to him in the presence of the elders, pull his sandal off his foot, spit in his face, and declare: Thus we requite the man who will not build up his brother's family.

¹⁰His family will be known in Israel as the house of the unsandalled man.

¹¹ When two men are fighting and the wife of one of them intervenes to drag her husband clear of his opponent, if she puts out her hand and catches hold of the man by the genitals,

¹² you must cut off her hand and show her no mercy.

¹³ You must not have unequal weights in your bag, one heavy, the other light.

¹⁴ You must not have unequal measures in your house, one large, the other small.

¹⁵ You must have true and correct weights and true and correct measures, so that you may enjoy long life in the land which the LORD your God is giving you.

¹⁶ All who do such things, all who deal dishonestly, are abominable to the LORD your God.

¹⁷ Bear in mind what the Amalekites did to you on your journey from Egypt,

¹⁸ how they fell on you on the road when you were faint and weary and cut off those at the rear, all who were lagging behind exhausted: they showed no fear of God.

¹⁹ When the LORD your God gives you peace from your enemies on every

side, in the land which he is giving you to occupy as your holding, you must without fail blot out all memory of Amalek from under heaven.

26 ¹AFTER you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving you to occupy as your holding and settle in it,

²you are to take some of the firstfruits of all the produce of the soil, which you harvest from the land which the LORD your God is giving you, and, having put them in a basket, go to the place which the LORD your God will choose as a dwelling for his name.

³When you come to the priest, whoever he is at that time, say to him, I acknowledge this day to the LORD your God that I have entered the land which the LORD swore to our forefathers to give us.

⁴The priest will receive the basket from your hand and set it down before the altar of the LORD your God.

⁵Then you must solemnly recite before the LORD your God: My father was a homeless Aramaean who went down to Egypt and lived there with a small band

of people, but there it became a great, powerful, and large nation.

⁶The Egyptians treated us harshly and humiliated us; they imposed cruel slavery on us.

⁷We cried to the LORD the God of our fathers for help, and he listened to us, and, when he saw our misery and hardship and oppression,

⁸the LORD led us out of Egypt with a strong hand and outstretched arm, with terrifying deeds, and with signs and portents.

⁹He brought us to this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey.

¹⁰Now I have brought here the firstfruits of the soil which you, LORD, have given me. You are then to set the basket before the LORD your God and bow in worship before him.

¹¹You are to rejoice, you and the Levites and the aliens living among you, in all the good things which the LORD your God has bestowed on you and your household.

¹²In the third year, the tithe-year, when you have finished taking the tithe of your

produce and have given it to the Levites and to the aliens, the fatherless, and the widows, so that they may eat it in your settlements and be well fed,

¹³then declare before the LORD your God: I have rid my house of the tithe that was holy to you and given it to the Levites, to the aliens, the fatherless, and the widows, according to all the commandments which you laid on me. I have not infringed or forgotten any of your commandments.

¹⁴I have not eaten any of the tithe while in mourning, nor have I got rid of any of it while unclean, nor offered any to the dead. I have obeyed the LORD my God, doing all that you commanded me.

¹⁵Look down from heaven, your holy dwelling-place, and bless your people Israel and the soil which you have given to us as you promised on oath to our forefathers, a land flowing with milk and honey.

¹⁶This day the LORD your God commands you to keep these statutes and laws: be careful to observe them with all your heart and soul.

¹⁷You have recognized the LORD this day as your God; you are to conform to his ways, to keep his statutes, his commandments, and his laws, and to obey him.

¹⁸The LORD has recognized you this day as his special possession, as he promised you, and you are to keep all his commandments;

¹⁹high above all the nations which he has made he will raise you, to bring him praise and fame and glory, and to be a people holy to the LORD your God, according to his promise.

27 ¹MOSES, with the elders of Israel, gave the people this charge: Keep all the commandments that I now lay upon you.

²On the day you cross the Jordan to the land which the LORD your God is giving you, you are to set up great stones. Coat them with plaster,

³and inscribe on them all the words of this law, when you have crossed over to enter the land which the LORD your God is giving you, a land flowing with milk and honey, as the LORD the God of your forefathers promised you.

⁴When you have crossed the Jordan you are to set up these stones on Mount Ebal, as I instruct you this day, and coat them with plaster.

⁵Build an altar there to the LORD your God, an altar of stones on which no iron tool is to be used.

⁶Build the altar of the LORD your God with blocks of undressed stone, and offer whole-offerings on it to the LORD your God.

⁷Slaughter shared-offerings and eat them there, and rejoice before the LORD your God.

⁸Inscribe on the stones all the words of this law, engraving them clearly and carefully.

⁹Moses and the levitical priests said to all Israel: Be silent, Israel, and listen; this day you have become a people belonging to the LORD your God.

¹⁰Obey the LORD your God, and observe his commandments and statutes that I now lay upon you.

¹¹That day Moses gave the people this command:

¹²When you have crossed the Jordan those who are to stand on Mount Gerizim

to bless the people are: Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin.

¹³Those who are to stand on Mount Ebal to pronounce the curse are: Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali.

¹⁴The Levites, in the hearing of all Israel, are to intone these words:

¹⁵A curse on anyone who carves an image or casts an idol, anything abominable to the LORD, a craftsman's handiwork, and sets it up in secret: the people must all respond, Amen.

¹⁶A curse on anyone who slights his father or his mother: the people must all say, Amen.

¹⁷A curse on anyone who moves his neighbour's boundary stone: the people must all say, Amen.

¹⁸A curse on anyone who misdirects a blind man: the people must all say, Amen.

¹⁹A curse on anyone who withholds justice from the alien, the fatherless, and the widow: the people must all say, Amen.

²⁰A curse on anyone who lies with his father's wife, for he brings shame

upon his father: the people must all say, Amen.

²¹ A curse on anyone who lies with any animal: the people must all say, Amen.

²² A curse on anyone who lies with his sister, whether his father's daughter or his mother's daughter: the people must all say, Amen.

²³ A curse on anyone who lies with his wife's mother: the people must all say, Amen.

²⁴ A curse on anyone who strikes another in secret: the people must all say, Amen.

²⁵ A curse on anyone who accepts payment for killing an innocent person: the people must all say, Amen.

²⁶ A curse on anyone who does not fulfil this law by doing all that it prescribes: the people must all say, Amen.

28¹ IF you faithfully obey the LORD your God by diligently observing all his commandments which I lay on you this day, then the LORD your God will raise you high above all nations of the earth,

²and the following blessings will all come and light on you, because you obey the LORD your God.

³A blessing on you in the town; a blessing on you in the country.

⁴A blessing on the fruit of your body, the fruit of your land and cattle, the offspring of your herds and lambing flocks.

⁵A blessing on your basket and your kneading trough.

⁶A blessing on you as you come in, and a blessing on you as you go out.

⁷May the LORD deliver up to you the enemies who attack you, and let them be put to rout before you. Though they come out against you by one way, they will flee before you by seven.

⁸May the LORD grant you a blessing in your granaries and on all your labours; may the LORD your God bless you in the land which he is giving you.

⁹The LORD will establish you as his own holy people, as he swore to you, provided you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and conform to his ways.

¹⁰All people on earth seeing that the LORD has named you as his very own will go in fear of you.

¹¹The LORD will make you prosper greatly in the fruit of your body and of your cattle, and in the fruit of the soil in the land which he swore to your forefathers to give you.

¹²May the LORD open the heavens for you, his rich storehouse, to give your land rain at the proper time and bless everything to which you turn your hand. You may lend to many nations, but borrow from none;

¹³the LORD will make you the head and not the tail: you will always be at the top and never at the bottom, if you listen to the commandments of the LORD your God, which I give you this day to keep and to fulfil.

¹⁴Deviate neither to right nor to left from all the things which I command you this day, and do not go after other gods to serve them.

¹⁵**BUT** if you will not obey the LORD your God by diligently observing all his commandments and statutes which I lay

upon you this day, then all the following curses will come and light upon you.

¹⁶A curse on you in the town, a curse in the country.

¹⁷A curse on your basket and your kneading trough.

¹⁸A curse on the fruit of your body, the fruit of your land, the offspring of your herds and your lambing flocks.

¹⁹A curse on you as you come in, and a curse on you as you go out.

²⁰May the LORD send on you cursing, confusion, and rebuke in whatever you are doing, until you are destroyed and soon perish for the evil you have done in forsaking him.

²¹May the LORD cause pestilence to haunt you until he has exterminated you out of the land which you are entering to occupy;

²²may the LORD afflict you with wasting disease and recurrent fever, ague, and eruptions; with drought, and black blight and red; and may these plague you until you perish.

²³May the skies above you be brazen, and the earth beneath you iron.

²⁴ May the LORD turn the rain in your country to fine sand, and may dust descend on you from the sky until you are blotted out.

²⁵ May the LORD put you to rout before your enemies. Though you go out against them by one way, you will flee before them by seven. May you be repugnant to all the kingdoms on earth.

²⁶ May your bodies become food for all the birds of the air and all the wild beasts, with no one to scare them off.

²⁷ May the LORD strike you with Egyptian boils and with tumours, scabs, and itch, for which you will find no cure.

²⁸ May the LORD strike you with madness, blindness, and stupefaction;

²⁹ so that you will grope about in broad daylight, just as a blind man gropes in darkness, and you will fail to find your way. You will be oppressed and robbed, day in, day out, with no one to save you.

³⁰ A woman will be betrothed to you, but someone will ravish her; you will build a house but not live in it; you will plant a vineyard but not enjoy its fruit.

³¹ Your ox will be slaughtered before your eyes, but you will not eat any of it;

and while you watch your donkey will be stolen and will not come back to you; your sheep will be given to the enemy, and there will be no one to recover them.

³²Your sons and daughters will be given to another people with you looking on; your eyes will strain after them all day long, but you will be powerless.

³³A nation which you do not know will eat the products of your land and of all your toil, and your lot will be nothing but grievous oppression.

³⁴The sights you see will drive you mad.

³⁵May the LORD strike you on knee and leg with severe boils for which you will find no cure; they will spread from the sole of your foot to the crown of your head.

³⁶May the LORD give you up, you and the king whom you have appointed, to a nation which neither you nor your fathers have known, and there you will serve other gods, gods of wood and stone.

³⁷You will become a horror, a byword, and an object-lesson to all the peoples amongst whom the LORD disperses you.

³⁸You will carry plentiful seed to your fields, but you will harvest little, for locusts will devour it.

³⁹You will plant vineyards and cultivate them, but you will not drink the wine or gather the grapes, for the grub will eat them.

⁴⁰You will have olive trees everywhere in your territory, but you will not anoint yourselves with the oil, for your olives will drop off.

⁴¹You will have sons and daughters, but they will not remain yours, for they will go into captivity.

⁴²All your trees and the fruit of the ground will be infested with the mole-cricket.

⁴³The alien who lives with you will raise himself higher and higher, and you will sink lower and lower.

⁴⁴He will lend to you but you will not lend to him: he will be the head and you the tail.

⁴⁵All these curses will come on you; they will pursue and overtake you until you are destroyed, because you did not obey the LORD your God by keeping the

commandments and statutes which he gave you.

⁴⁶They will be a sign and a portent to you and your descendants for ever.

⁴⁷You have not served the LORD your God, rejoicing in gladness of heart over all your blessings;

⁴⁸therefore in hunger and thirst, in nakedness and extreme want, you will have to serve the enemies whom the LORD will send against you. He will put a yoke of iron on your neck until you are subdued.

⁴⁹May the LORD bring against you from afar, from the end of the earth, a nation which will swoop upon you like a vulture, a nation whose language you will not understand,

⁵⁰a nation of grim aspect with no regard for the old, no pity for the young.

⁵¹When you have been subdued, they will devour the offspring of your cattle and the fruit of your land. They will leave you neither grain nor new wine nor oil, neither calves from your herds nor lambs from your flocks, until you are brought to ruin.

⁵²They will besiege you in all your towns until they overthrow your high fortifications, those walls throughout your land in which you trust. They will besiege you within all your towns, throughout the land which the LORD your God has given you.

⁵³Then, because of the dire straits to which you will be reduced when your enemy besieges you, you will eat your own children, the flesh of your sons and daughters whom the LORD your God has given you.

⁵⁴The most delicately bred and sensitive man will not share with his brother, or with the wife he loves, or with his own remaining children

⁵⁵any of the meat which he is eating, the flesh of his own children. He is left with nothing else because of the dire straits to which you will be reduced within all your towns when the enemy besieges you.

⁵⁶The most delicately bred and sensitive woman, so delicate and sensitive that she would never venture to put a foot to the ground, will not share with her own husband or her son or her daughter

⁵⁷ the afterbirth which she expels, or any boy or girl that she may bear. During the siege she herself will eat them secretly in her extreme want, in the dire straits to which the enemy will reduce you in your towns.

⁵⁸ If you do not observe and fulfil all the law written down in this book, if you do not revere this honoured and dreaded name, this name the LORD your God,

⁵⁹ then the LORD will strike you and your descendants with unimaginable plagues, virulent and chronic, and with lingering and severe sickness.

⁶⁰ He will bring on you once again all the diseases of Egypt which you dreaded, and they will cling to you.

⁶¹ The LORD will bring upon you sickness and plague of every kind, even those not recorded in this book of the law, until you are destroyed.

⁶² Then you who were countless as the stars in the heavens will be left few in number, because you did not obey the LORD your God.

⁶³ Just as the LORD took delight in you, prospering you and increasing your numbers, so now it will be his delight to

ruin and exterminate you, and you will be uprooted from the land which you are entering to occupy.

⁶⁴The LORD will disperse you among all peoples from one end of the earth to the other, and there you will serve other gods of whom neither you nor your forefathers have had experience, gods of wood and stone.

⁶⁵Among those nations you will find no peace, no resting-place for the sole of your foot. Then the LORD will give you an unquiet mind, dim eyes, and failing appetite.

⁶⁶Your life will hang continually in suspense, fear will beset you night and day, and you will find no security all your life long.

⁶⁷Every morning you will say, Would God it were evening! and every evening, Would God it were morning! because of the terror that fills your heart and because of the sights you see.

⁶⁸The LORD will bring you back sorrowing to Egypt by that very road of which I said to you, You shall not see that road again; there you will offer

yourselves for sale as slaves to your enemies, but there will be no buyer.

29¹ These are the terms of the covenant which the LORD commanded Moses to make with the Israelites in Moab, in addition to the covenant which he made with them on Horeb.

² MOSES summoned all the Israelites and addressed them: You have seen for yourselves all that the LORD did in Egypt to Pharaoh, to all his courtiers, and to his whole land,

³ the great challenge which you yourselves witnessed, those great signs and portents,

⁴ but to this day the LORD has not given you a mind to understand or eyes to see or ears to hear.

⁵ I led you for forty years in the wilderness; the clothes on your back did not wear out, nor did your sandals become worn and fall off your feet;

⁶ you ate no bread and drank no wine or strong drink, in order that you might learn that I am the LORD your God.

⁷ When you reached this place King Sihon of Heshbon and King Og of Bashan

launched an attack on us. We defeated them,

⁸took their land, and gave it as a holding to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh.

⁹Observe the provisions of this covenant and keep them so that you may be successful in all you do.

¹⁰You are standing here today before the LORD your God, all of you leaders of tribes, elders, and officers, all the men of Israel,

¹¹with your dependants, your wives, the aliens who live in your camp -- all of them, from those who cut wood for you to those who draw water --

¹²and you are ready to accept the oath and enter into the covenant which the LORD your God is making with you now.

¹³The covenant is to constitute you his people this day, and he will be your God, as he promised you and as he swore to your forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

¹⁴It is not with you alone that I am making this covenant and this oath,

¹⁵but with all those who stand here with us today before the LORD our God

and also with those who are not here with us today.

¹⁶You know how we lived in Egypt and how we and you, as we passed through the nations,

¹⁷saw their loathsome idols and the false gods they had, gods made of wood and stone, of silver and gold.

¹⁸If there should be among you a man or woman, family or tribe, who is moved today to turn from the LORD our God and to go and serve the gods of those nations -- if there is among you such a root from which springs gall and wormwood,

¹⁹then any such person on hearing the terms of this oath may inwardly flatter himself and think, All will be well with me even if I follow the promptings of my stubborn heart; but this will bring sweeping disaster.

²⁰The LORD will not be willing to forgive him; but his anger and resentment will overwhelm this person, and the curses described in this book will fall heavily on him, and the LORD will blot out his name from under heaven.

²¹ The LORD will single him out from all the tribes of Israel for disaster to fall on him, according to the oath required by the covenant and prescribed in this book of the law.

²² The next generation, your children who follow you, and the foreigners who come from distant countries, will see the plagues of this land and the diseases which the LORD has brought upon its people,

²³ the whole land burnt up with brimstone and salt, nothing sown, nothing growing, not a plant in sight. It will be as desolate as Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboyim, when the LORD overthrew them in raging anger.

²⁴ Then they, and all the nations with them, will ask, Why has the LORD so afflicted this land? Why this great outburst of anger?

²⁵ The answer will be: Because they forsook the covenant of the LORD the God of their forefathers which he made with them when he brought them out of Egypt.

²⁶They began to serve other gods and to bow down to them, gods of whom they had no experience and whom the LORD had not assigned to them.

²⁷The anger of the LORD was roused against that land, so that he brought on it all the curses described in this book.

²⁸The LORD uprooted them from their soil in anger, in rage and great fury, and banished them to another land, where they are to this day.

²⁹There are things hidden, and they belong to the LORD our God, but what is revealed belongs to us and our children for ever; it is for us to observe all that is prescribed in this law.

30¹When all these things have happened to you, the blessing and the curse of which I have offered you the choice, if you take them to heart there among all the nations to which the LORD your God has banished you,

²if you and your children turn back to him and obey him heart and soul in all that I command you this day,

³then the LORD your God will restore your fortunes. In compassion for you he

will gather you again from all the peoples to which he has dispersed you.

⁴Even though he has banished you to the ends of the earth, the LORD your God will gather you from there, and from there he will fetch you home.

⁵The LORD your God will bring you into the land which your forefathers occupied, and you will occupy it again; then he will bring you prosperity and make you more numerous than your forefathers were.

⁶The LORD your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you will love him with all your heart and soul and you will live.

⁷The LORD your God will turn all these curses against your enemies and the foes who persecute you.

⁸Then you will obey the LORD once more and keep all his commandments which I give you this day.

⁹The LORD your God will make you more than prosperous in all that you do, in the fruit of your body and of your cattle and in the fruits of your soil; for, when you obey the LORD your

God by keeping his commandments and statutes, as they are written in this book of the law, and when you turn back to the LORD your God with all your heart and soul, he will again rejoice over you and be good to you, as he rejoiced over your forefathers.

¹⁰ (30: 9)

¹¹ This commandment that I lay on you today is not too difficult for you or beyond your reach.

¹² It is not in the heavens, that you should say, Who will go up to the heavens for us to fetch it and tell it to us, so that we can keep it?

¹³ Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, Who will cross the sea for us to fetch it and tell it to us, so that we can keep it?

¹⁴ It is a thing very near to you, on your lips and in your heart ready to be kept.

¹⁵ Today I offer you the choice of life and good, or death and evil.

¹⁶ If you obey the commandments of the LORD your God which I give you this day, by loving the LORD your God, conforming to his ways, and keeping his commandments, statutes, and laws,

then you will live and increase, and the LORD your God will bless you in the land which you are about to enter to occupy.

¹⁷But if in your heart you turn away and do not listen, and you are led astray to worship other gods and serve them,

¹⁸I tell you here and now that you will perish, and not enjoy long life in the land which you will enter to occupy after crossing the Jordan.

¹⁹I summon heaven and earth to witness against you this day: I offer you the choice of life or death, blessing or curse. Choose life and you and your descendants will live;

²⁰love the LORD your God, obey him, and hold fast to him: that is life for you and length of days on the soil which the LORD swore to give to your forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

31 ¹Moses, finishing this address to all Israel,

²went on to say: At a hundred and twenty years old, I am no longer able to lead the campaign; and the LORD has told me that I shall not cross the Jordan.

³It is the LORD your God who will cross over at your head and destroy

these nations before your advance, and you will occupy their lands; and, as he directed, Joshua will lead you across.

⁴The LORD will do to these nations as he did to Sihon and Og, kings of the Amorites, and to their lands, when he destroyed them.

⁵The LORD will deliver them into your power, and you are to do to them as I have commanded you.

⁶Be strong and resolute; you must not dread them or be afraid, for the LORD your God himself accompanies you; he will not let you down or forsake you.

⁷Moses summoned Joshua and in the sight of all Israel said to him: Be strong and resolute, for it is you who will lead this people into the land which the LORD swore to give their forefathers; you are to bring them into possession of it.

⁸The LORD himself goes at your head; he will be with you; he will not let you down or forsake you. Do not be afraid or discouraged.

⁹Moses wrote down this law and gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi, who carried the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD, and to all the elders of Israel.

¹⁰ Moses gave them this command: At the end of every seven years, at the appointed time for the year of remission, at the pilgrim-feast of Booths,

¹¹ when all Israel comes to appear before the LORD your God in the place which he will choose, this law is to be read in the hearing of all Israel.

¹² Assemble the people, men, women, and dependants, together with the aliens residing in your settlements, so that they may listen, and learn to fear the LORD your God and observe all these laws with care.

¹³ Their children, too, who do not know the laws, will hear them, and learn to fear the LORD your God all their lives in the land which you will occupy after crossing the Jordan.

¹⁴ THE LORD said to Moses, The time of your death is drawing near. Summon Joshua, and present yourselves in the Tent of Meeting so that I may give him his commission. When Moses and Joshua went and presented themselves in the Tent of Meeting,

¹⁵the LORD appeared in a pillar of cloud, which stood over the entrance of the Tent.

¹⁶The LORD said to Moses, You are about to die and join your forefathers, and then this people, when they come into the land and live among foreigners, will wantonly worship their gods; they will abandon me and break the covenant which I have made with them.

¹⁷My anger will be roused against them on that day, and I shall abandon them and hide my face from them. They will be an easy prey, and many terrible disasters will come upon them. On that day they will say, These disasters have come because our God is not among us.

¹⁸On that day I shall hide my face because of all the evil they have done in turning to other gods.

¹⁹Now write down this song and teach it to the Israelites; make them repeat it, so that it may be a witness for me against them.

²⁰When I have brought them into the land which I swore to give to their forefathers, a land flowing with milk and honey, and they have plenty to eat and

are thriving, then they will turn to other gods and serve them, spurning me and breaking my covenant;

²¹ and many terrible disasters will follow. Then this song will confront them as a witness, for it will not be forgotten by their descendants. For even before I bring them into the land which I swore to give them, I already know which way their thoughts incline.

²² That day Moses wrote down this song and taught it to the Israelites.

²³ The LORD gave Joshua son of Nun his commission in these words: Be strong and resolute; for you are to lead the Israelites into the land which I swore to give them, and I shall be with you.

²⁴ When Moses had finished writing down these laws from beginning to end in a book,

²⁵ he gave this command to the Levites who carried the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD:

²⁶ Take this book of the law and put it beside the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD your God, and let it be there as a witness against you.

²⁷ For I know how defiant and stubborn you are; even during my lifetime you have defied the LORD; how much more, then, will you do so after my death!

²⁸ Assemble for me all the elders of your tribes and your officers; I shall say all these words in their hearing and summon heaven and earth to witness against them.

²⁹ For I know that, when I am dead, you will take to infamous practices and turn aside from the way which I told you to follow. In days to come disaster will befall you, for in doing what is wrong in the eyes of the LORD you provoked him to anger.

³⁰ MOSES recited this song from beginning to end in the hearing of the whole assembly of Israel:

32¹ Give ear, you heavens, to what I say; listen, earth, to the words I speak.

² May my teaching fall like raindrops, my words distil like dew, like fine rain on tender grass, like lavish showers on growing plants.

³When I proclaim the name of the LORD, you will respond: Great is our God,

⁴the Creator, whose work is perfect, for all his ways are just, a faithful God who does no wrong; how righteous and true is he!

⁵Perverted and crooked generation whose faults have proved you no children of his,

⁶is this how you repay the LORD, you senseless, stupid people? Is he not your father who formed you? Did he not make you and establish you?

⁷Remember the days of old, think of the years, age upon age; ask your father to inform you, the elders to tell you.

⁸When the Most High gave each nation its heritage, when he divided all mankind, he laid down the boundaries for peoples according to the number of the sons of God;

⁹but the LORD's share was his own people, Jacob was his allotted portion.

¹⁰He found his people in a desert land, in a barren, howling waste. He protected and trained them, he guarded them as the apple of his eye.

¹¹ As an eagle watches over its nest, hovers above its young, spreads its pinions and takes them up, and bears them on its wings,

¹² the LORD alone led his people, no alien god at his side.

¹³ He made them ride over the heights of the earth and fed them on the harvest of the fields; he satisfied them with honey from the crags and oil from the flinty rock,

¹⁴ curds from the cattle, milk from the herd, the fat of lambs' kidneys, of Bashan rams, and of goats, with the finest flour of wheat; and you, his people, drank red wine from the juice of the grape.

¹⁵ Jacob ate and was well fed, Jeshurun grew fat and unruly, they grew fat and bloated and sleek. They forsook God their Maker and dishonoured the Rock of their salvation.

¹⁶ They roused his jealousy with alien gods and provoked him to anger with abominable practices.

¹⁷ They sacrificed to demons that are no gods, to gods who were strangers to them; they consorted with upstart gods

from their neighbours, gods whom your fathers did not acknowledge.

¹⁸You forsook the Creator who begot you and ceased to care for God who brought you to birth.

¹⁹The LORD saw and spurned them; his own sons and daughters provoked his anger.

²⁰I shall hide my face from them, he said; let me see what their end will be, for they are a subversive generation, children not to be trusted.

²¹They roused my jealousy with a god of no account, with their worthless idols they provoked me to anger; so I shall rouse their jealousy with a people of no account, with a foolish nation I shall provoke them.

²²For fire is set ablaze by my anger, it burns to the depths of Sheol; it devours earth and its harvest and the flames reach the very roots of the mountains.

²³I shall heap on them one disaster after another, and expend my arrows on them:

²⁴pangs of hunger, ravages of plague, and bitter pestilence. I shall harry them with the fangs of wild beasts and the

poison of creatures that crawl in the dust.

²⁵The sword will make orphans in the streets, make widows in their homes; it will take toll of young men and girls, of babes in arms as well as of the aged.

²⁶I had resolved to strike them down and to destroy all memory of them,

²⁷but I feared that I should be provoked by their foes, that their enemies would take the credit, saying, It was not the LORD, but we who got the upper hand.

²⁸They are a nation devoid of good counsel, that lacks all understanding.

²⁹If only they had the wisdom to discern this and understand what their end is to be!

³⁰How could one man rout a thousand of them, how could two put ten thousand to flight, if their Rock had not sold them to their enemies, if the LORD had not handed them over?

³¹For the enemy have no Rock like ours; in themselves they are mere fools.

³²Their vines are from the vines of Sodom, grown on the terraces of Gomorrah; their grapes are poisonous, the clusters bitter to the taste.

³³ Their wine is the venom of serpents,
the cruel poison of asps;

³⁴ all this I have in reserve, sealed up in
my storehouses

³⁵ till the day of punishment and
vengeance, till the moment when their
foot slips; for the day of their downfall is
near, their doom is fast approaching.

³⁶ The LORD will judge his people and
have compassion on his servants; for he
will see that their strength is gone: no
one, either fettered or free, is left.

³⁷ He will ask, Where are your gods, the
rock in which you sought refuge,

³⁸ the gods who ate the fat of your
sacrifices and drank the wine of your
drink-offerings? Let them rise to help
you! Let them be your protection!

³⁹ See now that I, I am He, and besides
me there is no god: I put to death and
I keep alive, I inflict wounds and I heal;
there is no rescue from my grasp.

⁴⁰ I raise my hand towards heaven and
swear: As I live for ever,

⁴¹ when I have whetted my flashing
sword, when I have set my hand to
judgement, then I shall punish my

adversaries and wreak vengeance on my foes.

⁴²I shall make my arrows drunk with blood, my sword will devour flesh, blood of slain and captives, the heads of the enemy princes.

⁴³Rejoice with him, you heavens, bow down, all you gods, before him; for he will avenge the blood of his sons and take vengeance on his adversaries; he will punish those who hate him and cleanse his people's land.

⁴⁴These are the words of the song that Moses, when he came with Joshua son of Nun, recited in full in the hearing of the people.

⁴⁵When Moses had finished reciting all these words to Israel

⁴⁶he said: Take to heart all the warnings which I give you this day: command your children to be careful to observe all the words of this law.

⁴⁷For you they are no empty words; they are your very life, and by them you will enjoy long life in the land which you are to occupy after crossing the Jordan.

⁴⁸That same day the LORD said to Moses,

⁴⁹Go up the mountain of the Abarim, Mount Nebo in Moab, to the east of Jericho, and view the land of Canaan that I am giving to the Israelites for their possession.

⁵⁰On this mountain you will die and be gathered to your father's kin, just as Aaron your brother died on Mount Hor and was gathered to his father's kin.

⁵¹This is because both of you broke faith with me at the waters of Meribah-kadesh in the wilderness of Zin, when you did not uphold my holiness among the Israelites.

⁵²You may see the land from a distance, but you may not enter the land I am giving to the Israelites.

33¹ THIS is the blessing that Moses, the man of God, pronounced on the Israelites before his death:

²The LORD came from Sinai and shone forth from Seir. He appeared from Mount Paran, and with him were myriads of holy ones streaming along at his right hand.

³Truly he loves his people and blesses his holy ones. They sit at his feet and receive his instruction,

⁴ the law which Moses laid upon us, as a possession for the assembly of Jacob.

⁵ Then a king arose in Jeshurun, when the chiefs of the people were assembled together with all the tribes of Israel.

⁶ Of Reuben he said: May Reuben live and not die out, but may he be few in number.

⁷ And of Judah he said this: Hear, LORD, the cry of Judah and join him to his people; strengthen his hands for him, be his helper against his adversaries.

⁸ Of Levi he said: Give your Thummim to Levi, your Urim to your loyal servant whom you tested at Massah, for whom you pleaded at the waters of Meribah,

⁹ who said of his parents, I do not know them, who did not acknowledge his brothers, who disowned his children. But they observe your word and keep your covenant;

¹⁰ they teach your precepts to Jacob, your law to Israel. They furnish you with the smoke of sacrifice and offerings on your altar.

¹¹ Bless his powers, LORD, and accept the work of his hands. Strike his

adversaries hip and thigh, and may those hostile to him rise no more.

¹²Of Benjamin he said: The LORD's beloved dwells securely, the High God shields him all the day long, and he dwells under his protection.

¹³Of Joseph he said: May the LORD's blessing be on his land with choice fruit watered from heaven above and from the deep that lies below,

¹⁴with choice fruit ripened by the sun, choice fruit, the produce of the months,

¹⁵with all good things from the ancient mountains, the choice fruit of the everlasting hills,

¹⁶the choice fruits of earth and its fullness, by the favour of him who dwells in the burning bush. May this rest on the head of Joseph, on the brow of him who was prince among his brothers.

¹⁷In majesty he shall be like a firstborn bull, his horns those of a wild ox with which he will gore nations and drive them to the ends of the earth. Such will be the myriads of Ephraim, and such the thousands of Manasseh.

¹⁸Of Zebulun he said: Rejoice, Zebulun, when you set forth, rejoice in your tents, Issachar.

¹⁹They will summon peoples to the mountain; there they will offer true sacrifices, for they will draw from the abundance of the sea, from the hidden wealth of the sand.

²⁰Of Gad he said: Blessed be Gad, in his wide domain; he couches like a lion tearing an arm or a scalp.

²¹He chose the best for himself, for to him was allotted a ruler's portion, when the chiefs of the people were assembled together. He did what the LORD deemed right, observing his ordinances for Israel.

²²Of Dan he said: Dan is a lion's cub springing out from Bashan.

²³Of Naphtali he said: Naphtali is richly favoured and full of the blessings of the LORD; his domain stretches to the sea and southward.

²⁴Of Asher he said: Asher is the most blest of sons; may he be the favourite among his brothers and bathe his feet in oil!

²⁵ May your bolts be of iron and bronze, and your strength last as long as you live.

²⁶ There is none like the God of Jeshurun who rides on the heavens to your aid, on the clouds in his glory,

²⁷ who humbled the gods of old and subdued the ancient powers; who drove out the enemy before you and gave the command to destroy.

²⁸ Israel lives in security, and Jacob dwells alone in a land of grain and wine where the skies drip with dew.

²⁹ Happy are you, Israel, peerless, set free! The LORD is the shield that guards you, the Blessed One is your glorious sword. When your enemies come cringing to you, you will trample their backs underfoot.

34¹ MOSES went up from the lowlands of Moab to Mount Nebo, to the top of Pisgah eastwards from Jericho, and the LORD showed him the whole land, from Gilead to Dan;

² the whole of Naphtali; the territory of Ephraim and Manasseh, and all Judah as far as the western sea;

³ the Negeb and the plain; the valley of Jericho, city of palm trees, as far as Zoar.

⁴ The LORD said to him, This is the land which I swore to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that I would give to their descendants. I have let you see it with your own eyes, but you will not cross over into it.

⁵ There in the Moabite country Moses the servant of the LORD died, as the LORD had said.

⁶ He was buried in a valley in Moab opposite Beth-peor; but to this day no one knows his burial-place.

⁷ Moses was a hundred and twenty years old when he died, his sight undimmed, his vigour unimpaired.

⁸ The Israelites wept for Moses in the lowlands of Moab for thirty days. The time of mourning for Moses came to an end.

⁹ Joshua son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him. The Israelites listened to him and did what the LORD had commanded Moses.

¹⁰There has never yet risen in Israel a prophet like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face:

¹¹remember all the signs and portents which the LORD sent him to show in Egypt to Pharaoh and all his servants and the whole land;

¹²remember the strong hand of Moses and the awesome deeds which he did in the sight of all Israel.

Joshua

1 ¹ AFTER the death of Moses the LORD's servant, the LORD said to Joshua son of Nun, Moses' assistant,

² Now that my servant Moses is dead, get ready to cross the Jordan, you and all this people, to the land which I am giving to the Israelites.

³ Every place where you set foot is yours: I have given it to you, as I promised Moses.

⁴ From the desert and this Lebanon to the great river, the Euphrates, and across all the Hittite country westwards to the Great Sea, all of it is to be your territory.

⁵ As long as you live no one will be able to stand against you: as I was with Moses, so shall I be with you; I shall not fail you or forsake you.

⁶ Be strong, be resolute; it is you who are to put this people in possession of the land which I swore to their forefathers I would give them.

⁷ Only be very strong and resolute. Observe diligently all the law which my servant Moses has given you; if you would succeed wherever you go, you must not swerve from it either to right or to left.

⁸ This book of the law must never be off your lips; you must keep it in mind day and night so that you may diligently observe everything that is written in it. Then you will prosper and be successful in everything you do.

⁹ This is my command: be strong, be resolute; do not be fearful or discouraged, for wherever you go the LORD your God is with you.

¹⁰ Then Joshua instructed the officers

¹¹ to pass through the camp and give this order to the people: Get food ready to take with you, for within three days you will be crossing this Jordan to occupy the country which the LORD your God is giving you to possess.

¹² To the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, Joshua said,

¹³ Remember what Moses the servant of the LORD commanded when he said, The

LORD your God will grant you security here and will give you this territory.

¹⁴Your wives and dependants and your livestock may stay east of the Jordan in the territory which Moses has assigned you; but as for yourselves, all the warriors among you must cross over as a fighting force at the head of your kinsmen. You are to assist them,

¹⁵until the LORD grants them security like you have, and they too take possession of the land which the LORD your God is giving them. You may then return and occupy the land which is your possession, the territory which Moses the servant of the LORD has assigned you east of the Jordan.

¹⁶They answered Joshua, Whatever you tell us, we shall do; wherever you send us, we shall go.

¹⁷As we obeyed Moses in all things, so shall we obey you; and may the LORD your God be with you as he was with Moses!

¹⁸Anyone who rebels against your command, and fails to carry out all your orders, is to be put to death. Only be strong and resolute.

2¹ JOSHUA son of Nun sent out two spies secretly from Shittim with orders to reconnoitre the land and especially Jericho. The two men set off and came to the house of a prostitute named Rahab to spend the night there.

²When it was reported to the king of Jericho that some Israelites had arrived that night to explore the country,

³he sent word to Rahab: Bring out the men who have come to you and are now in your house, for they have come to spy out the whole country.

⁴The woman, who had taken the two men and hidden them, replied, True, the men did come to me, but I did not know where they came from;

⁵and at nightfall when it was time to shut the gate, they had gone. I do not know where they were going, but if you hurry after them you may overtake them.

⁶In fact, she had brought them up on to the roof and concealed them among the stalks of flax which she had laid out there in rows.

⁷The messengers went in pursuit of them in the direction of the fords of the

Jordan, and as soon as they had gone out the gate was closed.

⁸The men had not yet settled down, when Rahab came up to them on the roof,

⁹and said, I know that the LORD has given the land to you; terror of you has fallen upon us, and the whole country is panic-stricken.

¹⁰We have heard how the LORD dried up the waters of the Red Sea before you when you came out of Egypt, and what you did to Sihon and Og, the two Amorite kings beyond the Jordan, for you destroyed them.

¹¹When we heard this, our courage failed; your coming has left no spirit in any of us; for the LORD your God is God in heaven above and on earth below.

¹²Swear to me by the LORD that you will keep faith with my family, as I have kept faith with you. Give me a token of good faith;

¹³promise that you will spare the lives of my father and mother, my brothers and sisters, and all who belong to them, and preserve us from death.

¹⁴The men replied, Our lives for yours, so long as you do not betray our business. When the LORD gives us the country, we shall deal loyally and faithfully by you.

¹⁵She then let them down through a window by a rope; for the house where she lived was on an angle of the wall.

¹⁶Make for the hills, she said, or the pursuers will come upon you. Hide there for three days until they return; then go on your way.

¹⁷The men warned her that, unless she did what they told her, they would be free from the oath she had made them take.

¹⁸When we invade the land, they said, you must fasten this strand of scarlet cord in the window through which you have lowered us, and get everybody together here inside the house, your father and mother, your brothers, and all your family.

¹⁹Should anybody go out of doors into the street, his blood will be on his own head; we shall be free of the oath. But if a hand is laid on anyone who stays

indoors with you, his blood be on our heads!

²⁰Remember too that, if you betray our business, then we shall be free of the oath you have made us take.

²¹It shall be as you say, she replied, and sent them on their way. When they had gone, she fastened the strand of scarlet cord in the window.

²²The men made their way into the hills and stayed there for three days until the pursuers returned. They had searched all along the road, but had not found them.

²³The two men then came down from the hills and crossed the river. When they joined up with Joshua son of Nun, they reported all that had happened to them.

²⁴The LORD has delivered the whole country into our hands, they said; the inhabitants are all panic-stricken at our approach.

3¹Early in the morning Joshua and all the Israelites set out from Shittim and came to the Jordan, where they encamped before crossing.

²At the end of three days the officers passed through the camp,

³ giving the people these instructions: When you see the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD your God being carried forward by the levitical priests, then you too must leave your positions and set out. Follow it,

⁴ but do not go close to it; keep some distance behind, about two thousand cubits. It will show you the route you are to follow, for you have not travelled this way before.

⁵ Joshua said to the people, Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the LORD will perform a great miracle among you.

⁶ To the priests he said, Lift the Ark of the Covenant and move ahead of the people. So they lifted it up and went at the head of the people.

⁷ The LORD said to Joshua, Today I shall begin to exalt you in the eyes of all Israel, and they will know that I shall be with you as I was with Moses.

⁸ Give this order to the priests who carry the Ark of the Covenant: When you come to the edge of the waters of the Jordan, you are to take your stand in the river.

⁹Joshua said to the Israelites, Draw near and listen to the words of the LORD your God.

¹⁰He went on, By this you will know that the living God is among you and that he will without fail drive out before you the Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites, and Jebusites:

¹¹the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord of all the earth is to cross the Jordan at your head.

¹²Choose now twelve men from the tribes of Israel, one from each tribe.

¹³As soon as the priests carrying the Ark of the LORD, the Lord of all the earth, set foot in the waters of the Jordan, then the waters of the Jordan will be cut off; the water coming down from upstream will stand piled up like a bank.

¹⁴The people set out from their encampment to cross the Jordan, with the priests in front carrying the Ark of the Covenant.

¹⁵Now the Jordan is in full flood in all its reaches throughout the time of harvest, but as soon as the priests reached the

Jordan and their feet touched the water at the edge,

¹⁶the water flowing down from upstream was brought to a standstill; it piled up like a bank for a long way back, as far as Adam, a town near Zarethan. The water coming down to the sea of the Arabah, the Dead Sea, was completely cut off, and the people crossed over opposite Jericho.

¹⁷The priests carrying the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD stood firmly on the dry bed in the middle of the river, and all Israel passed over on dry ground, until the whole nation had completed the crossing of the Jordan.

4¹WHEN the whole nation had completed the crossing of the Jordan, the LORD said to Joshua,

²Choose twelve men from the people, one from each tribe,

³and order them to take up twelve stones from this place in the middle of the Jordan, where the priests have taken their stand. They are to carry the stones across and place them in the camp where you spend the night.

⁴Joshua summoned the twelve Israelites whom he had appointed, one man from each tribe,

⁵and said to them, Go over in front of the Ark of the LORD your God as far as the middle of the Jordan, and let each of you take up a stone on his shoulder, one for each of the tribes of Israel.

⁶These stones are to stand as a memorial among you: in days to come, when your children ask what these stones mean,

⁷you will tell them how the waters of the Jordan were cut off before the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD; when it crossed the Jordan the waters of the Jordan were cut off. These stones will always be a reminder to the Israelites.

⁸The Israelites did as Joshua had commanded: they took up twelve stones from the middle of the Jordan, as the LORD had instructed Joshua, one for each of the tribes of Israel, carried them across to the camp, and placed them there.

⁹Joshua also erected twelve stones in the middle of the Jordan at the place where the priests who carried the Ark of

the Covenant had stood; they are there to this day.

¹⁰The priests carrying the Ark remained standing in the middle of the Jordan until every command which the LORD had told Joshua to give the people was fulfilled. The people crossed hurriedly,

¹¹and when they had all got across, then the Ark of the LORD crossed, and the priests with it to lead the people.

¹²At the head of the Israelites, there crossed over the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, as a fighting force, as Moses had told them to do;

¹³about forty thousand strong, drafted for active service, they crossed over to the lowlands of Jericho in the presence of the LORD to do battle.

¹⁴That day the LORD exalted Joshua in the eyes of all Israel, and the people revered him, as they had revered Moses all his life.

¹⁵The LORD said to Joshua,

¹⁶Command the priests carrying the Ark of the Testimony to come up from the Jordan.

¹⁷ Joshua passed the command to the priests;

¹⁸ and no sooner had the priests carrying the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD come up from the river bed, and set foot on dry land, than the waters of the Jordan returned to their course and filled up all its reaches as before.

¹⁹ On the tenth day of the first month the people went up from the Jordan and encamped in Gilgal in the district east of Jericho,

²⁰ and there Joshua set up these twelve stones they had taken from the Jordan.

²¹ He said to the Israelites, In days to come, when your descendants ask their fathers what these stones mean,

²² you are to explain to them that Israel crossed this Jordan on dry land,

²³ for the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan in front of you until you had gone across, just as the LORD your God did at the Red Sea when he dried it up for us until we had crossed.

²⁴ Thus all people on earth will know how strong is the hand of the LORD; and thus you will always stand in awe of the LORD your God.

5¹ When all the Amorite kings to the west of the Jordan and all the Canaanite kings by the sea-coast heard how the LORD had dried up the waters of the Jordan before the advance of the Israelites until they had crossed, their courage failed them; there was no more spirit left in them because of the Israelites.

² At that time the LORD said to Joshua, Fashion knives out of flint, and make Israel a circumcised people again.

³ So Joshua made knives of flint, and the Israelites were circumcised at Gibeath-haaraloth.

⁴ This is why he had them circumcised: all the males who came out of Egypt, all the fighting men, had died in the wilderness on the journey from Egypt.

⁵ The people who came out of Egypt had all been circumcised, but not those who had been born in the wilderness during the journey.

⁶ The Israelites had travelled in the wilderness for forty years, until the whole generation, all the fighting men in the nation, died, all who came out of Egypt and had disobeyed the LORD. The

LORD swore that he would not allow any of these to see the land which he had sworn to their fathers to give us, a land flowing with milk and honey.

⁷ So it was their sons, whom the LORD had raised up in their place, that Joshua circumcised; they were uncircumcised because they had not been circumcised on the journey.

⁸ When the circumcision of the whole nation was complete, they stayed where they were in camp until they had recovered.

⁹ The LORD then said to Joshua, Today I have rolled away from you the reproaches of the Egyptians. Therefore the place is called Gilgal to this day.

¹⁰ While the Israelites were encamped in Gilgal, at sunset on the fourteenth day of the month they kept the Passover in the lowlands of Jericho.

¹¹ On the day after the Passover they ate of the produce of the country, roasted grain and loaves made without leaven.

¹² It was from that day, when they first ate the produce of the country, that the manna ceased. The Israelites got no

more manna; that year they ate what had grown in the land of Canaan.

¹³When Joshua was near Jericho he looked up and saw a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword in his hand. Joshua approached him and asked, Are you for us or for our enemies?

¹⁴The man replied, Neither! I am here as captain of the army of the LORD. Joshua prostrated himself in homage, and said, What have you to say to your servant, my lord?

¹⁵The captain of the LORD's army answered, Remove your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy; and Joshua did so.

6¹ JERICHO was bolted and barred against the Israelites; no one could go out or in.

²The LORD said to Joshua, See, I am delivering Jericho, its king, and his warriors into your hands.

³You are to march round the city with all your fighting men, making the circuit of it once a day for six days.

⁴Seven priests carrying seven trumpets made from rams horns are to go ahead of the Ark. On the seventh day you are

to march round the city seven times with the priests blowing their trumpets.

⁵At the blast of the rams' horns, when you hear the trumpet sound, the whole army must raise a great shout; the city wall will collapse and the army will advance, every man straight ahead.'

⁶Joshua son of Nun summoned the priests and gave them instructions: Take up the Ark of the Covenant; let seven priests with seven trumpets of ram's horn go ahead of the Ark of the LORD.

⁷Then he gave orders to the army: Move on, march round the city, and let the men who have been drafted go in front of the Ark of the LORD.

⁸After Joshua had issued this command to the army, the seven priests carrying the seven trumpets of ram's horn before the LORD moved on and blew the trumpets; the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD followed them.

⁹The drafted men marched in front of the priests who blew the trumpets, and the rearguard came behind the Ark, the trumpets sounding as they marched.

¹⁰But Joshua commanded the army not to shout, or to raise their voices or even

utter a word, till the day when he would tell them to shout; then they were to give a mighty shout.

¹¹ Thus he made the Ark of the LORD go round the city, making the circuit of it once, and then they returned to the camp and spent the night there.

¹² Joshua rose early next morning, and the priests took up the Ark of the LORD.

¹³ The seven priests carrying the seven trumpets of ram's horn marched in front of the Ark of the LORD, blowing the trumpets as they went, with the drafted men in front of them and the rearguard following the Ark, the trumpets sounding as they marched.

¹⁴ They marched round the city once on the second day and returned to the camp; this they did for six days.

¹⁵ On the seventh day they rose at dawn and marched seven times round the city in the same way; that was the only day on which they marched round seven times.

¹⁶ The seventh time, as the priests blew the trumpets, Joshua said to the army, Shout! The LORD has given you the city.

¹⁷ The city is to be under solemn ban: everything in it belongs to the LORD. No one is to be spared except the prostitute Rahab and everyone who is with her in the house, because she hid the men we sent.

¹⁸ And you must beware of coveting anything that is forbidden under the ban; you must take none of it for yourselves, or else you will put the Israelite camp itself under the ban and bring disaster on it.

¹⁹ All silver and gold, all the vessels of copper and iron, are to be holy; they belong to the LORD and must go into his treasury.

²⁰ So the trumpets were blown, and when the army heard the trumpets sound, they raised a great shout, and the wall collapsed. The army advanced on the city, every man straight ahead, and they captured it.

²¹ Under the ban they destroyed everything there; they put everyone to the sword, men and women, young and old, as well as the cattle, the sheep, and the donkeys.

²²The two men who had been sent out to reconnoitre the land were told by Joshua to go to the prostitute's house and bring out the woman and all who belonged to her, as they had sworn to do.

²³The young men went and brought out Rahab, her father and mother, her brothers, and all who belonged to her; they brought the whole family and placed them outside the Israelite camp.

²⁴The city and everything in it were then set on fire, except that the silver and gold and the vessels of copper and iron were deposited in the treasury of the LORD's house.

²⁵Thus Joshua spared the lives of Rahab the prostitute, her household, and all who belonged to her, because she had hidden the men whom Joshua had sent to reconnoitre Jericho; she and her family settled permanently among the Israelites.

²⁶At that time Joshua pronounced this curse: May the LORD's curse light on anyone who comes forward to rebuild this city of Jericho: the laying of its foundations shall cost him his eldest son,

the setting up of its gates shall cost him his youngest.

²⁷ THE LORD was with Joshua, and his fame spread throughout the country.

7 ¹ In a perfidious act, however, Israelites violated the ban: Achan son of Carmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took some of the forbidden things, and the LORD's anger blazed out against Israel.

² Joshua sent men from Jericho with orders to go up to Ai, near Beth-aven, east of Bethel, and reconnoitre the land. The men went and explored Ai,

³ and on their return reported to Joshua that there was no need for the whole army to move: Let some two or three thousand men advance to attack Ai. Do not have the whole army toil up there; the population is small.

⁴ About three thousand troops went up, but they were routed by the men of Ai,

⁵ who killed some thirty-six of them; they chased the rest all the way from the gate to the Quarries and killed them on the pass. At this the courage of the people melted and flowed away like water.

⁶Joshua and the elders of Israel tore their clothes and flung themselves face downwards to the ground; throwing dust on their heads, they lay in front of the Ark of the LORD till evening.

⁷Joshua cried, Alas, Lord GOD, why did you bring this people across the Jordan just to hand us over to the Amorites to be destroyed? If only we had been content to settle on the other side of the Jordan!

⁸I beseech you, Lord; what can I say, now that Israel has been routed by the enemy?

⁹When the Canaanites and all the other natives of the country hear of this, they will close in upon us and wipe us off the face of the earth. What will you do then for the honour of your great name?

¹⁰The LORD answered, Stand up; why lie prostrate on your face?

¹¹Israel has sinned: they have violated the covenant which I laid upon them; they have taken things forbidden under the ban; they have stolen them; they have concealed them by putting them among their own possessions.

¹²That is why the Israelites cannot stand against their enemies: they are defeated because they have brought themselves under the ban. Unless you Israelites destroy every single thing among you that is forbidden under the ban, I shall be with you no longer.

¹³Get up and consecrate the people; tell them they must consecrate themselves for tomorrow. Say to them that these are the words of the LORD the God of Israel: You have among you forbidden things, Israel, and you will not be able to stand against your enemies until you have rid yourselves of these things.

¹⁴In the morning come forward tribe by tribe, and the tribe which the LORD takes must come forward clan by clan; the clan which the LORD takes must come forward family by family, and the family which the LORD takes must come forward man by man.

¹⁵The man who is taken as the harbourer of forbidden things must be burnt, he and all that is his, because he has violated the covenant of the LORD and committed an outrage in Israel.

¹⁶Early next morning Joshua rose and had Israel come forward tribe by tribe, and the tribe of Judah was taken;

¹⁷he brought forward the clans of Judah, and the clan of Zerah was taken; then the clan of Zerah family by family, and the family of Zabdi was taken.

¹⁸He had that family brought forward man by man, and Achan son of Carmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, was taken.

¹⁹Then Joshua said to Achan, My son, give honour to the LORD the God of Israel and make your confession to him. Tell me what you have done; hide nothing from me.

²⁰Achan answered, It is true; I have sinned against the LORD the God of Israel. This is what I did:

²¹among the booty I saw a fine mantle from Shinar, two hundred shekels of silver, and a bar of gold weighing fifty shekels; I coveted them and I took them. You will find them hidden in the ground inside my tent, with the silver underneath.

²²Joshua sent messengers, who went straight to the tent, and there it was

hidden in the tent with the silver underneath.

²³They took the things from the tent, brought them to Joshua and all the Israelites, and laid them out before the LORD.

²⁴Then Joshua and all Israel with him took Achan son of Zerah, with the silver, the mantle, and the bar of gold, together with his sons and daughters, his oxen, his donkeys, and his sheep, his tent, and everything he had, and they brought them up to the vale of Achor.

²⁵Joshua said, What trouble you have brought on us! Now the LORD will bring trouble on you. Then all the Israelites stoned him to death;

²⁶and they raised over him a great cairn of stones which is there to this day. So the LORD's anger was abated. That is why to this day the place is called the vale of Achor.

8¹THE LORD said to Joshua, Do not be afraid or discouraged; take the whole army with you and go and attack Ai. I am delivering the king of Ai into your hands, along with his people, his city, and his territory.

² Deal with Ai and its king as you dealt with Jericho and its king, except that you may keep for yourselves the cattle and any other spoil you take. Set an ambush for the city to the west of it.

³ Joshua and the army prepared for the assault on Ai. He chose thirty thousand warriors and dispatched them by night,

⁴ with these orders: Lie in ambush to the west of the city, not far distant from it, and hold yourselves in readiness, all of you.

⁵ I myself will advance on the city with the rest of the army, and when the enemy come out to meet us as they did last time, we shall turn and flee before them.

⁶ They will come in pursuit until we have drawn them away from the city, for they will think we are in flight as before. While we are retreating,

⁷ rise from your ambush and occupy the city; the LORD your God will deliver it into your hands.

⁸ When you have taken it, set it on fire. Thus you will do what the LORD commands; these are my orders to you.

⁹After Joshua sent them off, they went to the place of ambush and lay in wait between Bethel and Ai to the west of Ai, while Joshua spent the night with the army.

¹⁰Early in the morning Joshua mustered the army and, with Joshua himself and the elders of Israel at its head, they marched against Ai.

¹¹All the armed forces with him marched on until they came within sight of the city, where they encamped north of Ai, with the valley between them and the city.

¹²Joshua took some five thousand men and set them in ambush between Bethel and Ai to the west of the city.

¹³[[EMPTY]]

¹⁴When the king of Ai saw them, he and the citizens set off hurriedly and marched out to do battle against Israel, being unaware that an ambush had been prepared for him to the west of the city.

¹⁵Joshua and the Israelites made as if they were worsted by them and fled towards the wilderness,

¹⁶while all the people of the city were called out in pursuit. In pursuing Joshua they were drawn away from the city,

¹⁷until not a man was left in Ai; they had all gone out in pursuit of the Israelites and thus had left the place wide open.

¹⁸The LORD then said to Joshua, Point towards Ai with the dagger you are holding, for I will deliver the city into your hands. Joshua pointed with his dagger towards Ai

¹⁹and, at his signal, the men in ambush rose quickly from their position; dashing into the city, they captured it and at once set it on fire.

²⁰The men of Ai looked back and saw the smoke from the city already going up to the sky; they were powerless to make their escape in any direction. The Israelites who had feigned flight towards the wilderness now turned on their pursuers,

²¹for when Joshua and all the Israelites with him saw that the men in ambush had seized the city and that smoke from it was already going up, they faced about and attacked the men of Ai.

²² Those who had come out to contend with the Israelites were now hemmed in by Israelites on both sides of them, and the Israelites cut them down until there was not a single survivor; no one escaped.

²³ Only the king of Ai was taken alive and brought to Joshua.

²⁴ When the Israelites had slain all the inhabitants of Ai in the open country and the wilderness where they had pursued them, and the massacre was complete, they all went back to Ai and put it to the sword.

²⁵ The number who fell that day, men and women, was twelve thousand, the whole population of Ai.

²⁶ Joshua held out his dagger and did not draw back his hand until all who lived in Ai had been destroyed;

²⁷ but the Israelites kept for themselves the cattle and any other spoil that they took, following the LORD's instructions given to Joshua.

²⁸ So Joshua burnt Ai to the ground, and left it the desolate ruined mound it remains to this day.

²⁹ He hanged the king of Ai on a gibbet and left him there till evening. At sunset they cut down the body on Joshua's orders and flung it on the ground at the entrance of the city gate. Over it they raised a great cairn of stones, which is there to this day.

³⁰ At that time Joshua built an altar to the LORD the God of Israel on Mount Ebal.

³¹ The altar was of blocks of undressed stone on which no iron tool had been used; this followed the commands given to the Israelites by Moses the servant of the LORD, as is described in the book of the law of Moses. On the altar they offered whole-offerings to the LORD, and slaughtered shared-offerings.

³² There in the presence of the Israelites Joshua engraved on blocks of stone a copy of the law of Moses.

³³ All Israel, native-born and resident alien alike, with the elders, officers, and judges, took their stand on either side of the Ark, facing the levitical priests who carried the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD. Half of them stood facing Mount Gerizim and half facing Mount Ebal, to

fulfil the command of Moses the servant of the LORD that the blessing should be pronounced first.

³⁴ Then Joshua recited the whole of the blessing and the cursing word by word, as they are written in the book of the law;

³⁵ there was not a single word of all that Moses had commanded which Joshua did not read aloud in the presence of the whole congregation of Israel, including the women and dependants and the aliens resident among them.

9¹ News of these happenings reached all the kings west of the Jordan, in the hill-country, in the Shephelah, and in all the coast of the Great Sea running up to the Lebanon, and the kings of the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites

² agreed to join forces and fight against Joshua and Israel.

³ When the inhabitants of Gibeon heard how Joshua had dealt with Jericho and Ai,

⁴ they resorted to a ruse: they set out after disguising themselves, with old

sacks on their donkeys, old wineskins split and mended,

⁵old and patched sandals for their feet, old clothing to wear, and by way of provisions nothing but dry and crumbling bread.

⁶They came to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal, where they said to him and the Israelites, We have come from a distant country to ask you now to grant us a treaty.

⁷The Israelites said to these Hivites, But it may be that you live in our neighbourhood: if so, how can we grant you a treaty?

⁸They said to Joshua, We are your slaves. Joshua asked them who they were and where they came from.

⁹Sir, they replied, our country is very far away, and we have come because of the renown of the LORD your God. We have heard the report of all that he did to Egypt

¹⁰and to the two Amorite kings east of the Jordan, King Sihon of Heshbon and King Og of Bashan who lived at Ashtaroth.

¹¹ Our elders and all the people of our country told us to take provisions for the journey and come to meet you, and say, We are your slaves; please grant us a treaty.

¹² Look at our bread; it was hot from the oven when we packed it at home on the day we came away. Now, as you see, it is dry and crumbling.

¹³ Here are our wineskins; they were new when we filled them, and now they are all split; look at our clothes and our sandals, worn out by the very long journey.

¹⁴ Without seeking guidance from the LORD, the leaders of the community accepted some of their provisions.

¹⁵ Joshua received them peaceably and granted them a treaty, promising to spare their lives, and the leaders ratified it on oath.

¹⁶ However, within three days of granting them the treaty the Israelites learnt that these people were in fact neighbours, living nearby.

¹⁷ The Israelites then set out and on the third day they reached their

towns, Gibeon, Kephirah, Beeroth, and Kiriath-jearim.

¹⁸The Israelites did not attack them, because of the oath which the chief men of the community had sworn to them by the LORD the God of Israel. When the whole community was indignant with the leaders,

¹⁹they all made this reply: We swore an oath to them by the LORD the God of Israel; so now we cannot touch them.

²⁰What we shall do is this: we shall spare their lives so that the oath which we swore to them may bring down no wrath on us.

²¹But though their lives must be spared, they will be set to cut wood and draw water for the community. The people agreed to do as their chiefs had said.

²²Joshua summoned the Gibeonites and said to them, Why did you play this trick on us? You told us that you live a long way off, when in fact you are near neighbours.

²³From now there is a curse on you: for all time you shall provide us with

slaves, to cut wood and draw water for the house of my God.

²⁴They answered Joshua, We were told, sir, that the LORD your God had commanded his servant Moses to give you the whole country and to wipe out its inhabitants; so because of you we were in terror of our lives, and that is why we did this.

²⁵We are in your hands: do with us whatever you think right and proper.

²⁶What he did was this: he saved them from death at the hands of the Israelites, and they did not kill them;

²⁷but from that day he assigned them to cut wood and draw water for the community and for the altar of the LORD. And to this day they do so at the place which the LORD chose.

10¹WHEN King Adoni-zedek of Jerusalem heard that Joshua had captured and destroyed Ai, dealing with Ai and its king as he had dealt with Jericho and its king, and also that the inhabitants of Gibeon had come to terms with Israel and were living among them,

²he was greatly alarmed; for Gibeon was a large place, like a royal city: it was

larger than Ai, and its men were all good fighters.

³So King Adoni-zedek of Jerusalem sent this message to King Hoham of Hebron, King Piram of Jarmuth, King Japhia of Lachish, and King Debir of Eglon:

⁴Come up and assist me to attack Gibeon, because it has come to terms with Joshua and the Israelites.

⁵The five Amorite kings, the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon, advanced with their united forces to take up position for the attack on Gibeon.

⁶The Gibeonites sent word to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal: Do not abandon your slaves; come quickly to our relief. Come and help us, for all the Amorite kings in the hill-country have joined forces against us.

⁷When Joshua went up from Gilgal followed by his whole force, all his warriors,

⁸the LORD said to him, Do not be afraid; I have delivered these kings into your hands, and not one of them will be able to withstand you.

⁹After a night march from Gilgal, Joshua launched a surprise assault on the five kings,

¹⁰and the LORD threw them into confusion before the Israelites. Joshua utterly defeated them at Gibeon; he pursued them down the pass of Beth-horon and kept up the attack as far as Azekah and Makkedah.

¹¹As they fled from Israel down the pass, the LORD hurled great hailstones at them out of the sky all the way to Azekah, and they perished: more died from the hailstones than were slain by the swords of the Israelites.

¹²On that day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites into the hands of Israel, Joshua spoke with the LORD, and in the presence of Israel said: Stand still, you sun, at Gibeon; you moon, at the vale of Aijalon.

¹³The sun stood still and the moon halted until the nation had taken vengeance on its enemies, as indeed is written in the Book of Jashar. The sun stayed in mid-heaven and made no haste to set for almost a whole day.

¹⁴ Never before or since has there been such a day as that on which the LORD listened to the voice of a mortal. Surely the LORD fought for Israel!

¹⁵ Then Joshua returned with all the Israelites to the camp at Gilgal.

¹⁶ The five kings fled and hid in a cave at Makkedah,

¹⁷ and Joshua was told that they had been found hiding there.

¹⁸ Joshua replied, Roll large stones against the mouth of the cave, and post men there to keep watch over the kings.

¹⁹ But you yourselves must not stay. Keep up the pursuit, attack your enemies from the rear and do not let them reach their towns; the LORD your God has delivered them into your hands.

²⁰ When Joshua and the Israelites had completed the work of slaughter and everyone had been put to the sword -- all except a few survivors who escaped into the fortified towns --

²¹ the whole army returned safely to Joshua at Makkedah; not one of the Israelites suffered so much as a scratch.

²² Joshua gave the order: Open up the mouth of the cave, and bring out those five kings to me.

²³ This was done; the five kings, the kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth, Lachish, and Eglon, were taken from the cave

²⁴ and brought to Joshua. When he had summoned all the Israelites he said to the commanders of the troops who had served with him, Come forward and put your feet on the necks of these kings. They did so,

²⁵ and Joshua said to them, Do not be afraid or discouraged; be strong and resolute; for the LORD will do this to every enemy whom you fight.

²⁶ He fell on the kings and slew them; then he hung their bodies on five gibbets, where they remained hanging till evening.

²⁷ At sunset they were taken down on Joshua's orders and thrown into the cave in which they had hidden; large stones were piled against its mouth, where they remain to this very day.

²⁸ On that same day Joshua captured Makkedah and put both king and people

to the sword, destroying under the ban both them and every living thing in the city. He left no survivor, and he dealt with the king of Makkedah as he had dealt with the king of Jericho.

²⁹Then Joshua with all the Israelites marched on from Makkedah to Libnah and attacked it.

³⁰The LORD delivered the city and its king to the Israelites, and they put its people and every living thing in it to the sword; they left no survivor there, and dealt with its king as they had dealt with the king of Jericho.

³¹From Libnah Joshua and all the Israelites marched on to Lachish, where they took up their positions against it and attacked it.

³²The LORD delivered Lachish into their hands; they took it on the second day and put every living thing in it to the sword, as they had done at Libnah.

³³Meanwhile King Horam of Gezer had advanced to the relief of Lachish; but Joshua attacked him and his army until not a survivor was left to him.

³⁴From Lachish Joshua and all the Israelites marched on to Eglon, took up

their positions against it, and attacked it;

³⁵ that same day they captured it and put its inhabitants to the sword, destroying every living thing in it as they had done at Lachish.

³⁶ From Eglon Joshua and all the Israelites advanced to Hebron and attacked it.

³⁷ They captured it and put its king to the sword together with every living thing in it and in all its villages; as at Eglon, he left no survivor, destroying it and every living thing in it.

³⁸ Then Joshua and all the Israelites wheeled round towards Debir and attacked it.

³⁹ They captured the king, the city, and all its villages, put them to the sword, and destroyed every living thing; they left no survivor. They dealt with Debir and its king as they had dealt with Hebron and with Libnah and its king.

⁴⁰ So Joshua conquered the whole region -- the hill-country, the Negeb, the Shephelah, the watersheds -- and all its kings. He left no survivor, destroying

everything that drew breath, as the LORD the God of Israel had commanded.

⁴¹ Joshua's conquests extended from Kadesh-barnea to Gaza, over the whole land of Goshen, and as far as Gibeon.

⁴² All these kings he captured at the same time, and their country with them, for the LORD the God of Israel fought for Israel.

⁴³ Then Joshua returned with all the Israelites to the camp at Gilgal.

11 ¹ WHEN King Jabin of Hazor heard of these events, he sent to King Jobab of Madon, to the kings of Shimron and Akshaph,

² to the northern kings in the hill-country, in the Arabah opposite Kinnereth, in the Shephelah, and in the district of Dor on the west,

³ the Canaanites to the east and the west, the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, and Jebusites in the hill-country, and the Hivites below Hermon in the land of Mizpah.

⁴ They took the field with all their forces, a great host countless as the grains of sand on the seashore, among

them a very large number of horses and chariots.

⁵All these kings, making common cause, came and encamped at the waters of Merom to fight against Israel.

⁶The LORD said to Joshua, Do not be afraid of them, for at this time tomorrow I shall deliver them to Israel all dead men; you are to hamstring their horses and burn their chariots.

⁷Joshua with his whole army launched a surprise attack on them by the waters of Merom,

⁸and the LORD delivered them into the hands of Israel, who defeated them, cutting down the fugitives the whole way to Greater Sidon, Misrephoth on the west, and the vale of Mizpah on the east. They cut them down until they had left not a single survivor.

⁹Joshua dealt with them as the LORD had commanded: he hamstrung their horses and burnt their chariots.

¹⁰At this point, Joshua turned his forces against Hazor, formerly the leader among all these kingdoms. He captured the city and put its king to death with the sword.

¹¹ They put under the ban and killed every living thing in it; they spared nothing that drew breath, and Hazor itself was destroyed by fire.

¹² So Joshua captured these kings and their cities and put them to the sword, destroying them all, as Moses the servant of the LORD had commanded.

¹³ The cities whose ruined mounds are still standing were not burnt by the Israelites; it was Hazor alone that Joshua burnt.

¹⁴ The Israelites plundered all these cities and kept for themselves the cattle and any other spoil they took; but they put every living soul to the sword until they had destroyed everyone; they did not leave alive anyone that drew breath.

¹⁵ The LORD had laid his commands on his servant Moses, and Moses laid these same commands on Joshua, and Joshua carried them out. Not one of the commands laid on Moses by the LORD was left unfulfilled.

¹⁶ Thus Joshua took the whole land, the hill-country, all the Negeb, all the land of Goshen, the Shephelah, the Arabah,

and the Israelite hill-country with the adjoining lowlands.

¹⁷ His conquests extended from the bare mountain which leads up to Seir as far as Baal-gad in the vale of Lebanon under Mount Hermon. He captured all their kings, struck them down, and put them to death.

¹⁸ It was a lengthy campaign he waged against all those kingdoms;

¹⁹ except for the Hivites who lived in Gibeon, not one of their towns or cities came to terms with the Israelites; all had to be taken by storm.

²⁰ It was the LORD's purpose that they should offer stubborn resistance to the Israelites, and thus be annihilated and utterly destroyed without mercy, as the LORD had commanded Moses.

²¹ It was then that Joshua proceeded to wipe out the Anakim from the hill-country, from Hebron, Debir, Anab, all the hill-country of Judah, and all the hill-country of Israel, destroying both them and their towns.

²² No Anakim were left in the land taken by the Israelites; they survived only in Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod.

²³ Joshua took the whole land, fulfilling all the commands that the LORD had laid on Moses; he assigned it to Israel, allotting to each tribe its share. Then the land was at peace.

12¹ These are the names of the kings of the land whom the Israelites slew, and whose territory they occupied beyond the Jordan towards the sunrise from the wadi of the Arnon as far as Mount Hermon and all the Arabah on the east.

² Sihon the Amorite king who lived in Heshbon: his rule extended from Aroer, which is on the edge of the wadi of the Arnon, along the middle of the wadi and over half Gilead as far as the wadi of the Jabbok, the Ammonite frontier;

³ along the Arabah as far as the eastern side of the sea of Kinnereth and as far as the eastern side of the sea of the Arabah, the Dead Sea, by the road to Beth-jeshimoth and from Teman under the watershed of Pisgah.

⁴ King Og of Bashan, one of the survivors of the Rephaim, who lived in Ashtaroth and Edrei:

⁵ he ruled over Mount Hermon, Salcah, all Bashan as far as the Geshurite and Maacathite borders, and half Gilead as far as the boundary of King Sihon of Heshbon.

⁶ Moses the servant of the LORD put them to death, he and the Israelites, and he assigned their land to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and half the tribe of Manasseh.

⁷ These are the kings whom Joshua and the Israelites put to death on the west side of Jordan, from Baal-gad in the vale of Lebanon as far as the bare mountain that leads up to Seir; Joshua assigned their land to the Israelite tribes according to their allotted shares,

⁸ in the hill-country, the Shephelah, the Arabah, the watersheds, the wilderness, and the Negeb; lands of the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites:

⁹ the king of Jericho; the king of Ai which is beside Bethel;

¹⁰ the king of Jerusalem; the king of Hebron;

¹¹ the king of Jarmuth; the king of Lachish;

¹² the king of Eglon; the king of Gezer;

¹³ the king of Debir; the king of Geder;

¹⁴ the king of Hormah; the king of Arad;

¹⁵ the king of Libnah; the king of
Adullam;

¹⁶ the king of Makkedah; the king of
Bethel;

¹⁷ the king of Tappuah; the king of
Hepher;

¹⁸ the king of Aphek; the king of
Aphek-in-Sharon;

¹⁹ the king of Madon; the king of Hazor;

²⁰ the king of Shimron-meron; the king
of Akshaph;

²¹ the king of Taanach; the king of
Megiddo;

²² the king of Kedesh; the king of
Jokneam-in-Carmel;

²³ the king of Dor in the district of Dor;
the king of Gaiam-in-Galilee;

²⁴ the king of Tirzah: thirty-one kings in
all, one of each town.

13¹ BY this time Joshua had become
very old, and the LORD said to
him, You are now a very old man, and
much of the country still remains to be
occupied.

²The remaining territory is this: all the districts of the Philistines and all the Geshurite country

³(this is reckoned as Canaanite territory from Shihor to the east of Egypt as far north as Ekron; and it belongs to the five lords of the Philistines, those of Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron); all the districts of the Avvim

⁴on the south; all the Canaanite country from Mearah which belongs to the Sidonians as far as Aphek, the Amorite frontier;

⁵the land of the Gebalites and all the Lebanon to the east from Baal-gad under Mount Hermon as far as Lebo-hamath.

⁶I shall drive out in favour of the Israelites all the inhabitants of the hill-country from the Lebanon as far as Misrephoth on the west, and all the Sidonians. In the mean time, following my command, you are to allot all this to the Israelites as their holding.

⁷Distribute this country now to the nine tribes and the half tribe of Manasseh as their holding.

⁸HALF the tribe of Manasseh, and with them the Reubenites and the Gadites,

had taken the holding which Moses gave them east of the Jordan, as Moses the servant of the LORD had ordained.

⁹It started from Aroer which is on the edge of the wadi of the Arnon, and the level land half-way along the wadi, and included all the tableland from Medeba as far as Dibon;

¹⁰all the towns of Sihon, the Amorite king who ruled in Heshbon, as far as the Ammonite frontier;

¹¹and it also included Gilead and the Geshurite and Maacathite territory, and all Mount Hermon and the whole of Bashan as far as Salcah,

¹²all the kingdom of Og which he ruled from both Ashtaroth and Edrei in Bashan. He was a survivor from the remnant of the Rephaim, but Moses put both kings to death and occupied their lands.

¹³But the Israelites failed to drive out the Geshurites and the Maacathites, and they live among Israel to this day.

¹⁴The tribe of Levi, however, received no holding; the LORD the God of Israel is their portion, as he promised them.

¹⁵So Moses allotted territory to the tribe of the Reubenites family by family.

¹⁶Their territory started from Aroer which is on the edge of the wadi of the Arnon, and the level land half-way along the wadi, and included all the tableland as far as Medeba;

¹⁷Heshbon and all its towns on the tableland, Dibon, Bamoth-baal, Beth-baal-meon,

¹⁸Jahaz, Kedemoth, Mephaath,

¹⁹Kiriathaim, Sibmah, Zereth-shahar on the hill in the valley,

²⁰Beth-peor, the watershed of Pisgah, and Beth-jeshimoth,

²¹all the towns of the tableland, all the kingdom of Sihon the Amorite king who ruled in Heshbon, whom Moses put to death together with the princes of Midian: Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba, the vassals of Sihon who dwelt in the country.

²²Balaam son of Beor, who practised augury, was among those whom the Israelites put to the sword.

²³The boundary of the Reubenites was the Jordan and the land adjacent: this is the holding of the Reubenites family by family, both the towns and their hamlets.

²⁴ Moses allotted territory to the Gadites family by family.

²⁵ Their territory was Jazer, all the towns of Gilead, and half the Ammonite country as far as Aroer which is east of Rabbah.

²⁶ It reached from Heshbon as far as Ramath-mizpeh and Betonim, and from Mahanaim as far as the boundary of Lo-debar;

²⁷ it included, in the valley, Beth-haram, Beth-nimrah, Succoth, and Zaphon, the rest of the kingdom of King Sihon of Heshbon. The boundary was the Jordan and the adjacent land as far as the end of the sea of Kinnereth east of the Jordan.

²⁸ This is the holding of the Gadites family by family, both the towns and their hamlets.

²⁹ Moses allotted territory to the half tribe of Manasseh: it was for half the tribe of the Manassites family by family.

³⁰ Their territory ran from Mahanaim and included all Bashan, all the kingdom of King Og of Bashan, and all Havvoth-jair in Bashan -- sixty towns.

³¹ Half Gilead, and Ashtaroth and Edrei, the royal cities of Og in Bashan, belong to the sons of Machir son of Manasseh on behalf of half the Machirites family by family.

³² These are the territories which Moses allotted to the tribes as their holdings in the lowlands of Moab east of the Jordan.

³³ But to the tribe of Levi he gave no holding: the LORD the God of Israel is their portion, as he promised them.

14¹ THE following are the possessions which the Israelites acquired in the land of Canaan, as Eleazar the priest, Joshua son of Nun, and the heads of the families of the Israelite tribes allotted them.

² They were assigned by lot, following the LORD's command given through Moses, to the nine and a half tribes.

³ To two and a half tribes Moses had given holdings beyond the Jordan; but he gave none to the Levites as he did to the other tribes.

⁴ The tribe of Joseph formed the two tribes of Manasseh and Ephraim. The Levites were given no share in the land,

only towns to live in, with their common land for flocks and herds.

⁵So the Israelites assigned the land according to the LORD's command given to Moses.

⁶The tribe of Judah had come to Joshua at Gilgal, and Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him, You remember what the LORD said to Moses the man of God concerning you and me at Kadesh-barnea.

⁷I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the LORD sent me from there to reconnoitre the land, and I brought back an honest report.

⁸The others who went up with me discouraged the people, but I loyally carried out the purpose of the LORD my God.

⁹Moses swore an oath that day: The land on which you have set foot, he said, is to be your holding and your sons after you as a possession for ever; for you have loyally carried out the purpose of the LORD my God.

¹⁰Well, the LORD has spared my life as he promised; it is forty-five years since he made this promise to Moses, at the

time when Israel was journeying in the wilderness. Now here I am at eighty-five,¹¹ still as strong as I was on the day when Moses sent me out; I am as fit now for war as I was then and am ready to take the field again.

¹²Give me today this hill-country which the LORD then promised me. You yourself heard on that day that the Anakim were there and their towns were large and fortified. Perhaps the LORD will be with me, and I shall drive them out as he promised.'

¹³Joshua blessed Caleb and gave him Hebron for his holding,

¹⁴and that is why Hebron remains to this day in the possession of Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite. It is because he loyally carried out the purpose of the LORD the God of Israel.

¹⁵Formerly the name of Hebron was Kiriath-arba; this Arba was the chief man of the Anakim. The land was now at peace.

15¹This is the territory allotted to the tribe of the sons of Judah family by family. It started from the Edomite frontier at the wilderness of

Zin and ran as far as the Negeb at its southern end,

²and it had a common border with the Negeb at the end of the Dead Sea, where an inlet of water bends towards the Negeb.

³It continued from the south by the ascent of Akrabbim, passed by Zin, went up from the south of Kadesh-barnea, passed by Hezron, went on to Addar, and turned round to Karka.

⁴It then passed along to Azmon, reached the wadi of Egypt, and its limit was the sea. This was their southern boundary.

⁵The eastern boundary is the Dead Sea as far as the mouth of the Jordan and the adjacent land northwards from the inlet of the sea, at the mouth of the Jordan.

⁶The boundary goes up to Beth-hoglah; it passes north of Beth-arabah and thence to the stone of Bohan son of Reuben,

⁷thence to Debir from the vale of Achor, and then turns north to the districts in front of the ascent of Adummim south of the wadi. The boundary then passes

the waters of En-shemesh and the limit there is Enrogel.

⁸It then goes up by the valley of Ben-hinnom to the southern slope of the Jebusites (that is Jerusalem). Thence it goes up to the top of the hill which faces the valley of Hinnom on the west; this is at the northern end of the vale of Rephaim.

⁹The boundary then bends round from the top of the hill to the spring of the waters of Nephtoah and runs round to the cities of Mount Ephron and to Baalah, that is Kiriath-jearim.

¹⁰It then continues westwards from Baalah to Mount Seir, passes on to the north side of the slope of Mount Jearim, that is Kesalon, down to Beth-shemesh and on to Timnah.

¹¹The boundary then goes north to the slope of Ekron, bends round to Shikkeron, crosses to Mount Baalah, and reaches Jebneel; its limit is the sea.

¹²The western boundary is the Great Sea and the land adjacent. This is the whole circuit of the boundary of the tribe of Judah family by family.

¹³ Caleb son of Jephunneh received his share of the land within the tribe of Judah as the LORD had told Joshua. It was Kiriath-arba, that is Hebron; this Arba was the ancestor of the Anakim.

¹⁴ Caleb drove out the three Anakim, Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai, descendants of Anak.

¹⁵ From there he attacked the inhabitants of Debir, formerly called Kiriath-sepher.

¹⁶ Caleb announced that whoever should attack and capture Kiriath-sepher would receive his daughter Achsah in marriage.

¹⁷ It was captured by Othniel, son of Caleb's brother Kenaz, and Caleb gave him his daughter Achsah.

¹⁸ When she became his wife, he induced her to ask her father for a piece of land. She dismounted from her donkey, and Caleb asked her, What do you want?

¹⁹ She replied, Grant me this favour: you have put me in this arid Negeb; you must give me pools of water as well. So Caleb gave her the upper pool and the lower pool.

²⁰This is the holding of the tribe of the sons of Judah family by family.

²¹These are the towns belonging to the tribe of Judah, the full count. By the Edomite frontier in the Negeb: Kabzeel, Eder, Jagur,

²²Kinah, Dimonah, Ararah,

²³Kedesh, Hazor, Ithnan,

²⁴Ziph, Telem, Bealoth,

²⁵Hazor-hadattah, Kerioth-hezron,

²⁶Amam, Shema, Moladah,

²⁷Hazar-gaddah, Heshmon, Beth-pelet,

²⁸Hazar-shual, Beersheba and its villages,

²⁹Baalath, Iyim, Ezem,

³⁰Eltolad, Kesil, Hormah,

³¹Ziklag, Madmannah, Sansannah,

³²Lebaoth, Shilhim, Ain, and Rimmon: in all, twenty-nine towns with their hamlets.

³³In the Shephelah: Eshtaol, Zorah, Ashnah,

³⁴Zanoah, En-gannim, Tappuah, Enam,

³⁵Jarmuth, Adullam, Socoh, Azekah,

³⁶Shaaraim, Adithaim, Gederah,

namely both parts of Gederah: fourteen towns with their hamlets.

³⁷Zenan, Hadashah, Migdal-gad,

³⁸ Dilan, Mizpeh, Joktheel,

³⁹ Lachish, Bozkath, Eglon,

⁴⁰ Cabbon, Lahmas, Kithlish,

⁴¹ Gederoth, Beth-dagon, Naamah, and
Makkedah: sixteen towns with their
hamlets.

⁴² Libnah, Ether, Ashan,

⁴³ Jiphtah, Ashnah, Nezib,

⁴⁴ Keilah, Achzib, and Mareshah: nine
towns with their hamlets.

⁴⁵ Ekron, with its villages and hamlets,

⁴⁶ and from Ekron westwards, all the
towns near Ashdod and their hamlets.

⁴⁷ Ashdod with its villages and hamlets,
Gaza with its villages and hamlets as far
as the wadi of Egypt and the Great Sea
and the land adjacent.

⁴⁸ In the hill-country: Shamir, Jattir,
Socoh,

⁴⁹ Dannah, Kiriath-sannah, that is Debir,

⁵⁰ Anab, Eshtemoh, Anim,

⁵¹ Goshen, Holon, and Giloh: eleven
towns in all with their hamlets.

⁵² Arab, Dumah, Eshan,

⁵³ Janim, Beth-tappuah, Aphek,

⁵⁴ Humtah, Kiriath-arba, that is Hebron,
and Zior: nine towns in all with their
hamlets.

⁵⁵Maon, Carmel, Ziph, Juttah,

⁵⁶Jezreel, Jokdeam, Zanoah,

⁵⁷Kain, Gibeah, and Timnah: ten towns in all with their hamlets.

⁵⁸Halhul, Beth-zur, Gedor,

⁵⁹Maarath, Beth-anoth, and Eltekon: six towns in all with their hamlets. Tekoa, Ephrathah, that is Bethlehem, Peor, Etam, Culom, Tatam, Sores, Carem, Gallim, Baither, and Manach: eleven towns in all with their hamlets.

⁶⁰Kiriath-baal, that is Kiriath-jearim, and Rabbah: two towns with their hamlets.

⁶¹In the wilderness: Beth-arabah, Middin, Secacah,

⁶²Nibshan, Irmelach, and En-gedi: six towns with their hamlets.

⁶³At Jerusalem, the men of Judah failed to drive out the Jebusites living there, and to this day Jebusites and men of Judah live together in Jerusalem.

16¹This is the lot that fell to the sons of Joseph: the boundary runs from the Jordan at Jericho, east of the waters of Jericho by the wilderness, and goes up from Jericho into the hill-country to Bethel.

²It runs on from Bethel to Luz and crosses the Archite border at Ataroth.

³Westwards it descends to the boundary of the Japhletites as far as the boundary of Lower Beth-horon and Gezer; its limit is the sea.

⁴Here Manasseh and Ephraim the sons of Joseph received their holding.

⁵This was the boundary of the Ephraimites family by family: their eastern boundary ran from Ataroth-addar up to Upper Beth-horon.

⁶It continued westwards to Michmethath on the north, going round by the east of Taanath-shiloh and passing by it on the east of Janoah.

⁷It descends from Janoah to Ataroth and Naarath, touches Jericho and continues to the Jordan,

⁸and from Tappuah it goes westwards by the wadi of Kanah; and its limit is the sea. This is the holding of the tribe of Ephraim family by family.

⁹There were also towns reserved for the Ephraimites within the holding of the Manassites, each of these towns with its hamlets.

¹⁰They did not however drive out the Canaanites who lived in Gezer; the Canaanites have lived among the Ephraimites to the present day but have been subject to forced labour.

17 ¹This is the territory allotted to the tribe of Manasseh, Joseph's eldest son. Machir was Manasseh's eldest son and father of Gilead, a fighting man; Gilead and Bashan were allotted to him.

²The rest of the Manassites family by family were the sons of Abiezer, the sons of Helek, the sons of Asriel, the sons of Shechem, the sons of Hopher, and the sons of Shemida; these were the male offspring of Manasseh son of Joseph family by family.

³Zelophehad son of Hopher, son of Gilead, son of Machir, son of Manasseh, had no sons but only daughters: their names were Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.

⁴They presented themselves before Eleazar the priest and Joshua son of Nun, and before the leaders, and said, The LORD commanded Moses to allow us to inherit on the same footing as our kinsmen. They were therefore

given a holding on the same footing as their father's brothers according to the commandment of the LORD.

⁵There fell to Manasseh's lot ten shares, apart from the country of Gilead and Bashan beyond the Jordan,

⁶because Manasseh's daughters had received a holding on the same footing as his sons. The country of Gilead belonged to the rest of Manasseh's sons.

⁷The boundary of Manasseh reached from Asher as far as Michmethath, which is to the east of Shechem, and thence southwards towards Jashub by Entappuah.

⁸The territory of Tappuah belonged to Manasseh, but Tappuah itself was on the border of Manasseh and belonged to Ephraim.

⁹The boundary then followed the wadi of Kanah to the south of the wadi (these towns belong to Ephraim, although they lie among the towns of Manasseh), the boundary of Manasseh being on the north of the wadi; its limit was the sea.

¹⁰The southern side belonged to Ephraim and the northern to Manasseh, and their boundary was the sea. They

marched with Asher on the north and Issachar on the east.

¹¹ But in Issachar and Asher, Manasseh possessed Beth-shean and its villages, Ibleam and its villages, the inhabitants of Dor and its villages, the inhabitants of En-dor and its villages, the inhabitants of Taanach and its villages, and the inhabitants of Megiddo and its villages. (The third is the district of Dor.)

¹² The Manassites were unable to occupy these towns; the Canaanites maintained their hold on that part of the country.

¹³ When the Israelites grew stronger, they put the Canaanites to forced labour, but did not drive them out.

¹⁴ The sons of Joseph appealed to Joshua: Why have you given us only one lot and one share as our holding? We are a numerous people; so far the LORD has blessed us.

¹⁵ Joshua replied, If you are so numerous, go up into the forest in the territory of the Perizzites and the Rephaim and clear it for yourselves. You are their near neighbours in the hill-country of Ephraim.

¹⁶The sons of Joseph contended, The hill-country is not enough for us; besides, all the Canaanites have iron-clad chariots, both those who inhabit the valley beside Beth-shean and its villages and also those in the valley of Jezreel.

¹⁷Joshua said to the house of Joseph, that is Ephraim and Manasseh: You are a numerous people of great vigour. You shall not have one lot only.

¹⁸The hill-country is to be yours. It is forest land; clear it and it will be yours to its farthest limits. The Canaanites may be powerful and equipped with iron-clad chariots, but you will be able to drive them out.

18¹THE whole Israelite community assembled at Shiloh and established the Tent of Meeting there. The country now lay subdued at their feet;

²but there remained seven tribes among the Israelites who had not yet taken possession of the holdings which would fall to them.

³Joshua therefore said to them, How much longer will you neglect to take

possession of the land which the LORD the God of your fathers has assigned to you?

⁴ Appoint three men from each tribe, and I shall send them out to travel throughout the country. They are to make a survey of it showing the holding suitable for each tribe, and come back to me,

⁵ and then it can be shared out among you in seven portions. Judah will retain his boundary in the south, and the house of Joseph their boundary in the north.

⁶ Survey the land in seven portions, and bring your findings to me, and I shall cast lots for you in the presence of the LORD our God.

⁷ Levi has no share among you, because his share is the priesthood of the LORD; and Gad, Reuben, and the half tribe of Manasseh have each taken possession of their holding east of the Jordan, which Moses the servant of the LORD assigned to them.

⁸ The men set out on their journey. Joshua ordered the emissaries to survey the country: Go through the whole country, he said, survey it, and return

to me, and I shall cast lots for you here before the LORD in Shiloh.

⁹So the men went and passed through the country; they recorded the survey on a scroll, town by town, in seven portions. Then they came to Joshua in the camp at Shiloh;

¹⁰he cast lots for them in Shiloh before the LORD, and apportioned the land there to the Israelites in their proper shares.

¹¹This is the lot which fell to the tribe of the Benjamites family by family. The territory allotted to them lay between the territories of Judah and Joseph.

¹²Their boundary at its northern corner starts from the Jordan; it goes up the slope on the north side of Jericho, continuing westwards into the hill-country, and its limit there is the wilderness of Beth-aven.

¹³From there it runs on to Luz, to the southern slope of Luz, that is Bethel, and down to Ataroth-addar over the hill-country south of Lower Beth-horon.

¹⁴The boundary then bends round at the west corner southwards from the hill-country above Beth-horon,

and its limit is Kiriath-baal, that is Kiriath-jearim, which belongs to Judah. This is the western side.

¹⁵The southern side starts from the edge of Kiriath-jearim and ends at the spring of the waters of Nephtoah.

¹⁶It goes down to the edge of the hill to the east of the valley of Ben-hinnom, north of the vale of Rephaim, down the valley of Hinnom, to the southern slope of the Jebusites and so to En-rogel.

¹⁷It then bends round north and comes out at En-shemesh, goes on to the districts in front of the ascent of Adummim and thence down to the stone of Bohan son of Reuben.

¹⁸It passes to the northern side of the slope facing the Arabah and goes down to the Arabah,

¹⁹passing the northern slope of Beth-hoglah, and its limit is the northern inlet of the Dead Sea, at the southern mouth of the Jordan. This forms the southern boundary.

²⁰The Jordan is the boundary on the east side. This is the holding of the Benjamites, the complete circuit of their boundaries family by family.

²¹ The towns belonging to the tribe of the Benjamites family by family are:

Jericho, Beth-hoglah, Emek-keziz,

²² Beth-arabah, Zemaraim, Bethel,

²³ Avvim, Parah, Ophrah,

²⁴ Keph-ar-ammoni, Ophni, and Geba: twelve towns in all with their hamlets.

²⁵ Gibeon, Ramah, Beeroth,

²⁶ Mizpah, Kephirah, Mozah,

²⁷ Rekem, Irpeel, Taralah,

²⁸ Zela, Eleph, Jebus, that is Jerusalem, Gibeah, and Kiriath-jearim: fourteen towns in all with their hamlets. This is the holding of the Benjamites family by family.

19 ¹ The second lot cast was for Simeon, the tribe of the Simeonites family by family. Their holding was included in that of Judah.

² For their holding they had Beersheba, Moladah,

³ Hazar-shual, Balah, Ezem,

⁴ Eltolad, Bethul, Hormah,

⁵ Ziklag, Beth-marcaboth, Hazar-susah,

⁶ Beth-lebaoth, and Sharuhem: in all, thirteen towns and their hamlets.

⁷ They had Ain, Rimmon, Ether, and Ashan: four towns and their hamlets,

⁸all the hamlets round these towns as far as Baalath-beer and Ramath-negeb. This was the holding of the tribe of Simeon family by family.

⁹The holding of the Simeonites was part of the land allotted to the men of Judah, because their share was larger than they needed. The Simeonites therefore had their holding within the territory of Judah.

¹⁰The third lot fell to the Zebulunites family by family. The boundary of their holding extended to Shadud.

¹¹Their boundary went up westwards as far as Maralah and touched Dabbesheth and the wadi east of Jokneam.

¹²It turned back from Shadud eastwards towards the sunrise up to the border of Kisloth-tabor, on to Daberath and up to Japhia.

¹³From there it crossed eastwards towards the sunrise to Gath-hepher, to Ittah-kazin, out to Rimmon, and bent round to Neah.

¹⁴The northern boundary went round to Hannathon, and its limits were the valley of Jiphtah-el,

¹⁵Kattath, Nahalal, Shimron, Idalah, and Bethlehem: twelve towns in all with their hamlets.

¹⁶These towns and their hamlets were the holding of Zebulun family by family.

¹⁷The fourth lot cast was for the sons of Issachar family by family.

¹⁸Their boundary included Jezreel, Kesulloth, Shunem,

¹⁹Hapharaim, Shion, Anaharath,

²⁰Rabbith, Kishon, Ebez,

²¹Remeth, En-gannim, En-haddah, and Beth-pazzez.

²²The boundary touched Tabor, Shahazumah, and Beth-shemesh, and its limit was the Jordan: sixteen towns with their hamlets.

²³This was the holding of the tribe of the sons of Issachar family by family, both towns and hamlets.

²⁴The fifth lot cast was for the tribe of the Asherites family by family.

²⁵Their boundary included Helkath, Hali, Beten, Akshaph,

²⁶Alammelech, Amad, and Mishal; it touched Carmel on the west and the swamp of Libnath.

²⁷ It then turned back towards the east to Beth-dagon, touched Zebulun and the valley of Jiphtah-el on the north at Beth-emek and Neiel, and reached Cabul on its northern side,

²⁸ and Abdon, Rehob, Hammon, and Kanah as far as Greater Sidon.

²⁹ The boundary turned at Ramah, going as far as the fortress city of Tyre, and then back again to Hosah, and its limits to the west were Mehalbeh, Achzib,

³⁰ Acco, Aphek, and Rehob: twenty-two towns in all with their hamlets.

³¹ This was the holding of the tribe of Asher family by family, these towns and their hamlets.

³² The sixth lot cast was for the sons of Naphtali family by family.

³³ Their boundary started from Heleph and from Elon-bezaananim and ran past Adami-nekeb and Jabneel as far as Lakkum, and its limit was the Jordan.

³⁴ The boundary turned back westwards to Aznoth-tabor and from there on to Hukok. It touched Zebulun on the south, Asher on the west, and the low-lying land by the Jordan on the east.

³⁵ Their fortified towns were Ziddim, Zer, Hamath, Rakkath, Kinnereth,

³⁶ Adamah, Ramah, Hazor,

³⁷ Kedesh, Edrei, En-hazor,

³⁸ Iron, Migdal-el, Horem, Beth-anath, and Beth-shemesh: nineteen towns with their hamlets.

³⁹ This was the holding of the tribe of Naphtali family by family, both towns and hamlets.

⁴⁰ The seventh lot cast was for the tribe of the sons of Dan family by family.

⁴¹ The boundary of their holding was Zorah, Eshtaol, Ir-shemesh,

⁴² Shaalabbin, Aijalon, Jithlah,

⁴³ Elon, Timnah, Ekron,

⁴⁴ Eltekeh, Gibbethon, Baalath,

⁴⁵ Jehud, Bene-berak, and Gath-rimmon;

⁴⁶ and on the west, Jarkon was the boundary opposite Joppa.

⁴⁷ But the Danites, when they lost this territory, marched against Leshem, which they attacked and captured. They put its people to the sword, occupied it, and settled there; and they renamed the place Dan after their ancestor Dan.

⁴⁸This was the holding of the tribe of the sons of Dan family by family, these towns and their hamlets.

⁴⁹So the Israelites finished allocating the land and marking out its frontiers; and they gave Joshua son of Nun a holding within their territory.

⁵⁰They followed the commands of the LORD and gave him the town for which he asked, Timnath-serah in the hill-country of Ephraim; he rebuilt it and settled there.

⁵¹These are the holdings which Eleazar the priest and Joshua son of Nun and the heads of families assigned by lot to the Israelite tribes at Shiloh before the LORD at the entrance of the Tent of Meeting. Thus they completed the distribution of the land.

20¹THE LORD spoke to Joshua ²and commanded him to say this to the Israelites: You must now appoint your cities of refuge, of which I spoke to you through Moses.

³They are to be places where the homicide, the man who kills another inadvertently and without intent, may take sanctuary. Single them out as cities

of refuge from the vengeance of the dead man's next-of-kin.

⁴When a man takes sanctuary in one of them, he must stop at the entrance of the city gate and present his case in the hearing of the elders of that city; if they admit him into the city, they will grant him a place where he may live as one of themselves.

⁵When the next-of-kin comes in pursuit, they are not to surrender him: he struck down his fellow without intent and had not previously been at enmity with him.

⁶The homicide may stay in that city until he stands trial before the community. On the death of the ruling high priest, he may return to the town and home from which he has fled.

⁷They dedicated Kedesh in Galilee in the hill-country of Naphtali, Shechem in the hill-country of Ephraim, and Kiriath-arba, that is Hebron, in the hill-country of Judah.

⁸Across the Jordan eastwards from Jericho they appointed these cities: from the tribe of Reuben, Bezer-in-the-wilderness on the tableland, from the

tribe of Gad, Ramoth in Gilead, and from the tribe of Manasseh, Golan in Bashan.

⁹These were the appointed cities where any Israelite or any alien residing among them might take sanctuary. They were intended for any man who killed another inadvertently, to ensure that no one should die at the hand of the next-of-kin until he had stood trial before the community.

21 ¹The heads of the Levite families approached Eleazar the priest and Joshua son of Nun and the heads of the families of the tribes of Israel.

²They came before them at Shiloh in Canaan and said, The LORD gave his command through Moses that we were to receive towns to live in, together with the common land belonging to them for our cattle.

³The Israelites, therefore, in obedience to the LORD's command, assigned to the Levites out of their own holdings the following towns with their common land.

⁴When lots were cast the first fell to the Kohathite family. Those Levites who were descended from Aaron the priest received thirteen towns chosen by lot

from the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin;

⁵the rest of the Kohathites were allotted family by family ten towns from the tribes of Ephraim, Dan, and half Manasseh.

⁶The Gershonites were allotted family by family thirteen towns from the tribes of Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and the half tribe of Manasseh in Bashan.

⁷The Merarites were allotted family by family twelve towns from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun.

⁸So the Israelites gave the Levites these towns with their common land, allocating them by lot as the LORD had commanded through Moses.

⁹The Israelites designated the following towns out of the tribes of Judah and Simeon

¹⁰for those sons of Aaron who were of the Kohathite families of the Levites, because their lot came out first.

¹¹They gave them Kiriath-arba (Arba was the father of Anak), that is Hebron, in the hill-country of Judah, and the common land round it,

¹²but they gave the open country near the town, and its hamlets, to Caleb son of Jephunneh as his holding.

¹³To the sons of Aaron the priest they gave Hebron, a city of refuge for the homicide, Libnah,

¹⁴Jattir, Eshtemoa,

¹⁵Holon, Debir,

¹⁶Ashan, Juttah, and Beth-shemesh, each with its common land: nine towns from these two tribes.

¹⁷They also gave towns from the tribe of Benjamin, Gibeon, Geba,

¹⁸Anathoth, and Almon, each with its common land: four towns.

¹⁹The number of the towns with their common land given to the sons of Aaron, the priests, was thirteen.

²⁰The towns which the rest of the Kohathite families of the Levites received by lot were from the tribe of Ephraim.

²¹They gave them Shechem, a city of refuge for the homicide in the hill-country of Ephraim, Gezer,

²²Kibzaim, and Beth-horon, each with its common land: four towns.

²³From the tribe of Dan, they gave them Eltekeh, Gibbethon,

²⁴ Aijalon, and Gath-rimmon, each with its common land: four towns.

²⁵ From the half tribe of Manasseh, they gave them Taanach and Gath-rimmon, each with its common land: two towns.

²⁶ The number of the towns belonging to the rest of the Kohathite families with their common land was ten.

²⁷ The Gershonite families of the Levites received, out of the share of the half tribe of Manasseh, Golan in Bashan, a city of refuge for the homicide, and Be-ashtaroth, each with its common land: two towns.

²⁸ From the tribe of Issachar they received Kishon, Daberath,

²⁹ Jarmuth, and En-gannim, each with its common land: four towns.

³⁰ From the tribe of Asher they received Mishal, Abdon,

³¹ Helkath, and Rehob, each with its common land: four towns.

³² From the tribe of Naphtali they received Kedesh in Galilee, a city of refuge for the homicide, Hammoth-dor, and Kartan, each with its common land: three towns.

³³The number of the towns of the Gershonite families with their common land was thirteen.

³⁴From the tribe of Zebulun the rest of the Merarite families of the Levites received Jokneam, Kartah,

³⁵Rimmon, and Nahalal, each with its common land: four towns.

³⁶East of the Jordan at Jericho, from the tribe of Reuben they were given Bezer-in-the-wilderness on the tableland, a city of refuge for the homicide, Jahaz,

³⁷Kedemoth, and Mephaath, each with its common land: four towns.

³⁸From the tribe of Gad they received Ramoth in Gilead, a city of refuge for the homicide, Mahanaim,

³⁹Heshbon, and Jazer, each with its common land: four towns in all.

⁴⁰Twelve towns in all fell by lot to the rest of the Merarite families of the Levites.

⁴¹The towns of the Levites within the Israelite holdings numbered forty-eight in all, with their common land.

⁴²Each town had its common land round it, and it was the same for all of them.

⁴³ Thus the LORD gave Israel all the land which he had sworn to give to their forefathers; they occupied it and settled in it.

⁴⁴ The LORD gave them security on every side as he had sworn to their forefathers. Of all their enemies not a man could withstand them; the LORD delivered all their enemies into their hands.

⁴⁵ Not a word of the LORD's promises to the house of Israel went unfulfilled; they all came true.

22 ¹ AT that time Joshua summoned the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh,

² and said to them, You have observed all the commands of Moses the servant of the LORD, and you have obeyed me in every command I laid on you.

³ All this time you have not deserted your kinsmen; right up to the present day you have faithfully observed the charge laid on you by the LORD your God.

⁴ The LORD your God has now given your kinsmen security as he promised them. Now you may return to your

homes, to your own land which Moses the servant of the LORD assigned to you east of the Jordan.

⁵But be very careful to keep the commands and the law which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you: to love the LORD your God; to conform to all his ways; to observe his commandments; to hold fast to him; to serve him with your whole heart and soul.

⁶Joshua blessed them and dismissed them, and they went to their homes.

⁷When he sent them away with his blessing, he said: Go to your homes richly laden, with great herds, with silver and gold, copper and iron, and with large stores of clothing. See that you share with your kinsmen the spoil you have taken from your enemies. To one half of the tribe of Manasseh Moses had given territory in Bashan; to the other half Joshua gave territory west of the Jordan among their kinsmen.

⁸(22: 7)

⁹So at Shiloh in Canaan the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh parted from the rest of the Israelites to go into Gilead, the land

which belonged to them according to the decree of the LORD given through Moses.

¹⁰When these tribes came to Geliloth by the Jordan, they built there by the river a great altar for all to see.

¹¹The Israelites heard that the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh had built the altar facing the land of Canaan, at Geliloth by the Jordan opposite the Israelite side,

¹²and, at the news, the whole Israelite community assembled at Shiloh to march against them.

¹³At the same time the Israelites sent Phinehas son of Eleazar the priest into the land of Gilead, to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh;

¹⁴he was accompanied by ten leading men, one from each of the tribes of Israel, all of them heads of households among the clans of Israel.

¹⁵They came to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh in the land of Gilead, and remonstrated with them:

¹⁶We speak for the whole community of the LORD, they declared. What is this

treachery you have committed against the God of Israel? Are you ceasing to follow the LORD, and are you building your own altar this day in defiance of the LORD?

¹⁷Remember our offence at Peor, for which a plague struck the community of the LORD; to this day we have not been purified from it. Was that offence so slight

¹⁸that you dare cease to follow the LORD today? If today you defy the LORD, tomorrow he will be angry with the whole community of Israel.

¹⁹If the land you have taken is unclean, then cross over to the LORD's own land, where the Tabernacle of the LORD now rests, and take a share of it with us. But do not defy the LORD and involve us in your defiance by building an altar of your own besides the altar of the LORD our God.

²⁰Remember the treachery of Achan son of Zerah, who defied the ban, and the whole community of Israel suffered for it; he was not the only one who paid with his life for that sin.

²¹ In reply the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh said to the heads of the clans of Israel:

²² The LORD the God of gods, the LORD the God of gods, he knows, and Israel must know: if this had been an act of defiance or treachery against the LORD, you could not save us today.

²³ If we had built ourselves an altar and meant to forsake the LORD, or had offered whole-offerings and grain-offerings on it, or had presented shared-offerings, the LORD himself would exact punishment.

²⁴ The truth is that we have done this for fear that the day may come when your children will say to ours, What have you to do with the LORD, the God of Israel?

²⁵ The LORD put the Jordan as a boundary between us and you. You have no share in the LORD, you Reubenites and Gadites. So your children would prevent ours from worshipping the LORD.

²⁶ We resolved to build an altar, not for whole-offerings and sacrifices,

²⁷ but as a witness between us and you, and between the generations to come. Thus we shall be able to perform service before the LORD, as we do now, with our whole-offerings, our sacrifices, and our shared-offerings; and your children will never be able to say to our children in time to come, You have no share in the LORD.

²⁸ And we thought, if ever they do say this to us and to our descendants, we will point to this copy of the altar of the LORD which we have made, not for whole-offerings and not for sacrifices, but as a witness between us and you.

²⁹ God forbid that we should defy the LORD and forsake him now by building another altar for whole-offerings, grain-offerings, and sacrifices, in addition to the altar of the LORD our God which stands in front of his tabernacle.

³⁰ When Phinehas the priest and the leaders of the community, the heads of the Israelite clans, who were with him, heard what the Reubenites, Gadites, and Manassites had to say, they were satisfied.

³¹ Phinehas son of Eleazar the priest said to the Reubenites, Gadites, and Manassites, Now we know that the LORD is in our midst; you have not acted treacherously against the LORD, but have preserved all Israel from punishment at his hand.

³² Phinehas son of Eleazar the priest and the leaders left the Reubenites and the Gadites in Gilead and made their report to the Israelites in Canaan.

³³ The Israelites were satisfied, and they blessed God and thought no more of attacking and ravaging the land where Reuben and Gad had settled.

³⁴ The Reubenites and Gadites declared, The altar is a witness between us that the LORD is God, and they named it Witness.

23¹ A LONG time had passed since the LORD had given Israel security from all their enemies around them, and Joshua was now very old.

² He summoned all Israel, their elders and heads of families, their judges and officers, and said to them, I am now an old man, far advanced in years.

³You have seen for yourselves everything the LORD your God has done to all these peoples for your sake; it was the LORD God himself who fought for you.

⁴I have allotted to you tribe by tribe your holdings, the land of all the peoples that I have wiped out and of all these that remain between the Jordan and the Great Sea which lies towards the setting sun.

⁵The LORD your God himself drove them out at your approach; he dispossessed them to make way for you, and you occupied their land, as the LORD your God had promised you.

⁶Be very resolute therefore to observe and perform everything written in the book of the law of Moses, without swerving either to the right or to the left.

⁷You must not associate with these peoples that are still here among you; you must not invoke their gods or swear by them or bow down to them in worship.

⁸You must hold fast to the LORD your God as you have done up to this day.

⁹The LORD has driven out great and powerful nations before you; to this day not a man of them has withstood you.

¹⁰One of you can rout a thousand, because the LORD your God fights for you, as he promised.

¹¹For your own sakes be very careful to love the LORD your God.

¹²But if you do turn away and attach yourselves to the peoples still remaining among you, and intermarry with them and associate with them and they with you,

¹³then be sure that the LORD will not continue to drive out those peoples from before you. They will be snares to entrap you, whips for your backs, and barbed hooks in your eyes, until you perish from this good land which the LORD your God has given you.

¹⁴Now, as you see, I am going the way of all mortals. You know in your heart of hearts, all of you, that nothing the LORD your God promised you has failed to come true, not one word of it.

¹⁵But the same LORD God who has kept his word to you to such good effect can equally bring every kind of evil on

you, until he has rooted you out from this good land which he has given you.

¹⁶If you violate the covenant which the LORD your God has laid upon you and go and serve other gods and worship them, then the LORD's anger will be roused against you and the good land he has given you will soon see you no more.

24¹Joshua assembled all the tribes of Israel at Shechem. He summoned the elders of Israel, the heads of families, the judges and officers. When they presented themselves before God,

²Joshua said to all the people: This is the word of the LORD the God of Israel: Long ago your forefathers, including Terah the father of Abraham and Nahor, lived beyond the Euphrates and served other gods.

³I took your ancestor Abraham from beside the Euphrates and led him through the length and breadth of Canaan. I gave him many descendants: I gave him Isaac,

⁴and to Isaac I gave Jacob and Esau. I assigned the hill-country of Seir to Esau

as his possession; Jacob and his sons went down to Egypt.

⁵Later I sent Moses and Aaron, and I struck the Egyptians with plagues -- you know well what I did among them -- and after that I brought you out;

⁶I brought your forefathers out of Egypt, but at the Red Sea the Egyptians sent their chariots and cavalry to pursue them.

⁷When they appealed to the LORD, he put a screen of darkness between you and the Egyptians, and brought the sea down on them to engulf them; you saw for yourselves what I did to Egypt. For a long time you lived in the wilderness,

⁸and then I brought you into the land of the Amorites who lived east of the Jordan. They fought against you, but I delivered them into your power; you took possession of their country, when I destroyed them before you.

⁹The king of Moab, Balak son of Zippor, took the field against Israel. He sent for Balaam son of Beor to lay a curse on you,

¹⁰but I would not listen to Balaam. Instead of that he was constrained to

bless you, and so I saved you from Balak's clutches.

¹¹ Then you crossed the Jordan and came to Jericho. Its people fought against you, but I delivered them into your hands.

¹² I spread panic before your advance, and it was this, not your sword or your bow, that drove out the two kings of the Amorites.

¹³ I gave you land on which you had not laboured, towns which you had not built; you have settled in those towns and you eat the produce of vineyards and olive groves which you did not plant.

¹⁴ Now hold the LORD in awe, and serve him in loyalty and truth. Put away the gods your fathers served beyond the Euphrates and in Egypt, and serve the LORD.

¹⁵ But if it does not please you to serve the LORD, choose here and now whom you will serve: the gods whom your forefathers served beyond the Euphrates, or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living. But I and my family, we shall serve the LORD.

¹⁶The people answered, God forbid that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods! They declared:

¹⁷The LORD our God it was who brought us and our forefathers up from Egypt, that land of slavery; it was he who displayed those great signs before our eyes, who guarded us on all our wanderings among the many peoples through whose lands we passed.

¹⁸The LORD drove out before us the Amorites and all the peoples who lived in that country. We too shall serve the LORD; he is our God.

¹⁹Joshua said to the people, You may not be able to serve the LORD. He is a holy God, a jealous God, and he will not forgive your rebellion and your sins.

²⁰If you forsake the LORD and serve foreign deities, he will turn and bring disaster on you and make an end of you, even though he once brought you prosperity.

²¹The people answered, No; we shall serve the LORD.

²²He said to them, You are witnesses against yourselves that you have chosen

the LORD and will serve him. Yes, they answered, we are witnesses.

²³Then here and now banish the foreign gods that are among you, he said to them, and turn your hearts to the LORD the God of Israel.

²⁴The people replied, We shall serve the LORD our God and his voice we shall obey.

²⁵So Joshua made a covenant for the people that day; he drew up a statute and an ordinance for them in Shechem

²⁶and recorded its terms in the book of the law of God. He took a great stone and set it up there under the terebinth in the sanctuary of the LORD.

²⁷He said to all the people, You see this stone -- it will be a witness against us; for it has heard all the words which the LORD has spoken to us. If you renounce your God, it will be a witness against you.

²⁸Then Joshua dismissed the people, each man to his allotted holding.

²⁹After these events, Joshua son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died at the age of a hundred and ten.

³⁰They buried him within his own holding in Timnath-serah to the north of Mount Gaash in the hill-country of Ephraim.

³¹Israel served the LORD throughout the lifetime of Joshua and of the elders who outlived him and who knew all that the LORD had done for Israel.

³²The bones of Joseph, which the Israelites had brought up from Egypt, were buried in Shechem, in the plot of land which Jacob had bought from the sons of Hamor father of Shechem for a hundred sheep; and they passed into the ancestral holding of the house of Joseph.

³³Eleazar son of Aaron died and was buried in the hill which had been assigned to Phinehas his son in the hill-country of Ephraim.

Judges

1 ¹ AFTER the death of Joshua the Israelites enquired of the LORD which tribe should go up first to attack the Canaanites.

² The LORD answered, Judah is to go up; I have delivered the country into their power.

³ The Judahites said to their kinsmen, the Simeonites, Go up with us into the territory allotted to us, and let us do battle with the Canaanites, and we in turn shall go with you into your territory. So the Simeonites went with them.

⁴ Judah advanced to the attack, and the LORD delivered the Canaanites and the Perizzites into their hands, so that they slaughtered ten thousand of them at Bezek.

⁵ At Bezek they came upon Adoni-bezek, engaged him in battle, and defeated the Canaanites and Perizzites.

⁶ Adoni-bezek fled, but they pursued him, and having taken him prisoner cut off his thumbs and his big toes.

⁷Adoni-bezek said, I once had seventy kings with their thumbs and big toes cut off who were picking up the scraps under my table. What I have done, God has done to me. He was brought to Jerusalem, and he died there.

⁸The men of Judah made an assault on Jerusalem and captured it; they put its people to the sword, and set fire to the city.

⁹Then they turned south to fight the Canaanites living in the hill-country, the Negeb, and the Shephelah.

¹⁰Judah attacked the Canaanites in Hebron, formerly called Kiriath-arba, and defeated Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmi.

¹¹From there they marched against the inhabitants of Debir, formerly called Kiriath-sepher.

¹²Caleb said, I shall give my daughter Achsah in marriage to the man who attacks and captures Kiriath-sepher.

¹³Othniel, son of Caleb's younger brother Kenaz, captured it, and Caleb gave him his daughter Achsah.

¹⁴When she became his wife, Othniel induced her to ask her father for a piece of land. She dismounted from her

donkey, and Caleb asked her, What do you want?

¹⁵She replied, Grant me this favour: you have put me in this arid Negeb; you must give me pools of water as well. So Caleb gave her the upper pool and the lower pool.

¹⁶The descendants of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, went up with the Judahites from the city of palm trees to the wilderness of Judah which is in the Negeb of Arad, and they settled among the Amalekites.

¹⁷The Judahites then set out with their kinsmen the Simeonites, attacked the Canaanites in Zephath, and utterly destroyed it; hence the town was given the name Hormah.

¹⁸Judah took Gaza, Ashkelon, and Ekron, along with the territory of each.

¹⁹As the LORD was with the Judahites, they occupied the hill-country; but they failed to drive out the inhabitants of the plain because they had iron-clad chariots.

²⁰As Moses had directed, Hebron was given to Caleb, who drove out the three Anakim.

²¹ But the Benjamites failed to drive out the Jebusite inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the Jebusites have lived on in Jerusalem alongside the Benjamites to this day.

²² The men of Joseph also attacked Bethel, and the LORD was with them.

²³ They reconnoitred Bethel, formerly called Luz,

²⁴ and when the spies saw a man coming out of the town they said to him, Show us a way into the town, and we will see that you come to no harm.

²⁵ When he showed them how to enter, they put the town to the sword, but let the man and his family go unscathed.

²⁶ The man went into Hittite country, where he built a town, which he called Luz, the name it bears to this day.

²⁷ Manasseh failed to drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shean, Taanach, Dor, Ibleam, and Megiddo and their villages; the Canaanites maintained their hold on that region.

²⁸ Later, when Israel became strong, they put them to forced labour, but never completely drove them out.

²⁹ Ephraim failed to drive out the Canaanites who lived in Gezer; the Canaanites lived among them there.

³⁰ Zebulun failed to drive out the inhabitants of Kitron and Nahalol; the Canaanites lived among them and were put to forced labour.

³¹ Asher failed to drive out the inhabitants of Acco and Sidon, of Ahlab, Achzib, Helbah, Aphik, and Rehob.

³² Thus the Asherites lived among the Canaanite inhabitants and did not drive them out.

³³ Naphtali failed to drive out the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh and of Beth-anath, and lived among the Canaanite inhabitants, putting the inhabitants of Beth-shemesh and Beth-anath to forced labour.

³⁴ The Amorites pressed the Danites back into the hill-country and did not allow them to come down into the plain.

³⁵ The Amorites maintained their hold on Mount Heres and on Aijalon and Shaalbim, but the Joseph tribes increased their pressure on them until they reduced them to forced labour.

³⁶The boundary of the Edomites ran from the ascent of Akrabbim, upwards from Sela.

2¹THE angel of the LORD went up from Gilgal to Bokim, and said, I brought you up out of Egypt and into the country which I promised on oath I would give to your forefathers. I said: I shall never annul my covenant with you,² and you in turn must make no covenant with the inhabitants of this country; you must pull down their altars. But you did not obey me, and look what you have done!

³So I said, I shall not drive them out before you; they will entice you astray, and their gods will become a snare for you.

⁴When the angel of the LORD said this to the Israelites, they all broke into loud lamentation.

⁵They called the place Bokim and offered sacrifices there to the LORD.

⁶JOSHUA dismissed the people, and the Israelites went off to occupy the country, each to his allotted holding.

⁷The people served the LORD as long as Joshua and the elders who outlived

him were alive -- everyone, that is, who had witnessed all the great deeds the LORD had done for Israel.

⁸At the age of a hundred and ten Joshua son of Nun, the servant of the LORD, died,

⁹and was buried within his own holding in Timnath-heres to the north of Mount Gaash in the hill-country of Ephraim.

¹⁰When that whole generation was gathered to its forefathers, and was succeeded by another generation, who did not acknowledge the LORD and did not know what he had done for Israel,

¹¹then the Israelites did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD by serving the baalim.

¹²They forsook the LORD, their fathers' God who had brought them out of Egypt, and went after other gods, the gods of the peoples among whom they lived; by bowing down before them they provoked the LORD to anger;

¹³they forsook the LORD and served the baalim and the ashtaroth.

¹⁴In his anger the LORD made them the prey of bands of raiders and plunderers; he sold them into the power of their

enemies around them, so that they could no longer stand against them.

¹⁵Every time they went out to do battle the LORD brought disaster on them, as he had said when he gave them his solemn warning; and they were in dire straits.

¹⁶THEN the LORD raised up judges to rescue them from the marauding bands,

¹⁷yet even to their judges they did not listen. They prostituted themselves by worshipping other gods and bowed down before them; all too soon they abandoned the path of obedience to the LORD's commands which their forefathers had followed. They did not obey the LORD.

¹⁸Whenever the LORD set up a judge over them, he was with that judge, and kept them safe from their enemies so long as the judge lived. The LORD would relent when he heard them groaning under oppression and tyranny.

¹⁹But on the death of the judge they would relapse into corruption deeper than that of their predecessors and go after other gods; serving them and bowing before them, they would give up

none of their evil practices and wilful ways.

²⁰So the LORD's anger was roused against Israel and he said, Because this nation has violated the covenant which I laid upon their forefathers, and has not obeyed me,

²¹I for my part shall not drive out before them one individual of all the nations which Joshua left at his death.

²²Through them I shall test Israel, to see whether or not they will keep strictly to the way of the LORD as their forefathers did.

²³So the LORD left those nations alone and made no haste to drive them out or give them into Joshua's hands.

3¹As a means of testing all the Israelites who had not taken part in the battles for Canaan, the LORD left these nations,

²his purpose being to train succeeding generations of Israel in the art of warfare, or those at least who had not learnt it in former times.

³They were: the five lords of the Philistines, all the Canaanites, the Sidonians, and the Hivites who lived

in Mount Lebanon and from Mount Baal-hermon as far as Lebo-hamath.

⁴His purpose also was to test whether the Israelites would obey the commandments which the LORD had given to their forefathers through Moses.

⁵Thus the Israelites lived among the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites;

⁶they took their daughters in marriage and gave their own daughters to their sons; and they served their gods.

⁷The Israelites did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD: forgetting the LORD their God, they served the baalim and the asheroth.

⁸The anger of the LORD was roused against Israel and he sold them into the power of King Cushan-rishathaim of Aram-naharaim, who kept them in subjection for eight years.

⁹Then the Israelites cried to the LORD for help, and to deliver them he raised up Othniel son of Caleb's younger brother Kenaz, and he set them free.

¹⁰The spirit of the LORD came upon him and he became judge over Israel. He

took the field, and the LORD delivered King Cushan-rishathaim of Aram into his hands; Othniel was too strong for him.

¹¹ Thus the land was at peace for forty years until Othniel son of Kenaz died.

¹² Once again the Israelites did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD, and because of this he roused King Eglon of Moab against Israel.

¹³ Eglon mustered the Ammonites and the Amalekites, attacked Israel, and took possession of the city of palm trees.

¹⁴ The Israelites were subject to King Eglon of Moab for eighteen years.

¹⁵ Then they cried to the LORD for help, and to deliver them he raised up Ehud son of Gera the Benjamite; he was left-handed. The Israelites sent him to hand over their tribute to King Eglon.

¹⁶ Ehud had made himself a two-edged sword, about eighteen inches long, which he fastened on his right side under his clothes

¹⁷ when he brought the tribute to King Eglon. Eglon was a very fat man.

¹⁸ After Ehud had finished presenting the tribute, he sent on the men who had carried it,

¹⁹while he himself turned back from the Carved Stones at Gilgal. My lord king, he said, I have a message for you in private. Eglon called for silence and dismissed all his attendants.

²⁰Ehud then approached him as he sat in the roof-chamber of his summer palace. He said, Your majesty, I have a message from God for you. As Eglon rose from his seat,

²¹Ehud reached with his left hand, drew the sword from his right side, and drove it into Eglon's belly.

²²The hilt went in after the blade and the fat closed over the blade, for he did not draw the sword out but left it protruding behind.

²³Ehud then went out to the porch, where he shut the door on him and fastened it.

²⁴After he had gone, Eglon's servants came and, finding the doors fastened, they said, He must be relieving himself in the closet of his summer palace.

²⁵They waited until they became alarmed and, when he still did not open the door of the roof-chamber, they took

the key and opened the door; and there was their master lying dead on the floor.

²⁶While they had been waiting, Ehud had made good his escape; he passed the Carved Stones and escaped to Seirah.

²⁷Once there, he sounded the trumpet in the hill-country of Ephraim, and the Israelites went down from the hills with him at their head.

²⁸He said to them, Follow me, for the LORD has delivered your enemies, the Moabites, into your hands. They went down after him, and held the fords of the Jordan against the Moabites, allowing no one to cross.

²⁹They killed at that time some ten thousand Moabites, all of them stalwart and valiant fighters; not one escaped.

³⁰Moab became subject to Israel on that day, and the land was at peace for eighty years.

³¹After Ehud there was Shamgar son of Anath. He killed six hundred Philistines with an ox-goad, and he too delivered Israel.

4¹ AFTER Ehud's death the Israelites once again did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD,

²and he sold them into the power of Jabin, the Canaanite king who ruled in Hazor. The commander of his forces was Sisera, who lived in Harosheth-of-the-Gentiles.

³The Israelites cried to the LORD for help, because Sisera with his nine hundred iron-clad chariots had oppressed Israel harshly for twenty years.

⁴At that time Deborah wife of Lappidoth, a prophetess, was judge in Israel.

⁵It was her custom to sit under the Palm Tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill-country of Ephraim, and Israelites seeking a judgement went up to her.

⁶She sent for Barak son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali and said to him, This is the command of the LORD the God of Israel: Go and lead out ten thousand men from Naphtali and Zebulun and bring them with you to Mount Tabor.

⁷I shall draw out to you at the wadi Kishon Jabin's commander Sisera, along with his chariots and troops, and deliver him into your power.

⁸Barak answered, If you go with me, I shall go, but if you will not go, neither shall I.

⁹Certainly I shall go with you, she said, but this venture will bring you no glory, because the LORD will leave Sisera to fall into the hands of a woman. Deborah set off with Barak and went to Kedesh.

¹⁰Barak mustered Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh and marched up with ten thousand followers; Deborah went up with him.

¹¹Now Heber the Kenite had parted company with the Kenites, the descendants of Hobab, Moses' brother-in-law, and he had pitched his tent at Elon-bezaananim near Kedesh.

¹²When it was reported to Sisera that Barak son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor,

¹³he mustered all nine hundred of his iron-clad chariots, along with all the troops he had, and marched from

Harosheth-of-the-Gentiles to the wadi Kishon.

¹⁴Deborah said to Barak, Up! This day the LORD is to give Sisera into your hands. See, the LORD has marched out at your head! Barak came down from Mount Tabor with ten thousand men at his back,

¹⁵and the LORD threw Sisera and all his chariots and army into panic-stricken rout before Barak's onslaught; Sisera himself dismounted from his chariot and fled on foot.

¹⁶Barak pursued the chariots and the troops as far as Harosheth, and the whole army was put to the sword; not a man was left alive.

¹⁷Meanwhile Sisera fled on foot to the tent of Jael wife of Heber the Kenite, because King Jabin of Hazor and the household of Heber the Kenite were on friendly terms.

¹⁸Jael came out to greet Sisera and said, Come in, my lord, come in here; do not be afraid. He went into the tent, and she covered him with a rug.

¹⁹He said to her, Give me some water to drink, for I am thirsty. She opened

a skin of milk, gave him a drink, and covered him again.

²⁰He said to her, Stand at the tent door, and if anyone comes and asks if there is a man here, say No.

²¹But as Sisera lay fast asleep through exhaustion Jael took a tent-peg, picked up a mallet, and, creeping up to him, drove the peg into his temple, so that it went down into the ground, and Sisera died.

²²When Barak came by in pursuit of Sisera, Jael went out to meet him. Come, she said, I shall show you the man you are looking for. He went in with her, and there was Sisera lying dead with the tent-peg in his temple.

²³That day God gave victory to the Israelites over King Jabin of Canaan,

²⁴and they pressed home their attacks upon him until he was destroyed.

5¹ ON that day Deborah and Barak son of Abinoam sang this song:

²For the leaders, the leaders in Israel, for the people who answered the call, bless the LORD.

³Hear, you kings; princes, give ear! I shall sing, I shall sing to the LORD,

making music to the LORD, the God of Israel.

⁴LORD, when you set forth from Seir, when you marched from the land of Edom, earth trembled; heaven quaked; the clouds streamed down in torrents.

⁵Mountains shook in fear before the LORD, the Lord of Sinai, before the LORD, the God of Israel.

⁶In the days of Shamgar son of Anath, in the days of Jael, caravans plied no longer; travellers who had followed the high roads went round by devious paths.

⁷Champions there were none, none left in Israel, until you, Deborah, arose, arose as a mother in Israel.

⁸They chose new gods, they consorted with demons. Not a shield was to be seen, not a lance among forty thousand Israelites.

⁹My heart goes out to you, the marshals of Israel; you among the people that answered the call, bless the LORD.

¹⁰You that sit on saddle-cloths riding your tawny she-donkeys, and you that take the road on foot, ponder on this.

¹¹Hark, the sound of the merrymakers at the places where they draw water!

There they commemorate the victories of the LORD, his triumphs as the champion of Israel. Down to the gates came the LORD's people:

¹²Rouse yourself, rouse yourself, Deborah, rouse yourself, break into song. Up, Barak! Take prisoners in plenty, you son of Abinoam.

¹³Then down marched the column and its chieftains, the people of the LORD marching down like warriors.

¹⁴The men of Ephraim rallied in the vale, crying, We are with you, Benjamin! Your clansmen are here! Down came the marshals from Machir, from Zebulun the bearers of the musterer's staff.

¹⁵The princes of Issachar were with Deborah, Issachar with Barak; down into the valley they rushed in pursuit. Reuben however was split into factions; great were their heart-searchings.

¹⁶Why did you linger by the sheepfolds to listen to the shrill calling of the shepherds?

¹⁷Gilead stayed beyond Jordan; and Dan, why did he tarry by the ships? Asher remained by the seashore, by its creeks he stayed.

¹⁸The people of Zebulun risked their lives; so did Naphtali on the heights of the battlefield.

¹⁹Kings came, they fought; then fought the kings of Canaan at Taanach by the waters of Megiddo; no plunder of silver did they take.

²⁰The stars fought from heaven, the stars in their courses fought against Sisera.

²¹The torrent of Kishon swept him away, the torrent barred his flight, the torrent of Kishon. March on in might, my soul!

²²Then hammered the hoofs of his horses, his chargers galloped, galloped away.

²³A curse on Meroz, said the angel of the LORD; a curse, a curse on its inhabitants, because they did not come to the help of the LORD, to the help of the LORD and the fighting men.

²⁴Blest above women be Jael wife of Heber the Kenite; blest above all women in the tents.

²⁵He asked for water: she gave him milk, she offered him curds in a bowl fit for a chieftain.

²⁶She reached out her hand for the tent-peg, her right hand for the workman's hammer. With the hammer she struck Sisera, crushing his head; with a shattering blow she pierced his temple.

²⁷At her feet he sank, he fell, he lay prone; at her feet he sank down and fell. Where he sank down, there he fell, done to death.

²⁸The mother of Sisera peered through the lattice, through the window she peered and cried, Why is his chariot so long in coming? Why is the clatter of his chariots so delayed?

²⁹The wisest of her ladies answered her, yes, she found her own answer:

³⁰They must be finding spoil, taking their shares, a damsel for each man, two damsels, booty of dyed stuffs for Sisera, booty of dyed stuffs, dyed stuff and brocade, two lengths of brocade to grace the victor's neck.

³¹So perish all your enemies, LORD; but let those who love you be like the sun rising in strength. The land was at peace for forty years.

6¹ THE Israelites did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD and he delivered them into the hands of Midian for seven years.

²The Midianites were too strong for the Israelites, who were forced to find themselves hollow places in the mountains, in caves and fastnesses.

³If the Israelites had sown seed, the Midianites and the Amalekites and other eastern tribes would come up and attack Israel,

⁴pitching their camps in the country and destroying the crops as far as the outskirts of Gaza. They left nothing to support life in Israel, neither sheep nor ox nor donkey.

⁵They came up with their herds and their tents, swarming like locusts; they and their camels were past counting. They would come into the land and lay it waste.

⁶The Israelites, brought to destitution by the Midianites, cried to the LORD for help.

⁷When the Israelites cried to the LORD because of what they were suffering from the Midianites,

⁸ he sent them a prophet who said to them, These are the words of the LORD the God of Israel: I brought you up from Egypt, that land of slavery.

⁹ I rescued you from the Egyptians and from all your oppressors, whom I drove out before you to give you their lands.

¹⁰ I said to you, I am the LORD your God: do not worship the gods of the Amorites in whose country you are settling. But you did not listen to me.

¹¹ The angel of the LORD came to Ophrah and sat under the terebinth which belonged to Joash the Abiezrite. While Gideon son of Joash was threshing wheat in the winepress, so that he might keep it out of sight of the Midianites,

¹² the angel of the LORD appeared to him and said, You are a brave man, and the LORD is with you.

¹³ Pray, my lord, said Gideon, if the LORD really is with us, why has all this happened to us? What has become of all those wonderful deeds of his, of which we have heard from our forefathers, when they told us how the LORD brought us up from Egypt? But now the LORD

has cast us off and delivered us into the power of the Midianites.

¹⁴The LORD turned to him and said, Go and use this strength of yours to free Israel from the Midianites. It is I who send you.

¹⁵Gideon said, Pray, my lord, how can I save Israel? Look at my clan: it is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's family.

¹⁶The LORD answered, I shall be with you, and you will lay low all Midian as one man.

¹⁷He replied, If I stand so well with you, give me a sign that it is you who speak to me.

¹⁸Do not leave this place, I beg you, until I come with my gift and lay it before you. He answered, I shall stay until you return.

¹⁹So Gideon went in, and prepared a young goat and made an ephah of flour into unleavened bread. He put the meat in a basket, poured the broth into a pot, and brought it out to the angel under the terebinth. As he approached,

²⁰the angel of God said to him, Take the meat and the bread, and put them

here on the rock and pour out the broth. When he did so,

²¹ the angel of the LORD reached out the staff in his hand and touched the meat and bread with the tip of it. Fire sprang up from the rock and consumed the meat and the bread. Then the angel of the LORD vanished from his sight.

²² Gideon realized it was the angel of the LORD and said, Alas, Lord GOD! Then it is true: I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face.

²³ But the LORD said to him, Peace be with you! Do not be afraid; you shall not die.

²⁴ Gideon built an altar there to the LORD and named it The LORD is Peace. It stands to this day at Ophrah-of-the-Abiezrites.

²⁵ That night the LORD said to Gideon, Take a young bull of your father's, the yearling bull; tear down the altar of Baal belonging to your father, and cut down the sacred pole which stands beside it.

²⁶ Then build an altar of the proper pattern to the LORD your God on the top of this earthwork; take the yearling bull and offer it as a whole-offering with the

wood of the sacred pole that you cut down.

²⁷ Gideon took ten of his servants and did as the LORD had told him; but because he was afraid of his father's family and the people of the town, he did it by night and not by day.

²⁸ When the people rose early next morning, they found the altar of Baal overturned, the sacred pole which had stood beside it cut down, and the yearling bull offered up as a whole-offering on an altar which had been built.

²⁹ They asked among themselves who had done it, and, after searching enquiries, they declared it was Gideon son of Joash.

³⁰ The townspeople said to Joash, Bring out your son. He has overturned the altar of Baal and cut down the sacred pole beside it; he must die.

³¹ But as they crowded round him Joash retorted, Are you pleading Baal's cause then? Do you think it is for you to save him? Whoever pleads his cause shall be put to death at dawn. If Baal is a god, and someone has torn down his altar, let him take up his own cause.

³²That day Joash named Gideon Jerubbaal, saying, Let Baal plead his own cause against this man, for he has torn down his altar.

³³When all the Midianites, the Amalekites, and the eastern tribes joined forces, crossed the river, and encamped in the valley of Jezreel,

³⁴the spirit of the LORD took possession of Gideon. He sounded the trumpet to call out the Abiezrites to follow him,

³⁵and sent messengers all through Manasseh; and they too rallied to him. He sent messengers to Asher, Zebulun, and Naphtali, and they advanced to meet the others.

³⁶Gideon said to God, If indeed you are going to deliver Israel through me as you promised,

³⁷I shall put a fleece of wool on the threshing-floor, and if there is dew on the fleece while all the ground is dry, then I shall be sure that it is through me you will deliver Israel as you promised.

³⁸And that is what happened. When he rose early next day and wrung out the fleece, he squeezed enough dew from it to fill a bowl with water.

³⁹Gideon then said to God, Do not be angry with me, but give me leave to speak once again. Allow me, I pray, to make one more test with the fleece. This time let the fleece be dry, and all the ground be covered with dew.

⁴⁰God let it be so that night: the fleece alone was dry, and all over the ground there was dew.

7¹Early next morning Jerubbaal, that is Gideon, with all his troops pitched camp at En-harod; the Midianite encampment was in the valley to the north of his by the hill at Moreh.

²The LORD said to Gideon, Those with you are more than I need to deliver Midian into their hands: Israel might claim the glory for themselves and say that it is their own strength that has given them the victory.

³Make a proclamation now to the army to say that anyone who is afraid or anxious is to leave Mount Galud at once and go home. Twenty-two thousand of them went, and ten thousand remained.

⁴There are still too many, said the LORD to Gideon. Bring them down to the water, and I shall separate them for you

there. If I say to you, This man shall go with you, he shall go; and if I say, This man shall not go, he shall not go.

⁵When Gideon brought the men down to the water, the LORD said to him, Make every man who laps the water with his tongue like a dog stand on one side, and on the other every man who kneels down and drinks.

⁶The number of those who lapped, putting their hands to their mouths, was three hundred; all the rest had gone down on their knees to drink.

⁷The LORD said, By means of the three hundred men who lapped I shall save you and give Midian into your power; the rest may go home.

⁸Gideon sent all these Israelites home, but he kept the three hundred, and they took with them the jars and the trumpets which the people had. The Midianite camp was below him in the valley,

⁹and that night the LORD said to Gideon, Go down at once and attack the camp, for I have delivered it into your hands.

¹⁰If you are afraid to do so, then go down first with your servant Purah,

¹¹ and when you hear what they are saying, that will give you courage to attack the camp. So he and his servant Purah went down to the outposts of the camp where the fighting men were stationed.

¹² The Midianites, the Amalekites, and all the eastern tribes were so many that they lay there in the valley like a swarm of locusts; there was no counting their camels, which in number were like grains of sand on the seashore.

¹³ As Gideon came close, there was a man telling his comrades about a dream. He said, I dreamt that I saw a barley loaf rolling over and over through the Midianite camp; it came to a tent, struck it, and the tent collapsed and turned upside down.

¹⁴ The other answered, This can be none other than the sword of Gideon son of Joash the Israelite. God has delivered Midian and the whole army into his hands.

¹⁵ When Gideon heard the account of the dream and its interpretation, he bowed down in worship. Then going back to the Israelite camp he said, Let us go!

The LORD has delivered the camp of the Midianites into our hands.

¹⁶He divided the three hundred men into three companies, and furnished every man with a trumpet and an empty jar, with a torch inside each jar.

¹⁷Watch me, he said to them. When I come to the edge of the camp, do exactly as I do.

¹⁸When I and those with me blow our trumpets, you too all round the camp blow your trumpets and shout, For the LORD and for Gideon!

¹⁹Gideon and the hundred men who were with him reached the outskirts of the camp at the beginning of the middle watch, just after the posting of the sentries. They blew the trumpets and smashed the jars they were holding.

²⁰All three companies blew their trumpets and smashed their jars; then, grasping the torches in their left hands and the trumpets in their right, they shouted, A sword for the LORD and for Gideon!

²¹Every man stood where he was, all round the camp, and the whole camp leapt up in a panic and took flight.

²²When the three hundred blew their trumpets, the LORD set all the men in the camp fighting against each other. They fled as far as Beth-shittah in the direction of Zererah, as far as the ridge of Abel-meholah near Tabbath.

²³The Israelites from Naphtali and Asher and all Manasseh were called out to pursue the Midianites.

²⁴Gideon also sent messengers throughout the hill-country of Ephraim to say: Come down and cut off the Midianites. Hold the fords of the Jordan against them as far as Beth-barah. So all the Ephraimites when called out held the fords of the Jordan as far as Beth-barah.

²⁵They captured the two Midianite princes, Oreb and Zeeb. Oreb they killed at the Rock of Oreb, and Zeeb by the Winepress of Zeeb, and they kept up the pursuit of the Midianites; afterwards they brought the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon on the other side of Jordan.

8¹The men of Ephraim said to Gideon, Why have you treated us like this? Why did you not summon us when you went to fight Midian? and they upbraided him fiercely.

²But he replied, What have I now accomplished compared with you? Are not Ephraim's gleanings better than the whole grape harvest of Abiezer?

³God delivered Oreb and Zeeb, the princes of Midian, into your hands. What have I been able to accomplish compared with you? At that their anger against him died down.

⁴Gideon came to the Jordan, and he and his three hundred men crossed over to continue the pursuit, exhausted though they were.

⁵He said to the people of Succoth, Will you give my followers some bread? They are exhausted, and I am pursuing Zebah and Zalmunna, the kings of Midian.

⁶But the chief men of Succoth replied, Are Zebah and Zalmunna already in your hands, that we should give bread to your troops?

⁷Gideon said, For that, when the LORD delivers Zebah and Zalmunna into my hands, I shall thresh your bodies with desert thorns and briars.

⁸He went on from there to Penuel and made the same request; the people of

Penuel gave the same answer as had the people of Succoth.

⁹He said to them, When I return victorious, I shall pull down your tower.

¹⁰Zebah and Zalmunna were at Karkor with an army of about fifteen thousand men. Those were all that remained of the entire host of the eastern tribes, a hundred and twenty thousand warriors having fallen in battle.

¹¹Gideon advanced along the track used by the tent-dwellers east of Nobah and Jogbehah, and his attack caught the enemy off guard.

¹²Zebah and Zalmunna fled; but he went in pursuit of the Midianite kings and captured them both; and their whole army melted away.

¹³As Gideon son of Joash was returning from battle by the ascent of Heres,

¹⁴he caught a young man from Succoth. When questioned the young man listed for him the names of the rulers of Succoth and its elders, seventy-seven in all.

¹⁵Gideon then came to the people of Succoth and said, Here are Zebah and Zalmunna, about whom you taunted me.

Are Zebah and Zalmunna already in your hands, you said, that we should give your exhausted men bread?

¹⁶Then he took the elders of Succoth and inflicted punishment on them with desert thorns and briars.

¹⁷He also pulled down the tower of Penuel and put the men of the town to death.

¹⁸He said to Zebah and Zalmunna, What sort of men did you kill in Tabor? They answered, They were like you; every one had the look of a king's son.

¹⁹They were my brothers, he said, my mother's sons. I swear by the LORD, if you had let them live I would not have killed you.

²⁰Then he said to his eldest son Jether, Stand up and kill them. But he was still only a lad, and did not draw his sword, because he was afraid.

²¹Zebah and Zalmunna said, Rise up yourself and dispatch us, for you have a man's strength. So Gideon got up and killed them both, and he took the crescents from the necks of their camels.

²²The Israelites said to Gideon, You have saved us from the Midianites; now

you be our ruler, you and your son and your grandson.

²³ But Gideon replied, I shall not rule over you, nor will my son; the LORD will rule over you.

²⁴ He went on, I have a request to make: will every one of you give me an ear-ring from his booty? -- for the enemy, being Ishmaelites, wore gold ear-rings.

²⁵ They said, Of course we shall give them. So a cloak was spread out and every man threw on to it a gold ear-ring from his booty.

²⁶ The ear-rings he asked for weighed seventeen hundred shekels of gold; this was in addition to the crescents and pendants and the purple robes worn by the Midianite kings, and not counting the chains on the necks of their camels.

²⁷ Gideon made the gold into an ephod which he set up in his own town of Ophrah. All the Israelites went astray by worshipping it, and it became a snare for Gideon and his household.

²⁸ Thus the Midianites were subdued by the Israelites; they could no longer hold

up their heads. For forty years the land was at peace, all the lifetime of Gideon,²⁹ that is Jerubbaal son of Joash; and he retired to his own home.

³⁰Gideon had seventy sons, his own offspring, for he had many wives.

³¹He had a concubine who lived in Shechem, and she also bore him a son, whom he named Abimelech.

³²Gideon son of Joash died at a ripe old age and was buried in his father's grave at Ophrah-of-the-Abiezrites.

³³After Gideon's death the Israelites again went astray: they worshipped the baalim and made Baal-berith their god.

³⁴They were unmindful of the LORD their God who had delivered them from all their enemies around them,

³⁵nor did they show to the family of Jerubbaal, that is Gideon, the loyalty that was due to them for all the good he had done Israel.

9¹ ABIMELECH son of Jerubbaal went to Shechem to his mother's brothers, and spoke with them and with the rest of the clan of his mother's family.

²I beg you, he said, whisper a word in the ears of all the people of Shechem.

Ask them which is better for them: that seventy men, all the sons of Jerubbaal, should rule over them, or one man. Tell them to remember that I am their own flesh and blood.

³When his mother's kinsfolk repeated all this to every Shechemite on his behalf, they were moved to come over to Abimelech's side, because, as they said, he was their kinsman.

⁴They gave him seventy pieces of silver from the temple of Baal-berith, and with these he hired good-for-nothing, reckless fellows as his followers.

⁵He went to his father's house in Ophrah and butchered his seventy brothers, the sons of Jerubbaal, on a single stone block, all but Jotham, the youngest, who survived because he had gone into hiding.

⁶Then all the inhabitants of Shechem and all Beth-millo came together and made Abimelech king beside the propped-up terebinth at Shechem.

⁷When this was reported to Jotham, he climbed to the summit of Mount Gerizim, and standing there he cried at the top

of his voice: Listen to me, you people of Shechem, and may God listen to you.

⁸Once upon a time the trees set out to anoint a king over them. They said to the olive tree: Be king over us.

⁹But the olive tree answered: What, leave my rich oil by which gods and men are honoured, to go and hold sway over the trees?

¹⁰So the trees said to the fig tree: Then will you come and be king over us?

¹¹But the fig tree answered: What, leave my good fruit and all its sweetness, to go and hold sway over the trees?

¹²So the trees said to the vine: Then will you come and be king over us?

¹³But the vine answered: What, leave my new wine which gladdens gods and men, to go and hold sway over the trees?

¹⁴Then all the trees said to the thorn bush: Will you come and be king over us?

¹⁵The thorn answered: If you really mean to anoint me as your king, then come under the protection of my shadow; if not, fire will come out of the thorn and burn up the cedars of Lebanon.

¹⁶Jotham said, Now have you acted fairly and honourably in making Abimelech king? Have you done the right thing by Jerubbaal and his household? Have you given my father his proper due

--

¹⁷who fought for you, and risked his life to deliver you from the Midianites?

¹⁸Today you have risen against my father's family, butchered his sons, seventy on a single stone block, and made Abimelech, the son of his slave-girl, king over the inhabitants of Shechem just because he is your kinsman.

¹⁹In this day's work have you acted fairly and honourably by Jerubbaal and his family? If so, I wish you joy in Abimelech and wish him joy in you!

²⁰If not, may fire come out of Abimelech and devour the inhabitants of Shechem and all Beth-millo; may fire also come out from the inhabitants of Shechem and Beth-millo to devour Abimelech.

²¹Jotham then slipped away and made his escape; he came to Be-er, and there he settled, to be out of reach of his brother Abimelech.

²²After Abimelech had been prince over Israel for three years,

²³God sent an evil spirit to create a breach between Abimelech and the inhabitants of Shechem, and they broke faith with him.

²⁴This was done in order that the violent murder of the seventy sons of Jerubbaal might recoil on their brother Abimelech who did the murder, and on the people of Shechem who encouraged him to do it.

²⁵The people of Shechem set men to lie in wait for him on the hilltops, and they robbed all who passed that way. But Abimelech had word of it.

²⁶Gaal son of Ebed came with his kinsmen to Shechem, and the people of Shechem gave him their allegiance.

²⁷They went out into the countryside, picked the early grapes in their vineyards, trod them in the winepress, and made merry. They went into the temple of their god, where they ate and drank and reviled Abimelech.

²⁸Who is Abimelech, said Gaal son of Ebed, and who are the Shechemites, that we should be his subjects? Have not this

son of Jerubbaal and his lieutenant Zebul been subjects of the men of Hamor the father of Shechem? Why indeed should we be subject to him?

²⁹If only this people were in my charge I should know how to get rid of Abimelech! I should say to him, Muster your force and come out.

³⁰When Zebul the governor of the city heard what Gaal son of Ebed said, he was furious.

³¹He resorted to a ruse and sent messengers to report to Abimelech, Gaal son of Ebed and his kinsmen have come to Shechem and are turning the city against you.

³²Set off by night, you and the people with you, and lie in wait out in the country.

³³Then in the morning start at sunrise, and advance with all speed on the city. When he and his people come out to you, do to him what the situation demands.

³⁴So Abimelech and all the troops with him set out under cover of night, and lay in wait in four companies to attack Shechem.

³⁵ Gaal son of Ebed came out and stood in the entrance of the city gate. When Abimelech and his men rose from their hiding-place,

³⁶ and Gaal saw them, he said to Zebul, There are people coming down from the tops of the hills, but Zebul replied, What you see that looks like men is the shadow of the hills.

³⁷ Once more Gaal said, There are people coming down from the central ridge, and another group is advancing along the road of the Soothsayers Terebinth.'

³⁸ Then Zebul said to him, Where are your brave words now? You said, Who is Abimelech that we should be subject to him? Are not these the people you despised? Go out and fight him.

³⁹ Gaal led out the men of Shechem and attacked Abimelech,

⁴⁰ but Abimelech routed him and he fled. The ground was strewn with corpses all the way to the entrance of the gate.

⁴¹ Abimelech established himself in Arumah, and Zebul drove out Gaal and his kinsmen and allowed them no place in Shechem.

⁴²Next day the people came out into the open country, and this was reported to Abimelech.

⁴³He took his supporters, divided them into three companies, and lay in wait in the open country; when he saw the people coming out of the city, he rose and attacked them.

⁴⁴Abimelech and the company with him advanced rapidly and took up position at the entrance of the city gate, while the other two companies made a dash against all those who were in the open and struck them down.

⁴⁵Abimelech kept up the attack on the city all that day and, when he captured it, he slaughtered the people inside, razed the city to the ground, and sowed it with salt.

⁴⁶When news of this reached the occupants of the tower of Shechem, they took refuge in the crypt of the temple of Elberith.

⁴⁷It was reported to Abimelech that all the occupants of the tower of Shechem had flocked together,

⁴⁸and he and all his men went up Mount Zalmon, where with an axe he cut

brushwood. He took it and, hoisting it on his shoulder, he said to his men, You see what I am doing; quick, do the same.

⁴⁹Each man cut brushwood and then following Abimelech they laid the brushwood on the crypt. They burnt it over the heads of the occupants of the tower, and they all died, about a thousand men and women.

⁵⁰Abimelech proceeded to Thebez, which he besieged and captured.

⁵¹There was a strong tower in the middle of the town, and all the townspeople, men and women, took refuge there. They shut themselves in and went up on the roof.

⁵²Abimelech came up to the tower and attacked it, and as he approached the entrance to set fire to it,

⁵³a woman threw a millstone down on his head and fractured his skull.

⁵⁴He called hurriedly to his armour-bearer and said, Draw your sword and dispatch me, or it will be said of me: A woman killed him. So the young man ran him through, and he died.

⁵⁵When the Israelites saw that Abimelech was dead, they all went back to their homes.

⁵⁶In this way God repaid the crime which Abimelech had committed against his father by the murder of his seventy brothers,

⁵⁷and brought all the wickedness of the men of Shechem on their own heads. The curse of Jotham son of Jerubbaal overtook them.

10¹After Abimelech there came forward to deliver Israel Tola son of Pua, son of Dodo, a man of Issachar who lived at Shamir in the hill-country of Ephraim.

²He was judge over Israel for twenty-three years, and when he died he was buried in Shamir.

³After him came Jair the Gileadite; he was judge over Israel for twenty-two years.

⁴He had thirty sons, who rode on thirty donkeys; they had thirty towns in the land of Gilead, which to this day are called Havvoth-jair.

⁵When Jair died, he was buried in Kamon.

⁶Once more the Israelites did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD, serving the baalim and the ashtaroth, the deities of Aram and of Sidon and of Moab, of the Ammonites and of the Philistines. They forsook the LORD and did not serve him.

⁷The anger of the LORD was roused against Israel, and he sold them into the power of the Philistines and the Ammonites,

⁸who for eighteen years harassed and oppressed all those Israelites who lived beyond the Jordan in Amorite territory in Gilead.

⁹The Ammonites also crossed the Jordan to attack Judah, Benjamin, and Ephraim, so that Israel was in dire straits.

¹⁰Then the Israelites cried to the LORD: We have sinned against you; we have forsaken our God and served the baalim.

¹¹The LORD answered, The Egyptians, the Amorites, the Ammonites, the Philistines,

¹²the Sidonians too, and the Amalekites and the Midianites -- all these oppressed you and you cried to me for help; and did I not deliver you?

¹³ But you have forsaken me and served other gods; therefore I shall come to your rescue no more.

¹⁴ Go and cry for help to the gods you have chosen; let them save you in your day of distress.

¹⁵ But the Israelites said to the LORD, We have sinned. Deal with us as you please; only save us this day, we implore you.

¹⁶ They banished their foreign gods and served the LORD; and he could no longer bear the plight of Israel.

¹⁷ The Ammonites were called to arms and encamped in Gilead, while the Israelites assembled and encamped in Mizpah.

¹⁸ The people of Gilead and their chief men said to one another, Whoever strikes the first blow at the Ammonites shall be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.

11 ¹ JEPHTHAH the Gileadite was an intrepid warrior; he was the son of Gilead by a prostitute.

² Gilead's wife also bore him sons, and when they grew up they drove Jephthah away, saying to him, You have

no inheritance in our father's house; you are another woman's son.

³To escape his brothers, Jephthah fled and settled in the land of Tob, and a number of good-for-nothing fellows rallied to him and became his followers.

⁴The time came when the Ammonites launched an offensive against Israel

⁵and, when the fighting began, the elders of Gilead went to fetch Jephthah from the land of Tob.

⁶Come and be our commander so that we can fight the Ammonites, they said to him.

⁷But Jephthah answered, You drove me from my father's house in hatred. Why come to me now when you are in trouble?

⁸It is because of that, they replied, that we have turned to you now. Come with us, fight the Ammonites, and become head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.

⁹Jephthah said to them, If you ask me back to fight the Ammonites and if the LORD delivers them into my hands, then I must become your head.

¹⁰The Gilead elders said to him, We swear by the LORD, who will be witness

between us, that we will do what you say.

¹¹Jephthah then went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him their head and commander. And at Mizpah, in the presence of the LORD, Jephthah repeated the terms he had laid down.

¹²Jephthah sent a mission to the king of Ammon to ask what quarrel he had with them that made him invade their country.

¹³The king replied to the messengers: When the Israelites came up from Egypt, they seized our land all the way from the Arnon to the Jabbok and the Jordan. Now return these lands peaceably.

¹⁴Jephthah sent a second mission to the king of Ammon

¹⁵to say, This is Jephthah's answer: Israel took neither Moabite nor Ammonite territory.

¹⁶When they came up from Egypt, the Israelites passed through the wilderness to the Red Sea, and on to Kadesh.

¹⁷They then sent envoys to the king of Edom asking him to grant them passage through his country, but the king of Edom would not consent. They sent also

to the king of Moab, but he would not agree; so Israel remained at Kadesh.

¹⁸They then journeyed through the wilderness, skirting Edom and Moab, and kept to the east of Moab. They encamped beside the Arnon, but they did not enter Moabite territory, because the Arnon is the frontier of Moab.

¹⁹Israel then sent envoys to the king of the Amorites, King Sihon of Heshbon, asking him to give them free passage through his country to their destination.

²⁰But Sihon refused to grant Israel passage through his territory; he mustered all his people, and from his camp in Jahaz he launched an attack on Israel.

²¹But the LORD the God of Israel delivered Sihon and his whole army into the hands of Israel, who defeated the Amorites and occupied all their territory in that region.

²²They took possession of the entire Amorite country from the Arnon to the Jabbok and from the wilderness to the Jordan.

²³The LORD the God of Israel drove out the Amorites for the benefit of his people

Israel. And do you now propose to take their place?

²⁴It is for you to possess whatever Kemosh your god gives you; and all that the LORD our God gave us as we advanced is ours.

²⁵For that matter, are you any better than Balak son of Zippor, king of Moab? Did he ever pick a quarrel with Israel or attack them?

²⁶For three hundred years Israelites have lived in Heshbon and its dependent villages, in Aroer and its villages, and in all the towns by the Arnon. Why did you not retake them during all that time?

²⁷We have done you no wrong; it is you who are doing us wrong by attacking us. The LORD who is judge will decide this day between the Israelites and the Ammonites.

²⁸But the king of the Ammonites would not listen to the message Jephthah sent him.

²⁹Then the spirit of the LORD came upon Jephthah, who passed through Gilead and Manasseh, by Mizpeh of Gilead, and from Mizpeh over to the Ammonites.

³⁰Jephthah made this vow to the LORD: If you will deliver the Ammonites into my hands,

³¹then the first creature that comes out of the door of my house to meet me when I return from them safely shall be the LORD's; I shall offer that as a whole-offering.

³²So Jephthah crossed over to attack the Ammonites, and the LORD delivered them into his hands.

³³He routed them with very great slaughter all the way from Aroer to near Minnith, taking twenty towns, and as far as Abel-keramim. Thus Ammon was subdued by Israel.

³⁴When Jephthah arrived home in Mizpah, it was his daughter who came out to meet him with tambourines and dancing. She was his only child; apart from her he had neither son nor daughter.

³⁵At the sight of her, he tore his clothes and said, Oh, my daughter, you have broken my heart! Such calamity you have brought on me! I have made a vow to the LORD and I cannot go back on it.

³⁶She replied, Father, since you have made a vow to the LORD, do to me as your vow demands, now that the LORD has avenged you on the Ammonites, your enemies.

³⁷But, father, grant me this one favour: spare me for two months, that I may roam the hills with my companions and mourn that I must die a virgin.

³⁸Go, he said, and he let her depart for two months. She went with her companions and mourned her virginity on the hills.

³⁹At the end of two months she came back to her father, and he fulfilled the vow he had made; she died a virgin. It became a tradition

⁴⁰that the daughters of Israel should go year by year and commemorate for four days the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite.

12¹The Ephraimites mustered their forces and, crossing over to Zaphon, said to Jephthah, Why did you march against the Ammonites and not summon us to go with you? We shall burn your house over your head.

²Jephthah answered, I and my people had a grave feud with the Ammonites, and had I appealed to you for help, you would not have saved us from them.

³When I saw that we were not to look for help from you, I took my life in my hands and marched against the Ammonites, and the LORD delivered them into my power. So why do you now attack me?

⁴Jephthah then mustered all the men of Gilead and fought Ephraim, and the Gileadites defeated them.

⁵The Gileadites seized the fords of the Jordan and held them against Ephraim. When any Ephraimite who had escaped wished to cross, the men of Gilead would ask, Are you an Ephraimite? and if he said, No,

⁶they would retort, Say Shibboleth. He would say Sibboleth, and because he could not pronounce the word properly, they seized him and killed him at the fords. At that time forty-two thousand men of Ephraim lost their lives.

⁷Jephthah was judge over Israel for six years; when he died he was buried in his own town in Gilead.

⁸After him Ibzan of Bethlehem was made judge over Israel.

⁹He had thirty sons and thirty daughters. He gave away the thirty girls in marriage and brought in thirty girls for his sons. He was judge over Israel for seven years,

¹⁰and when he died he was buried in Bethlehem.

¹¹After him Elon the Zebulunite was judge over Israel for ten years.

¹²When he died, he was buried in Aijalon in Zebulun territory.

¹³Next Abdon son of Hillel the Pirathonite was judge over Israel.

¹⁴He had forty sons and thirty grandsons, each of whom rode on his own donkey. He was judge over Israel for eight years;

¹⁵and when he died he was buried in Pirathon in Ephraim territory on the hill of the Amalekite.

13¹ONCE more the Israelites did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD, and he delivered them into the hands of the Philistines for forty years.

²There was a certain man from Zorah of the tribe of Dan whose name was

Manoah and whose wife was barren; she had no child.

³The angel of the LORD appeared to her and said, Though you are barren and have no child, you will conceive and give birth to a son.

⁴Now be careful to drink no wine or strong drink, and to eat no forbidden food.

⁵You will conceive and give birth to a son, and no razor must touch his head, for the boy is to be a Nazirite, consecrated to God from birth. He will strike the first blow for Israel's freedom from the power of the Philistines.

⁶The woman went and told her husband. A man of God came to me, she said to him; his appearance was that of an angel of God, most terrible to see. I did not ask him where he came from, nor did he tell me his name,

⁷but he said to me, You are going to conceive and give birth to a son. From now on drink no wine or strong drink and eat no forbidden food, for the boy is to be a Nazirite, consecrated to God from his birth to the day of his death.

⁸Manoah prayed to the LORD, If it is pleasing to you, Lord, let the man of God whom you sent come again to tell us what we are to do for the boy that is to be born.

⁹God heard Manoah's prayer, and the angel of God came again to the woman, as she was sitting in the field. Her husband not being with her,

¹⁰the woman ran quickly and said to him, The man who came to me the other day has appeared to me again.

¹¹Manoah went with her at once and approached the man and said, Are you the man who talked with my wife? Yes, he replied, I am.

¹²Now when your words come true, Manoah said, what kind of boy will he be and what will he do?

¹³The angel of the LORD answered, Your wife must be careful to do all that I told her:

¹⁴she must not taste anything that comes from the vine; she must drink no wine or strong drink, and she must eat no forbidden food. She must do whatever I say.

¹⁵Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, May we urge you to stay? Let us prepare a young goat for you.

¹⁶The angel replied, Though you urge me to stay, I shall not eat your food; but prepare a whole-offering if you will, and offer that to the LORD. Manoah did not know that he was the angel of the LORD,

¹⁷and said to him, What is your name? For we shall want to honour you when your words come true.

¹⁸The angel of the LORD said to him, How can you ask my name? It is a name of wonder.

¹⁹Manoah took a young goat with the proper grain-offering, and offered it on the rock to the LORD, to him whose works are full of wonder. While Manoah and his wife were watching,

²⁰the flame went up from the altar towards heaven, and the angel of the LORD ascended in the flame. Seeing this, Manoah and his wife fell face downward to the ground.

²¹The angel of the LORD did not appear again to Manoah and his wife. When Manoah realized that it had been the angel of the LORD,

²² he said to his wife, We are doomed to die, for we have seen God.

²³ But she replied, If the LORD had wanted to kill us, he would not have accepted a whole-offering and a grain-offering at our hands; he would not now have let us see and hear all this.

²⁴ The woman gave birth to a son and named him Samson. The boy grew up in Mahaneh-dan between Zorah and Eshtaol, and the LORD blessed him, and the spirit of the LORD began to move him.

²⁵ (13: 24)

14¹ Samson went down to Timnah, and there a woman, one of the Philistines, caught his notice.

² On his return he told his father and mother that he had seen this Philistine woman in Timnah and asked them to get her for him as his wife.

³ His parents protested, Is there no woman among your cousins or in all our own people? Must you go to the uncircumcised Philistines to find a wife? But Samson said to his father, Get her for me, because she pleases me.

⁴ Neither his father nor his mother knew that the LORD was at work in this, seeking an opportunity against the Philistines, who at that time held Israel in subjection.

⁵ Samson went down to Timnah and, when he reached the vineyards there, a young lion came at him growling.

⁶ The spirit of the LORD suddenly seized him and, without any weapon in his hand, Samson tore the lion to pieces as if it were a kid. He did not tell his parents what he had done.

⁷ Then he went down and spoke to the woman, and she pleased him.

⁸ When, after a time, he went down again to make her his wife, he turned aside to look at the carcass of the lion, and saw there was a swarm of bees in it, and honey.

⁹ He scraped the honey into his hands and went on, eating as he went. When he came to his father and mother, he gave them some and they ate it; but he did not tell them that he had scraped the honey out of the lion's carcass.

¹⁰His father went down to see the woman, and Samson gave a feast there as the custom of young men was.

¹¹When the people saw him, they picked thirty companions to escort him.

¹²Samson said to them, Let me ask you a riddle. If you can solve it during the seven days of the feast, I shall give you thirty lengths of linen and thirty changes of clothing;

¹³but if you cannot guess the answer, then you will give me thirty lengths of linen and thirty changes of clothing. Tell us your riddle, they said; let us hear it.

¹⁴So he said to them: Out of the eater came something to eat; out of the strong came something sweet. At the end of three days they had failed to guess the answer.

¹⁵On the fourth day they said to Samson's wife, Coax your husband and make him explain the riddle to you, or we shall burn you and your father's house. Did you invite us here to beggar us?

¹⁶So Samson's wife wept on his shoulder and said, You only hate me, you do not love me. You have asked my

kinsfolk a riddle and you have not told it to me. He said to her, I have not told it even to my father and mother; and am I to tell it to you?

¹⁷But she wept on his shoulder every day until the seven feast days were ended, and on the seventh day, because she pestered him so, he told her, and she told the riddle to her kinsfolk.

¹⁸So on the seventh day the men of the city said to Samson just before he entered the bridal chamber: What is sweeter than honey? What is stronger than a lion? He replied, If you had not ploughed with my heifer, you would not have solved my riddle.

¹⁹Then the spirit of the LORD suddenly seized him, and he went down to Ashkelon, where he killed thirty men, took their belts, and gave their clothes to the men who had answered his riddle; then in a furious temper he went off to his father's house.

²⁰Samson's wife was given in marriage to the one who had been his groomsman.

15¹After a while, during the time of wheat harvest, Samson went to visit his wife, taking a young goat as a

present for her. He said, I am going to my wife in our bridal chamber, but her father would not let him in.

²He said, I was sure that you were really hostile to her, so I gave her in marriage to your groomsman. Her young sister is better than she is -- take her instead.

³Samson said, This time I shall settle my score with the Philistines; I shall do them some real harm.

⁴He went and caught three hundred jackals and got some torches; he tied the jackals tail to tail and fastened a torch between each pair of tails.

⁵He then lit the torches and turned the jackals loose in the standing grain of the Philistines, setting fire to standing grain and sheaves, as well as to vineyards and olive groves.

⁶Who has done this? the Philistines demanded, and when they were told that it was Samson, because the Timnite, his father-in-law, had taken his wife and given her to his groomsman, they came and burnt her and her father to death.

⁷Samson said to them, If you do things like that, I swear I will be revenged on you before I have done.

⁸He smote them hip and thigh, causing great slaughter; and after that he went down to live in a cave in the Rock of Etam.

⁹The Philistines came up and pitched camp in Judah, and overran Lehi.

¹⁰The Judahites said, Why have you attacked us? They answered, We have come to take Samson prisoner, and do to him as he did to us.

¹¹Then three thousand men from Judah went down to the cave in the Rock of Etam, where they said to Samson, Surely you know that the Philistines are our masters? Now look what you have done to us. He answered, I only did to them as they had done to me.

¹²They told him, We have come down to bind you and hand you over to the Philistines. Swear to me that you will not set upon me yourselves, he said.

¹³No, we shall not kill you, they answered; we shall only bind you and hand you over to them. They bound him

with two new ropes and brought him up from the cave in the Rock.

¹⁴When Samson came to Lehi, the Philistines met him with shouts of triumph; but the spirit of the LORD suddenly seized him, the ropes on his arms became like burnt tow, and his bonds melted away.

¹⁵He came on the fresh jaw-bone of a donkey, and seizing it he slew a thousand men.

¹⁶He made up this saying: With the jaw-bone of a donkey I have flayed them like donkeys; with the jaw-bone of a donkey I have slain a thousand men.

¹⁷Having said this he threw away the jaw-bone; and he called that place Ramath-lehi.

¹⁸He began to feel very thirsty and cried aloud to the LORD, You have let me, your servant, win this great victory, and must I now die of thirst and fall into the hands of the uncircumcised?

¹⁹God split open the Hollow of Lehi and water came out of it. Samson drank, his strength returned, and he revived. This is why to this day the spring in Lehi is called En-hakkore.

²⁰Samson was judge over Israel for twenty years in the days of the Philistines.

16¹Samson went to Gaza, and seeing a prostitute there he lay with her.

²The people of Gaza heard that Samson had come, and they gathered round and lay in wait for him all night at the city gate. During the night, however, they took no action, saying to themselves, When dawn comes we shall kill him.

³Samson stayed in bed till midnight; but then he rose, took hold of the doors of the city gate and the two gateposts, and pulled them out, bar and all; he hoisted them on his shoulders, and carried them to the top of the hill east of Hebron.

⁴Afterwards Samson fell in love with a woman named Delilah, who lived by the wadi of Sorek.

⁵The lords of the Philistines went up to her and said, Cajole him and find out what gives him his great strength, and how we can overpower and bind him and render him helpless. We shall each give you eleven hundred pieces of silver.

⁶Delilah said to Samson, Tell me, what gives you your great strength? How could you be bound and made helpless?

⁷If I were bound with seven fresh bowstrings not yet dry, replied Samson, then I should become no stronger than any other man.

⁸The lords of the Philistines brought her seven fresh bowstrings not yet dry, and she bound him with them.

⁹She had men concealed in the inner room, and she cried, Samson, the Philistines are upon you! Thereupon he snapped the bowstrings as a strand of tow snaps at the touch of fire, and his strength was not impaired.

¹⁰Delilah said to Samson, You have made a fool of me and lied to me. Now tell me this time how you can be bound.

¹¹He said to her, If I were tightly bound with new ropes that have never been used, then I should become no stronger than any other man.

¹²Delilah took new ropes and bound him with them. Then, with men concealed in the inner room, she cried, Samson, the Philistines are upon you! But he snapped the ropes off his arms like thread.

¹³Delilah said to him, You are still making a fool of me, still lying to me. Tell me: how can you be bound? He said, Take the seven loose locks of my hair, weave them into the warp, and drive them tight with the beater; then I shall become no stronger than any other man. So she lulled him to sleep, wove the seven loose locks of his hair into the warp,

¹⁴drove them tight with the beater, and cried, Samson, the Philistines are upon you! He woke from sleep and pulled away the warp and the loom with it.

¹⁵She said to him, How can you say you love me when you do not confide in me? This is the third time you have made a fool of me and have not told me what gives you your great strength.

¹⁶She so pestered him with these words day after day, pressing him hard and wearying him to death,

¹⁷that he told her the whole secret. No razor has touched my head, he said, because I am a Nazirite, consecrated to God from the day of my birth. If my head were shaved, then my strength

would leave me, and I should become no stronger than any other man.

¹⁸Delilah realized that he had told her his secret, and she sent word to the lords of the Philistines: Come up at once, she said; he has told me his secret. The lords of the Philistines came, bringing the money with them.

¹⁹She lulled Samson to sleep on her lap, and then summoned a man to shave the seven locks of his hair. She was now making him helpless. When his strength had left him,

²⁰she cried, Samson, the Philistines are upon you! He woke from his sleep and thought, I will go out as usual and shake myself; he did not know that the LORD had left him.

²¹Then the Philistines seized him, gouged out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza. There they bound him with bronze fetters, and he was set to grinding grain in the prison.

²²But his hair, after it had been shaved, began to grow again.

²³The lords of the Philistines assembled to offer a great sacrifice to their god Dagon, and to rejoice and say, Our god

has delivered into our hands Samson our enemy.

²⁴The people, when they saw him, praised their god, chanting: Our god has delivered our enemy into our hands, the scourge of our land who piled it with our dead.

²⁵When they grew merry, they said, Call Samson, and let him entertain us. When Samson was summoned from prison, he was a source of entertainment to them. They then stood him between the pillars,

²⁶and Samson said to the boy who led him by the hand, Put me where I can feel the pillars which support the temple, so that I may lean against them.

²⁷The temple was full of men and women, and all the lords of the Philistines were there, and there were about three thousand men and women on the roof watching the entertainment.

²⁸Samson cried to the LORD and said, Remember me, Lord GOD, remember me: for this one occasion, God, give me strength, and let me at one stroke be avenged on the Philistines for my two eyes.

²⁹ He put his arms round the two central pillars which supported the temple, his right arm round one and his left round the other and, bracing himself,

³⁰ he said, Let me die with the Philistines. Then Samson leaned forward with all his might, and the temple crashed down on the lords and all the people who were in it. So the dead whom he killed at his death were more than those he had killed in his life.

³¹ His brothers and all his father's family came down, carried him up to the grave of his father Manoah between Zorah and Eshtaol, and buried him there. He had been judge over Israel for twenty years.

17 ¹ ONCE there was a man named Micah from the hill-country of Ephraim

² who said to his mother, You remember the eleven hundred pieces of silver which were stolen from you, and how in my hearing you called down a curse on the thief? I have the money; I took it, and now I give it back to you. His mother said, May the LORD bless you, my son!

³ He gave back the eleven hundred pieces of silver to his mother, and she

said, I now solemnly dedicate this silver to the LORD for the benefit of my son, to make a carved image and a cast idol.

⁴When he returned the money to his mother, she handed two hundred of the pieces of silver to a silversmith, who made them into an image and an idol, which were placed in Micah's house.

⁵This man Micah had a shrine, and he made an ephod and teraphim and installed one of his sons to be his priest.

⁶In those days there was no king in Israel and everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

⁷There was a young man from Bethlehem in Judah, from the clan of Judah, a Levite named Ben-gershom.

⁸He had left the city of Bethlehem to go and find somewhere to live. On his way he came to Micah's house in the hill-country of Ephraim.

⁹Micah asked him, Where have you come from? and he replied, I am a Levite from Bethlehem in Judah, and I am looking for somewhere to live.

¹⁰Stay with me and be a father and priest to me, Micah said. I shall give you

ten pieces of silver a year, and provide you with food and clothes.

¹¹The Levite agreed to stay with the man, who treated him as one of his own family.

¹²Micah installed the Levite, and the young man became his priest and a member of his household.

¹³Micah said, Now I know that the LORD will make me prosper, because I have a Levite as my priest.

18¹IN those days when Israel had no king, the tribe of Dan was looking for territory to occupy, because they had not so far come into possession of the territory allotted to them among the tribes of Israel.

²The Danites therefore sent out five of their valiant fighters from Zorah and Eshtaol, instructing them to reconnoitre and explore the land. As they followed their instructions, they came to Micah's house in the hill-country of Ephraim and spent the night there.

³While at the house, they recognized the speech of the young Levite, and turning they said, Who brought you

here, and what are you doing? What is your business here?

⁴He explained, Micah did such and such: he hired me and I have become his priest.

⁵They said to him, Then enquire of God on our behalf whether our mission will be successful.

⁶The priest replied, Go and prosper. The LORD looks favourably on the mission you have undertaken.

⁷The five men went on their way and came to Laish. There they found the inhabitants living free of care in the same way as the Sidonians, quiet and carefree with nothing lacking in the country. They were a long way from the Sidonians, and had no contact with the Aramaeans.

⁸On their return to Zorah and Eshtaol, the five men were asked by their kinsmen for their report,

⁹and they replied, Go and attack them at once. The land that we saw was very good. Why hang back? Do not hesitate to go there and take possession.

¹⁰When you get there, you will find a people living a carefree life in a wide expanse of open country. It is a place

where nothing on earth is lacking, and God has delivered it into your hands.

¹¹ Six hundred fully armed men from the Danite clan set out from Zorah and Eshtaol,

¹² and went up country, where they encamped in Kiriath-jearim in Judah, which is why that place is called Mahaneh-dan to this day; it lies west of Kiriath-jearim.

¹³ From there they passed on to the hill-country of Ephraim until they came to Micah's house.

¹⁴ The five men who had been sent to reconnoitre the country round Laish addressed their kinsmen. Do you know, they said, that in one of these houses there are an ephod and teraphim, an image and an idol? Now consider what you had best do.

¹⁵ They turned aside to Micah's house and greeted him.

¹⁶ As the six hundred armed Danites took their stand at the entrance of the gate,

¹⁷ the five men who had gone to explore the country went indoors to take the image and the idol, the ephod and the

teraphim; the priest meanwhile was standing at the entrance with the six hundred armed men.

¹⁸When the five men entered Micah's house and laid hands on the image and the idol, the ephod and the teraphim, the priest asked them what they were doing.

¹⁹They said to him, Be quiet; not a word. Come with us and be to us a father and priest. Which is better, to be priest in the household of one man or to be priest to a tribe and clan in Israel?

²⁰This pleased the priest, and carrying off the ephod and the teraphim, the image and the idol, he went with the people.

²¹They set out on their way, putting their dependants, herds, and possessions in front.

²²The Danites had gone some distance from Micah's house, when his neighbours were called out in pursuit. As they caught up with them,

²³they shouted, and the Danites turned round and said to Micah, What is the matter with you that you have called out your men?

²⁴You have taken the gods which I made for myself and have taken the priest, he answered; you have gone off and left me nothing. How can you ask, What is the matter with you?

²⁵The Danites said to him, Not another word from you! We are desperate men and if we set about you it will be the death of you and your family.

²⁶With that the Danites went on their way, and Micah, seeing that they were too strong for him, turned and went home.

²⁷Carrying off the things which Micah had made for himself along with his priest, the Danites then attacked Laish, whose people were quiet and carefree. They put the people to the sword and set fire to their town.

²⁸There was no one to save them, for it was a long way from Sidon and they had no contact with the Aramaeans; the town was in the valley near Beth-rehob. They rebuilt the town and settled in it,

²⁹naming it Dan after their forefather Dan, a son of Israel; its original name was Laish.

³⁰The Danites set up the image, and Jonathan son of Gershom, son of Moses, and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan until the exile.

³¹They set up for themselves the image which Micah had made, and it was there as long as the house of God was at Shiloh.

19¹IN those days when Israel had no king, a Levite residing in the heart of the hill-country of Ephraim had taken himself a concubine from Bethlehem in Judah.

²In a fit of anger she had left him and gone to her father's house in Bethlehem in Judah. When she had been there four months,

³her husband set out after her, with his servant and two donkeys, to appeal to her and bring her back. She brought him into the house of her father, who was delighted to see him and made him welcome.

⁴Being pressed by his father-in-law, the girl's father, he stayed there three days, and they were regaled with food and drink during their visit.

⁵On the fourth day, they rose early in the morning, and the Levite prepared to leave, but the father said to his son-in-law, Have a bite of something to sustain you before you go,

⁶and the two of them sat down and ate and drank together. The girl's father said to the man, Why not spend the night and enjoy yourself?

⁷The man, however, rose to go, but his father-in-law urged him to stay, and again he stayed for the night.

⁸He rose early in the morning on the fifth day to depart, but the girl's father said, Have something to eat first. So they lingered till late afternoon, eating and drinking together.

⁹Then the man stood up to go with his concubine and his servant, but his father-in-law said, Look, the day is wearing on towards sunset. Spend the night here and enjoy yourself, and tomorrow rise early and set out for home.

¹⁰But the man would not stay the night; he set off on his journey. He reached a point opposite Jebus, that is

Jerusalem, with his two laden donkeys and his concubine.

¹¹ Since they were close to Jebus and the day was nearly gone, the servant said to his master, Do let us turn into this Jebusite town for the night.

¹² His master replied, No, not into a strange town where the people are not Israelites; let us go on to Gibeah.

¹³ Come, we will go and find some other place, Gibeah or Ramah, to spend the night.

¹⁴ So they went on until sunset overtook them; they were then near Gibeah which belongs to Benjamin.

¹⁵ They turned in there to spend the night, and went and sat down in the open square of the town; but nobody took them into his house for the night.

¹⁶ At nightfall an old man was coming home from his work in the fields. He was from the hill-country of Ephraim, though he lived in Gibeah, where the people were Benjamites.

¹⁷ When his eye lighted on the traveller in the town square, he asked him where he was going and where he came from.

¹⁸He answered, We are travelling from Bethlehem in Judah to the heart of the hill-country of Ephraim. I come from there; I have been to Bethlehem in Judah and I am going home, but nobody has taken me into his house.

¹⁹I have straw and provender for our donkeys, food and wine for myself, the girl, and the young man; we have all we need.

²⁰The old man said, You are welcome. I shall supply all your wants; you must not spend the night in the open.

²¹He took him inside, where he provided fodder for the donkeys. Then, having bathed their feet, they all ate and drank.

²²While they were enjoying themselves, some of the most depraved scoundrels in the town surrounded the house, beating the door violently and shouting to the old man whose house it was, Bring out the man who has come to your house, for us to have intercourse with him.

²³The owner of the house went outside to them and said, No, my friends, do nothing so wicked. This man is my guest; do not commit this outrage.

²⁴ Here are my daughter, who is a virgin, and the man's concubine; let me bring them out to you. Abuse them and do what you please; but you must not commit such an outrage against this man.

²⁵ When the men refused to listen to him, the Levite took his concubine and thrust her outside for them. They raped and abused her all night till the morning; only when dawn broke did they let her go.

²⁶ The woman came at daybreak and collapsed at the entrance of the man's house where her husband was, and lay there until it was light.

²⁷ Her husband rose in the morning and opened the door of the house to be on his way, and there was his concubine lying at the door with her hands on the threshold.

²⁸ He said to her, Get up and let us be off; but there was no answer. So he lifted her on to his donkey and set off for home.

²⁹ When he arrived there, he picked up a knife, took hold of his concubine, and cut her limb by limb into twelve pieces,

which he then sent through the length and breadth of Israel.

³⁰He told the men he sent with them to say to every Israelite, Has the like of this happened or been seen from the time the Israelites came up from Egypt till today? Consider among yourselves and speak your minds. Everyone who saw them said, Since that time no such thing has ever happened or been seen.

20¹ALL the Israelites, the whole community from Dan to Beersheba and also from Gilead, left their homes and as one man assembled before the LORD at Mizpah.

²The leaders of the people and all the tribes of Israel presented themselves in the assembly of God's people, four hundred thousand foot-soldiers armed with swords.

³That the Israelites had gone up to Mizpah became known to the Benjamites. The Israelites asked how this wicked crime happened,

⁴and the Levite, to whom the murdered woman belonged, answered, I and my concubine arrived at Gibeah in Benjamin to spend the night.

⁵The townsmen of Gibeah rose against me that night and surrounded the house where I was, intending to kill me; and they raped my concubine so that she died.

⁶I took her and cut her in pieces, and sent the pieces through the length and breadth of Israel, because of the abominable outrage they had committed in Israel.

⁷It is for you, the whole of Israel, to come to a decision as to what action should be taken.

⁸As one man all the people stood up and declared, Not one of us will go back to his tent, not one will return home.

⁹But this is what we shall do to Gibeah: we shall draw lots for the attack,

¹⁰and in all the tribes of Israel we shall take ten men out of every hundred, a hundred out of every thousand, and a thousand out of every ten thousand, and they will collect provisions for the army, for those who have taken the field against Gibeah in Benjamin to avenge the outrage committed in Israel.

¹¹Thus all the Israelites, united to a man, were massed against the town.

¹²The tribes of Israel sent messengers throughout the tribe of Benjamin saying, What crime is this that has taken place among you?

¹³Hand over to us now those scoundrels in Gibeah; we shall put them to death and purge Israel of this wickedness. The Benjamites, however, refused to listen to their fellow-Israelites.

¹⁴They flocked from their towns to Gibeah to do battle with the Israelites,

¹⁵and that day they mustered out of their towns twenty-six thousand men armed with swords. There were also seven hundred picked men from Gibeah,

¹⁶left-handed men, who could sling a stone and not miss by a hair's breadth.

¹⁷The Israelites, without the Benjamites, numbered four hundred thousand men armed with swords, every one a warrior.

¹⁸The Israelites at once moved on to Bethel and there sought an oracle from God. Which of us is to lead the attack on the Benjamites? they enquired, and the LORD's answer was, Judah is to lead the attack.

¹⁹The Israelites set out at dawn and encamped opposite Gibeah.

²⁰They advanced to do battle with the Benjamites and drew up their forces before the town.

²¹The Benjamites sallied out from Gibeah and laid low twenty-two thousand of Israel on the field that day.

²²The Israelite army took fresh courage and formed up again on the same ground as the first day.

²³The Israelites went up to Bethel, where they lamented before the LORD until evening, and enquired whether they should again attack their kinsmen the Benjamites. The LORD said, Go up to the attack.

²⁴So on the second day they advanced against the Benjamites,

²⁵who sallied out from Gibeah to meet them and laid low on the field another eighteen thousand armed men.

²⁶The Israelites, the whole army, went back to Bethel, where they sat before the LORD lamenting and fasting until evening, and they offered whole-offerings and shared-offerings before the LORD.

²⁷ In those days the Ark of the Covenant of God was there, and Phinehas son of Eleazar, son of Aaron, served before the LORD. The Israelites enquired of the LORD, Shall we again march out to battle against Benjamin our kin, or shall we desist? The LORD answered, Attack! Tomorrow I shall deliver him into your hands.

²⁸ (20: 27)

²⁹ The Israelites posted men in ambush all round Gibeah,

³⁰ and on the third day they advanced against the Benjamites and drew up their forces at Gibeah as before.

³¹ The Benjamites sallied out to meet them, and were drawn away from the town. They began the attack as before by killing a few Israelites, about thirty, on the highways which led across open country, one to Bethel and the other to Gibeon.

³² They thought that once again they were inflicting a defeat, but the Israelites had planned a retreat to draw them out on the highways away from the town.

³³ Meanwhile the main body of Israelites left their positions and re-formed at

Baal-tamar, while those in ambush, ten thousand picked men all told, burst out from their position in the neighbourhood of Gibeah and came in on the east of the town. There was soon heavy fighting; yet the Benjamites did not suspect the disaster threatening them.

³⁴ (20: 33)

³⁵ So the LORD put Benjamin to flight before Israel, and on that day the Israelites killed twenty-five thousand one hundred Benjamites, all armed with swords.

³⁶ The men of Benjamin now saw that they had suffered a defeat, for all that the Israelites, trusting in the ambush which they had set by Gibeah, had given ground before them.

³⁷ The men in ambush made a sudden dash on Gibeah, fell on the town from all sides, and put all the inhabitants to the sword.

³⁸ The agreed signal between the Israelites and those in ambush was to be a column of smoke sent up from the town,

³⁹ and the Israelites would then face about in the battle. Benjamin began to

cut down the Israelites, killing about thirty of them, in the belief that they were defeating the enemy as they had done in the first encounter.

⁴⁰But as the column of smoke began to go up from the town, the Benjamites looked back and thought the whole town was in flames.

⁴¹Then the Israelites faced about, and the Benjamites saw that disaster had overtaken them. They were seized with panic,

⁴²and turned in flight before the Israelites in the direction of the wilderness; but the fighting caught up with them, and soon those from the town were among them, cutting them down.

⁴³They hemmed in the Benjamites, pursuing them without respite, and overtook them at a point to the east of Gibeah.

⁴⁴Eighteen thousand of the Benjamites fell, all of them valiant warriors.

⁴⁵The survivors turned and fled into the wilderness towards the Rock of Rimmon. The Israelites picked off the stragglers on the roads, five thousand of them, and

continued the pursuit until they had cut down two thousand more.

⁴⁶Twenty-five thousand armed men of Benjamin fell in battle that day, all valiant warriors.

⁴⁷The six hundred who survived made off into the wilderness as far as the Rock of Rimmon, and there they remained for four months.

⁴⁸The Israelites then turned back to deal with the other Benjamites, and put to the sword the people in the towns and the cattle, every creature that they found; they also set fire to every town within their reach.

21 ¹The Israelites had taken an oath at Mizpah that none of them would give his daughter in marriage to a Benjamite.

²The people now came to Bethel and remained there in God's presence till sunset, raising their voices in bitter lamentation.

³LORD God of Israel, they cried, why has it happened among us that one tribe should this day be lost to Israel?

⁴Early next morning the people built an altar there and offered whole-offerings and shared-offerings.

⁵At that the Israelites asked themselves whether among all the tribes of Israel there was any who did not go up to the assembly before the LORD; for under the terms of the weighty oath they had sworn, anyone who had not gone up to the LORD at Mizpah was to be put to death.

⁶The Israelites felt remorse over their kinsmen the Benjamites, because, as they said, This day one whole tribe has been lopped off Israel.

⁷They asked, What shall we do to provide wives for those who are left, as we ourselves have sworn to the LORD not to give any of our daughters to them in marriage?

⁸Is there anyone in all the tribes of Israel who did not go up to the LORD at Mizpah? Now it happened that no one from Jabesh-gilead had come to the camp for the assembly;

⁹so when they held a roll-call of the people, they found that none of

the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead was present.

¹⁰The community therefore sent off twelve thousand valiant fighting men with orders to go and put the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead to the sword, men, women, and dependants.

¹¹This is what you are to do, they said: put to death every male person, and every woman who has had intercourse with a man, but spare any who are virgins. This they did.

¹²Among the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead they found four hundred young women who were virgins and had not had intercourse with a man, and they brought them to the camp at Shiloh in Canaan.

¹³The whole community sent messengers to the Benjamites at the Rock of Rimmon to parley with them, and peace was proclaimed.

¹⁴The Benjamites came back then, and were given those of the women of Jabesh-gilead who had been spared; but these were not enough.

¹⁵The people were still full of remorse over Benjamin because the LORD had made this gap in the tribes of Israel.

¹⁶The elders of the community said, What can we do for wives for those who are left, as all the women in Benjamin have been wiped out?

¹⁷They said, Heirs there must be for the surviving Benjamites! Then Israel will not see one of its tribes destroyed.

¹⁸Yet we cannot give them our own daughters in marriage, because we have sworn that there shall be a curse on the man who gives a wife to a Benjamite.

¹⁹They bethought themselves of the pilgrimage in honour of the LORD, made every year to Shiloh, the place which lies to the north of Bethel, on the east side of the highway from Bethel to Shechem and to the south of Lebonah.

²⁰They told the Benjamites to go and hide in the vineyards.

²¹Keep watch, they said, and when the girls of Shiloh come out to take part in the dance, come from the vineyards, and each of you seize one of them for his wife; then be off to the territory of Benjamin.

²²If their fathers or brothers come and complain to us, we shall say to them, Let them keep them with your approval, for none of us has captured a wife in battle. Had you yourselves given them the women, you would now have incurred guilt.

²³The Benjamites did this; they carried off as many wives as they needed, snatching them from the dance; then they went their way back to their own territory, where they rebuilt their towns and settled in them.

²⁴The Israelites also dispersed by tribes and families, and every man returned to his own holding.

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

Ruth

1 ¹ ONCE, in the time of the Judges when there was a famine in the land, a man from Bethlehem in Judah went with his wife and two sons to live in Moabite territory.

²The man's name was Elimelech, his wife was Naomi, and his sons were Mahlon and Chilion; they were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They came to Moab and settled there.

³Elimelech died, and Naomi was left a widow with her two sons.

⁴The sons married Moabite women, one of whom was called Orpah and the other Ruth. They had lived there about ten years

⁵when both Mahlon and Chilion died. Then Naomi, bereaved of her two sons as well as of her husband,

⁶got ready to return to her own country with her daughters-in-law, because she heard in Moab that the LORD had shown his care for his people by giving them food.

⁷Accompanied by her two daughters-in-law she left the place where she had been living, and they took the road leading back to Judah.

⁸Naomi said to her daughters-in-law, Go back, both of you, home to your own mothers. May the LORD keep faith with you, as you have kept faith with the dead and with me;

⁹and may he grant each of you the security of a home with a new husband. And she kissed them goodbye. They wept aloud

¹⁰and said, No, we shall return with you to your people.

¹¹But Naomi insisted, Go back, my daughters. Why should you come with me? Am I likely to bear any more sons to be husbands for you?

¹²Go back, my daughters, go; for I am too old to marry again. But if I could say that I had hope of a child, even if I were to be married tonight and were to bear sons,

¹³would you, then, wait until they grew up? Would you on their account remain unmarried? No, my daughters! For your

sakes I feel bitter that the LORD has inflicted such misfortune on me.

¹⁴At this they wept still more. Then Orpah kissed her mother-in-law and took her leave, but Ruth clung to her.

¹⁵Look, said Naomi, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and her god. Go, follow her.

¹⁶Ruth answered, Do not urge me to go back and desert you. Where you go, I shall go, and where you stay, I shall stay. Your people will be my people, and your God my God.

¹⁷Where you die, I shall die, and there be buried. I solemnly declare before the LORD that nothing but death will part me from you.

¹⁸When Naomi saw that Ruth was determined to go with her, she said no more.

¹⁹The two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem, where their arrival set the whole town buzzing with excitement. The women cried, Can this be Naomi?

²⁰Do not call me Naomi, she said; call me Mara, for the Almighty has made my life very bitter.

²¹ I went away full, and the LORD has brought me back empty. Why call me Naomi? The LORD has pronounced against me, the Almighty has brought me misfortune.

²² That was how Naomi's daughter-in-law, Ruth the Moabite, returned with her from Moab; they arrived in Bethlehem just as the barley harvest was beginning.

2¹ NAOMI had a relative on her husband's side, a prominent and well-to-do member of Elimelech's family; his name was Boaz.

² One day Ruth the Moabite asked Naomi, May I go to the harvest fields and glean behind anyone who will allow me? Yes, go, my daughter, she replied.

³ So Ruth went gleaning in the fields behind the reapers. As it happened, she was in that strip of the fields which belonged to Boaz of Elimelech's family,

⁴ and there was Boaz himself coming out from Bethlehem. He greeted the reapers, The LORD be with you! and they responded, The LORD bless you!

⁵ Whose girl is this? he asked the servant in charge of the reapers. The servant answered,

⁶She is a Moabite girl who has come back with Naomi from Moab.

⁷She asked if she might glean, gathering among the sheaves behind the reapers. She came and has been on her feet from morning till now; she has hardly had a moment's rest in the shelter.

⁸Boaz said to Ruth, Listen, my daughter: do not go to glean in any other field. Do not look any farther, but stay close to my servant-girls.

⁹Watch where the men reap, and follow the gleaners; I have told the men not to molest you. Any time you are thirsty, go and drink from the jars they have filled.

¹⁰She bowed to the ground and said, Why are you so kind as to take notice of me, when I am just a foreigner?

¹¹Boaz answered, I have been told the whole story of what you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband, how you left father and mother and homeland and came among a people you did not know before.

¹²The LORD reward you for what you have done; may you be richly repaid by

the LORD the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge.

¹³She said: I hope you will continue to be pleased with me, sir, for you have eased my mind by speaking kindly to me, though I am not one of your slave-girls.

¹⁴When mealtime came round, Boaz said to Ruth, Come over here and have something to eat. Dip your piece of bread in the vinegar. She sat down beside the reapers, and he passed her some roasted grain. She ate all she wanted and still had some left.

¹⁵When she got up to glean, Boaz instructed the men to allow her to glean right among the sheaves. Do not find fault with her, he added;

¹⁶you may even pull out some ears of grain from the handfuls as you cut, and leave them for her to glean; do not check her.

¹⁷Ruth gleaned in the field until sunset, and when she beat out what she had gathered it came to about a bushel of barley.

¹⁸She carried it into the town and showed her mother-in-law how much

she had got; she also brought out and handed her what she had left over from the meal.

¹⁹Her mother-in-law asked, Where did you glean today? Which way did you go? Blessings on the man who took notice of you! She told her mother-in-law in whose field she had been working. The owner of the field where I worked today, she said, is a man called Boaz.

²⁰Naomi exclaimed, Blessings on him from the LORD, who has kept faith with the living and the dead! This man, she explained, is related to us; he is one of our very near kinsmen.

²¹And what is more, Ruth said, he told me to stay close to his workers until they had finished all his harvest.

²²Naomi said, My daughter, it would be as well for you to go with his girls; in another field you might come to harm.

²³So Ruth kept close to them, gleaning with them till the end of both barley and wheat harvests; but she lived with her mother-in-law.

3¹One day Naomi, Ruth's mother-in-law, said to her, My daughter, I want to see you settled happily.

² Now there is our kinsman Boaz, whose girls you have been with.

³ Tonight he will be winnowing barley at the threshing-floor. Bathe and anoint yourself with perfumed oil, then get dressed and go down to the threshing-floor; but do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking.

⁴ When he lies down make sure you know the place where he is. Then go in, turn back the covering at his feet and lie down. He will tell you what to do.

⁵ I will do everything you say, replied Ruth.

⁶ She went down to the threshing-floor and did exactly as her mother-in-law had told her.

⁷ When Boaz had eaten and drunk, he felt at peace with the world and went and lay down to sleep at the far end of the heap of grain. Ruth came quietly, turned back the covering at his feet and lay down.

⁸ About midnight the man woke with a start; he turned over, and there, lying at his feet, was a woman!

⁹Who are you? he said. Sir, it is I, Ruth, she replied. Spread the skirt of your cloak over me, for you are my next-of-kin.

¹⁰Boaz said, The LORD bless you, my daughter! You are proving yourself more devoted to the family than ever by not running after any young man, whether rich or poor.

¹¹Set your mind at rest, my daughter: I shall do all you ask, for the whole town knows what a fine woman you are.

¹²Yes, it is true that I am a near kinsman; but there is one even closer than I am.

¹³Stay tonight, and then in the morning, if he is willing to act as your next-of-kin, well and good; but if he is not, then as sure as the LORD lives, I shall do so. Now lie down till morning.

¹⁴She lay at his feet till next morning, but rose before it was light enough for one man to recognize another; Boaz had it in mind that no one should know that the woman had been to the threshing-floor.

¹⁵He said to her, Take the cloak you are wearing, and hold it out. When she did

so, he poured in six measures of barley and lifted it for her to carry, and she went off to the town.

¹⁶When she came to her mother-in-law, Naomi asked, How did things go with you, my daughter? Ruth related all that the man had done for her,

¹⁷and she added, He gave me these six measures of barley; he would not let me come home to my mother-in-law empty-handed.

¹⁸Naomi said, Wait, my daughter, until you see what will come of it; he will not rest till he has settled the matter this very day.

4¹Boaz meanwhile had gone up to the town gate and was sitting there when the next-of-kin of whom he had spoken came past. Calling him by name, Boaz cried, Come over here and sit down. He went over and sat down.

²Boaz also stopped ten of the town's elders and asked them to sit there. When they were seated,

³he addressed the next-of-kin: You will remember the strip of field that belonged to our kinsman Elimelech. Naomi is

selling it, now that she has returned from Moab.

⁴I promised to open the matter with you, to ask you to acquire it in the presence of those sitting here and in the presence of the elders of my people. If you are going to do your duty as next-of-kin, then do so; but if not, someone must do it. So tell me, and then I shall know, for I come after you as next-of-kin. He answered, I shall act as next-of-kin.

⁵Boaz continued: On the day you take over the field from Naomi, I take over the widow, Ruth the Moabite, so as to perpetuate the name of the dead man on his holding.

⁶Then I cannot act, said the next-of-kin, lest it should be detrimental to my own holding; and as I cannot act, you yourself must take over my duty as next-of-kin.

⁷Now it used to be the custom when ratifying any transaction by which property was redeemed or transferred for a man to take off his sandal and give it to the other party; this was the form of attestation in Israel.

⁸Accordingly when the next-of-kin said to Boaz, You must take it over, he drew off his sandal and handed it over.

⁹Then Boaz addressed the elders and all the other people there: You are witnesses this day that I have taken over from Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and Mahlon;

¹⁰and, further, that I have taken over Mahlon's widow, Ruth the Moabite, to be my wife, in order to keep alive the dead man's name on his holding, so that his name may not be missing among his kindred and at the gate of his native town. You are witnesses this day.

¹¹All who were at the gate, including the elders, replied, We are witnesses. May the LORD make this woman, who is about to come into your home, to be like Rachel and Leah, the two who built up the family of Israel. May you do a worthy deed in Ephrathah by keeping this name alive in Bethlehem.

¹²Through the offspring the LORD gives you by this young woman may your family be like the family of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah.

¹³ So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife. When they had come together the LORD caused her to conceive, and she gave birth to a son.

¹⁴ The women said to Naomi, Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you this day without next-of-kin. May the name of your dead son be kept alive in Israel!

¹⁵ The child will give you renewed life and be your support and stay in your old age, for your devoted daughter-in-law, who has proved better to you than seven sons, has borne him.

¹⁶ Naomi took the child and laid him in her own lap, and she became his foster-mother.

¹⁷ Her women neighbours gave him a name: Naomi has a son; we shall call him Obed, they said. He became the father of Jesse, David's father.

¹⁸ THIS is the genealogy of Perez: Perez was the father of Hezron,

¹⁹ Hezron of Ram, Ram of Amminadab,

²⁰ Amminadab of Nahshon, Nahshon of Salmon,

²¹ Salmon of Boaz, Boaz of Obed,

²² Obed of Jesse, and Jesse of David.

1 Samuel

1 ¹ THERE was a certain man from Ramathaim, a Zuphite from the hill-country of Ephraim, named Elkanah son of Jeroham, son of Elihu, son of Tohu, son of Zuph an Ephraimite.

² He had two wives, Hannah and Peninnah; Peninnah had children, but Hannah was childless.

³ Every year this man went up from his town to worship and offer sacrifice to the LORD of Hosts at Shiloh, where Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were priests of the LORD.

⁴ When Elkanah sacrificed, he gave several shares of the meat to his wife Peninnah with all her sons and daughters;

⁵ but to Hannah he gave only one share; the LORD had not granted her children, yet it was Hannah whom Elkanah loved.

⁶ Hannah's rival also used to torment and humiliate her because she had no children.

⁷This happened year after year when they went up to the house of the LORD; her rival used to torment her, until she was in tears and would not eat.

⁸Her husband Elkanah said to her, Hannah, why are you crying and eating nothing? Why are you so miserable? Am I not more to you than ten sons?

⁹After they had finished eating and drinking at the sacrifice at Shiloh, Hannah rose in deep distress, and weeping bitterly stood before the LORD and prayed to him. Meanwhile Eli the priest was sitting on his seat beside the door of the temple of the LORD.

¹⁰(1: 9)

¹¹Hannah made this vow: LORD of Hosts, if you will only take notice of my trouble and remember me, if you will not forget me but grant me offspring, then I shall give the child to the LORD for the whole of his life, and no razor shall ever touch his head.

¹²For a long time she went on praying before the LORD, while Eli watched her lips.

¹³Hannah was praying silently; her lips were moving although her voice could

not be heard, and Eli took her for a drunken woman.

¹⁴Enough of this drunken behaviour! he said to her. Leave off until the effect of the wine has gone.

¹⁵Oh, sir! she answered, I am a heart-broken woman; I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have been pouring out my feelings before the LORD.

¹⁶Do not think me so devoid of shame, sir; all this time I have been speaking out of the depths of my grief and misery.

¹⁷Eli said, Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant what you have asked of him.

¹⁸Hannah replied, May I be worthy of your kindness. And no longer downcast she went away and had something to eat.

¹⁹Next morning they were up early and, after prostrating themselves before the LORD, returned to their home at Ramah. Elkanah had intercourse with his wife Hannah, and the LORD remembered her;

²⁰she conceived, and in due time bore a son, whom she named Samuel, because, she said, I asked the LORD for him.

²¹Elkanah with his whole household went up to make the annual sacrifice to the LORD and to keep his vow.

²²Hannah did not go; she said to her husband, After the child is weaned I shall come up with him to present him before the LORD; then he is to stay there always.

²³Her husband Elkanah said to her, Do what you think best; stay at home until you have weaned him. Only, may the LORD indeed see your vow fulfilled. So the woman stayed behind and nursed her son until she had weaned him.

²⁴When she had weaned him, she took him up with her. She took also a bull three years old, an ephah of flour, and a skin of wine, and she brought him, child as he was, into the house of the LORD at Shiloh.

²⁵When the bull had been slaughtered, Hannah brought the boy to Eli

²⁶and said, Sir, as sure as you live, I am the woman who stood here beside you praying to the LORD.

²⁷ It was this boy that I prayed for and the LORD has granted what I asked.

²⁸ Now I make him over to the LORD; for his whole life he is lent to the LORD. And they prostrated themselves there before the LORD.

2¹ Then Hannah offered this prayer: My heart exults in the LORD, in the LORD I now hold my head high; I gloat over my enemies; I rejoice because you have saved me.

² There is none but you, none so holy as the LORD, none so righteous as our God.

³ Cease your proud boasting, let no word of arrogance pass your lips, for the LORD is a God who knows; he governs what mortals do.

⁴ Strong men stand in mute dismay, but those who faltered put on new strength.

⁵ Those who had plenty sell themselves for a crust, and the hungry grow strong again. The barren woman bears seven children, and the mother of many sons is left to languish.

⁶ The LORD metes out both death and life: he sends down to Sheol, he can bring the dead up again.

⁷ Poverty and riches both come from the LORD; he brings low and he raises up.

⁸ He lifts the weak out of the dust and raises the poor from the refuse heap to give them a place among the great, to assign them seats of honour. The foundations of the earth are the LORD's, and he has set the world upon them.

⁹ He will guard the footsteps of his loyal servants, while the wicked will be silenced in darkness; for it is not by strength that a mortal prevails.

¹⁰ Those who oppose the LORD will be terrified when from the heavens he thunders against them. The LORD is judge even to the ends of the earth; he will endow his king with strength and raise high the head of his anointed one.

¹¹ Then Elkanah went home to Ramah, but the boy remained behind in the service of the LORD under Eli the priest.

¹² Eli's sons were scoundrels with little regard for the LORD.

¹³ The custom of the priests in their dealings with the people was this: when anyone offered a sacrifice, the priest's servant would come while the flesh was stewing

¹⁴and would thrust a three-pronged fork into the cauldron or pan or kettle or pot; and the priest would take whatever the fork brought out. This should have been their practice whenever Israelites came to sacrifice at Shiloh; but now,

¹⁵even before the fat was burnt, the priest's servant would come and say to the person who was sacrificing, Give me meat to roast for the priest; he will not accept what has been already stewed, only raw meat.

¹⁶And if the man protested, Let them burn the fat first, and then take what you want, the servant would say, No, hand it over now, or I shall take it by force.

¹⁷The young men's sin was very great in the LORD's sight, for they caused what was offered to him to be brought into general contempt.

¹⁸Samuel continued in the service of the LORD, a mere boy with a linen ephod fastened round him.

¹⁹Every year his mother made him a little cloak and took it to him when she went up with her husband to offer the annual sacrifice.

²⁰Eli would give his blessing to Elkanah and his wife and say, The LORD grant you children by this woman in place of the one whom you made over to the LORD. Then they would return home.

²¹The LORD showed his care for Hannah, and she conceived and gave birth to three sons and two daughters; meanwhile the boy Samuel grew up in the presence of the LORD.

²²When Eli, now a very old man, heard a detailed account of how his sons were treating all the Israelites, and how they lay with the women who were serving at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting,

²³he said to them, Why do you do such things? I hear from every quarter how wickedly you behave.

²⁴Do stop it, my sons; for this is not a good report that I hear spreading among the LORD's people.

²⁵If someone sins against another, God will intervene; but if someone sins against the LORD, who can intercede for him? They would not listen, however, to their father's rebuke, for the LORD meant to bring about their death.

²⁶The young Samuel, as he grew up, increasingly commended himself to the LORD and to the people.

²⁷A man of God came to Eli and said, This is the word of the LORD: You know that I revealed myself to your forefather's house when he and his family were in Egypt in slavery to the house of Pharaoh.

²⁸You know that I chose your forefather out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to go up to my altar, to burn incense, and to carry the ephod before me; and that I assigned all the food-offerings of the Israelites to your family.

²⁹Why then do you show disrespect for my sacrifices and the offerings which I have ordained? What makes you resent them? Why do you honour your sons more than me by letting them batten on the choicest offerings of my people Israel?

³⁰The LORD's word was: I promise that your house and your father's house will serve before me for all time. But now his word is: I shall have no such thing; I shall honour those who honour me, and

those who despise me will meet with contempt.

³¹ The time is coming when I shall lop off every limb of your own and of your father's family, so that no one in your house will attain old age.

³² You will even resent the prosperity I give to Israel; never again will anyone in your house live to old age.

³³ If I allow any to survive to serve my altar, his eyes will grow dim, his appetite fail, and his issue will be weaklings and die off.

³⁴ The fate of your two sons will be a proof to you; Hophni and Phinehas will both die on the same day.

³⁵ I shall appoint for myself a priest who will be faithful, who will do what I have in my mind and in my heart. I shall establish his family to serve in perpetual succession before my anointed king.

³⁶ Any of your family still left will come and bow humbly before him to beg for a piece of silver and a loaf of bread, and ask for a turn of priestly duty to earn a crust.

3¹ The boy Samuel was in the LORD's service under Eli. In those days the

word of the LORD was rarely heard, and there was no outpouring of vision.

²One night Eli, whose eyes were dim and his sight failing, was lying down in his usual place,

³while Samuel slept in the temple of the LORD where the Ark of God was. Before the lamp of God had gone out,

⁴the LORD called him, and Samuel answered, Here I am!

⁵and ran to Eli saying, You called me: here I am. No, I did not call you, said Eli; lie down again. So he went and lay down.

⁶The LORD called Samuel again, and he got up and went to Eli. Here I am! he said. Surely you called me. I did not call, my son, he answered; lie down again.

⁷Samuel had not yet come to know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not been disclosed to him.

⁸When the LORD called him for the third time, he again went to Eli and said, Here I am! You did call me. Then Eli understood that it was the LORD calling the boy;

⁹he told Samuel to go and lie down and said, If someone calls once more, say,

Speak, LORD; your servant is listening. So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

¹⁰Then the LORD came, and standing there called, Samuel, Samuel! as before. Samuel answered, Speak, your servant is listening.

¹¹The LORD said, Soon I shall do something in Israel which will ring in the ears of all who hear it.

¹²When that day comes I shall make good every word from beginning to end that I have spoken against Eli and his family.

¹³You are to tell him that my judgement on his house will stand for ever because he knew of his sons blasphemies against God and did not restrain them.

¹⁴Therefore I have sworn to the family of Eli that their abuse of sacrifices and offerings will never be expiated.'

¹⁵Samuel lay down till morning, when he opened the doors of the house of the LORD; but he was afraid to tell Eli about the vision.

¹⁶Eli called Samuel: Samuel, my son! he said; and Samuel answered, Here I am!

¹⁷ Eli asked, What did the LORD say to you? Do not hide it from me. God's curse upon you if you conceal from me one word of all that he said to you.

¹⁸ Then Samuel told him everything, concealing nothing. Eli said, The LORD must do what is good in his eyes.

¹⁹ As Samuel grew up, the LORD was with him, and none of his words went unfulfilled.

²⁰ From Dan to Beersheba, all Israel recognized that Samuel was attested as a prophet of the LORD.

²¹ So the LORD continued to appear in Shiloh, because he had revealed himself there to Samuel.

4¹ Samuel's word had authority throughout Israel. THE time came when the Philistines mustered for battle against Israel, and the Israelites, marching out to meet them, encamped near Eben-ezer, while the Philistines' camp was at Aphek.

² The Philistines drew up their lines facing the Israelites, and when battle was joined the Israelites were defeated by the Philistines, who killed about four thousand men on the field.

³When their army got back to camp, the Israelite elders asked, Why did the LORD let us be defeated today by the Philistines? Let us fetch the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD from Shiloh to go with us and deliver us from the power of our enemies.

⁴The army sent to Shiloh and fetched the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD of Hosts, who is enthroned upon the cherubim; Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, were there with the Ark.

⁵When the Ark came into the camp it was greeted with such a great shout by all the Israelites that the earth rang.

⁶The Philistines, hearing the noise, asked, What is this great shouting in the camp of the Hebrews? When they learned that the Ark of the LORD had come into the camp,

⁷they were alarmed. A god has come into the camp, they cried. We are lost! No such thing has ever happened before.

⁸We are utterly lost! Who can deliver us from the power of this mighty god? This is the god who broke the Egyptians and crushed them in the wilderness.

⁹Courage, act like men, you Philistines, or you will become slaves to the Hebrews as they were to you. Be men, and fight!

¹⁰The Philistines then gave battle, and the Israelites were defeated and fled to their homes. It was a great defeat, and thirty thousand Israelite foot-soldiers fell.

¹¹The Ark of God was captured, and Eli's two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, perished.

¹²A Benjamite ran from the battlefield and reached Shiloh on the same day, his clothes torn and dust on his head.

¹³When he arrived Eli was sitting on a seat by the road to Mizpah, for he was deeply troubled about the Ark of God. The man entered the town with his news, and all the people cried out in horror.

¹⁴When Eli heard the uproar, he asked, What does it mean? The man hurried to Eli and told him.

¹⁵Eli was ninety-eight years old and sat staring with sightless eyes.

¹⁶The man said to him, I am the one who has just come from the battle. I fled from the field this very day. Eli asked, What is the news, my son?

¹⁷The runner answered, The Israelites have fled before the Philistines; the army has suffered severe losses; your two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead; and the Ark of God is taken.

¹⁸At the mention of the Ark of God, Eli fell backwards from his seat by the gate and broke his neck, for he was an old man and heavy. So he died; he had been judge over Israel for forty years.

¹⁹His daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas, was pregnant and near her time, and when she heard of the capture of the Ark and the deaths of her father-in-law and her husband, she went into labour and she crouched down and was delivered.

²⁰As she lay dying, the women who attended her said, Do not be afraid; you have a son. But she did not answer or heed what they said.

²¹She named the boy Ichabod, saying, Glory has departed from Israel, referring to the capture of the Ark of God and the deaths of her father-in-law and her husband;

²²Glory has departed from Israel, she said, because the Ark of God is taken.

5¹ After the Philistines had captured the Ark of God, they brought it from Eben-ezer to Ashdod,

² where they carried it into the temple of Dagon and set it beside the god.

³ When the people of Ashdod rose next morning, there was Dagon fallen face downwards on the ground before the Ark of the LORD. They lifted him up and put him back in his place.

⁴ But next morning when they rose, Dagon had again fallen face downwards on the ground before the Ark of the LORD, with his head and his two hands lying broken off beside his platform; only Dagon's body remained on it.

⁵ That is why to this day the priests of Dagon and all who enter the temple of Dagon at Ashdod do not set foot on Dagon's platform.

⁶ The LORD's hand oppressed the people of Ashdod. He threw them into despair; he plagued them with tumours, and their territory swarmed with rats. There was death and destruction all through the city.

⁷ Seeing this, the men of Ashdod decided, The Ark of the God of Israel

must not stay here, for his hand is pressing on us and on Dagon our god.

⁸When they called together all the Philistine lords to ask what should be done with the Ark, they were told, Let the Ark of the God of Israel be taken across to Gath. They moved it there,

⁹and after its removal there the LORD caused great havoc in that city; he plagued everybody, high and low alike, with the tumours which broke out.

¹⁰So the Ark of God was sent on to Ekron, and when it arrived there, the people cried, They have moved the Ark of the God of Israel over to us, to kill us and our families.

¹¹Summoning all the Philistine lords they said, Send the Ark of the God of Israel away; let it go back to its own place, or it will be the death of us all. There was death and destruction all through the city; for the hand of God lay heavy upon it.

¹²Those who did not die were plagued with tumours, and the cry of the city ascended to heaven.

6¹When the Ark of the LORD had been in their territory for seven months,

² the Philistines summoned the priests and soothsayers and asked, What shall we do with the Ark of the LORD? Tell us how we ought to send it back to its own place.

³ Their answer was, If you send the Ark of the God of Israel back, do not let it go empty, but send it back with an offering by way of compensation; if you are then healed you will know why his hand had not been lifted from you.

⁴ When they were asked, What should we send to him? they answered, Send five tumours modelled in gold and five gold rats, one for each of the Philistine lords, for the same plague afflicted all of you and your lords.

⁵ Make models of your tumours and of the rats which are ravaging the land, and give honour to the God of Israel; perhaps he will relax the pressure of his hand on you, your god, and your land.

⁶ Why be stubborn like Pharaoh and the Egyptians? Remember how this God made sport of them until they let Israel go.

⁷ Now make ready a new wagon with two milch cows which have never been

yoked; harness the cows to the wagon, but take their calves away and keep them in their stall.

⁸Fetch the Ark of the LORD and put it on the wagon, place beside it in a casket the gold offerings that you are sending to him, and let it go where it will.

⁹Watch: if it goes up towards its own territory to Beth-shemesh, then it was the LORD who has inflicted this great injury on us; but if not, then we shall know that it was not his hand that struck us, but that we have been the victims of chance.

¹⁰They did this: they took two milch cows and harnessed them to a wagon, meanwhile shutting up their calves in the stall;

¹¹they placed the Ark of the LORD on the wagon together with the casket containing the gold rats, and the models of their tumours.

¹²The cows went straight in the direction of Beth-shemesh; they kept to the road, lowing as they went and turning neither right nor left, while the Philistine lords followed them as far as the territory of Beth-shemesh.

¹³The people of Beth-shemesh, busy harvesting their wheat in the valley, looked up and saw the Ark, and they rejoiced at the sight.

¹⁴The wagon came to the field of Joshua of Beth-shemesh and halted there, close by a great stone. The people chopped up the wood of the wagon and offered the cows as a whole-offering to the LORD.

¹⁵The Levites who lifted down the Ark of the LORD and the casket containing the gold offerings laid them on the great stone; and the men of Beth-shemesh offered whole-offerings and shared-offerings that day to the LORD.

¹⁶The five lords of the Philistines watched all this, and returned to Ekron the same day.

¹⁷These golden tumours which the Philistines sent back as an offering to the LORD were for Ashdod, Gaza, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron, one for each city.

¹⁸The gold rats were for all the towns of the Philistines governed by the five lords, both fortified towns and open settlements. The great stone where they deposited the Ark of the LORD

stands witness on the farm of Joshua of Beth-shemesh to this day.

¹⁹But the sons of Jeconiah did not rejoice with the rest of the men of Beth-shemesh when they welcomed the Ark of the LORD, and he struck down seventy of them. The people mourned because the LORD had struck them so heavy a blow,

²⁰and the men of Beth-shemesh said, No one is safe in the presence of the LORD, this holy God. To whom can we send the Ark, to be rid of him?

²¹So they sent this message to the inhabitants of Kiriath-jearim: The Philistines have returned the Ark of the LORD; come down and take charge of it.

7¹The men of Kiriath-jearim came and took the Ark of the LORD away; they brought it into the house of Abinadab on the hill and consecrated his son Eleazar as its custodian.

²FOR a long while, some twenty years in all, the Ark was housed in Kiriath-jearim. Then there was a movement throughout Israel to follow the LORD,

³and Samuel addressed these words to the whole nation: If your return to

the LORD is whole-hearted, banish the foreign gods and the ashtaroth from your shrines; turn to the LORD with heart and mind, and worship him alone, and he will deliver you from the Philistines.

⁴So the Israelites banished the baalim and the ashtaroth, and worshipped the LORD alone.

⁵Samuel summoned all Israel to an assembly at Mizpah, so that he might intercede with the LORD for them.

⁶When they had assembled, they drew water and poured it out before the LORD and fasted all day, confessing that they had sinned against the LORD. It was at Mizpah that Samuel acted as judge over Israel.

⁷When the Philistines heard that the Israelites had assembled at Mizpah, their lords marched against them. The Israelites heard that the Philistines were advancing, and they were afraid

⁸and begged Samuel, Do not cease to pray for us to the LORD our God to save us from the power of the Philistines.

⁹Samuel took a sucking-lamb, offered it up complete as a whole-offering, and prayed aloud to the LORD on behalf

of Israel, and the LORD answered his prayer.

¹⁰As Samuel was offering the sacrifice and the Philistines were advancing to the attack, the LORD with mighty thunder threw the Philistines into confusion. They fled in panic before the Israelites,

¹¹who set out from Mizpah in pursuit and kept up the slaughter of the Philistines till they reached a point below Beth-car.

¹²There Samuel took a stone and set it up as a monument between Mizpah and Jeshanah, naming it Eben-ezer. This is a witness, he said, that the LORD has helped us.

¹³Thus the Philistines were subdued and no longer encroached on the territory of Israel; as long as Samuel lived, the hand of the LORD was against them.

¹⁴The towns they had captured were restored to Israel, and from Ekron to Gath the borderland was freed from Philistine control. Between Israel and the Amorites also peace was maintained.

¹⁵Samuel acted as judge in Israel as long as he lived,

¹⁶and every year went on circuit to Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah; he dispensed justice at all these places.

¹⁷But always he went back to Ramah; that was his home and the place from which he governed Israel, and there he built an altar to the LORD.

8¹WHEN Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons to be judges in Israel.

²The eldest son was called Joel and the second Abiah; they acted as judges in Beersheba.

³His sons did not follow their father's ways but were intent on their own profit, taking bribes and perverting the course of justice.

⁴So all the elders of Israel met, and came to Samuel at Ramah.

⁵They said to him, You are now old and your sons do not follow your ways; appoint us a king to rule us, like all the other nations.

⁶But their request for a king displeased Samuel. He prayed to the LORD,

⁷and the LORD told him, Listen to the people and all that they are saying; they have not rejected you, it is I whom they

have rejected, I whom they will not have to be their king.

⁸They are now doing to you just what they have done to me since I brought them up from Egypt: they have forsaken me and worshipped other gods.

⁹Hear what they have to say now, but give them a solemn warning and tell them what sort of king will rule them.

¹⁰Samuel reported to the people who were asking him for a king all that the LORD had said to him.

¹¹This will be the sort of king who will bear rule over you, he said. He will take your sons and make them serve in his chariots and with his cavalry, and they will run before his chariot.

¹²Some he will appoint officers over units of a thousand and units of fifty. Others will plough his fields and reap his harvest; others again will make weapons of war and equipment for the chariots.

¹³He will take your daughters for perfumers, cooks, and bakers.

¹⁴He will seize the best of your fields, vineyards, and olive groves, and give them to his courtiers.

¹⁵He will take a tenth of your grain and your vintage to give to his eunuchs and courtiers.

¹⁶Your slaves, both men and women, and the best of your cattle and your donkeys he will take for his own use.

¹⁷He will take a tenth of your flocks, and you yourselves will become his slaves.

¹⁸There will come a day when you will cry out against the king whom you have chosen; but the LORD will not answer you on that day.

¹⁹The people, however, refused to listen to Samuel. No, they said, we must have a king over us;

²⁰then we shall be like other nations, with a king to rule us, to lead us out to war and fight our battles.

²¹When Samuel heard what the people had decided, he told the LORD,

²²who said, Take them at their word and appoint them a king. Samuel then dismissed all the Israelites to their homes.

9¹There was a man from the territory of Benjamin, whose name was Kish son of Abiel, son of Zeror, son of

Bechorath, son of Aphiah a Benjamite. He was a man of substance,

²and had a son named Saul, a young man in his prime; there was no better man among the Israelites than he. He stood a head taller than any of the people.

³One day some donkeys belonging to Saul's father Kish had strayed, so he said to his son Saul, Take one of the servants with you, and go and look for the donkeys.

⁴They crossed the hill-country of Ephraim and went through the district of Shalisha but did not find them; they passed through the district of Shaalim but they were not there; they passed through the district of Benjamin but again did not find them.

⁵When they reached the district of Zuph, Saul said to the servant who was with him, Come, we ought to turn back, or my father will stop thinking about the donkeys and begin to worry about us.

⁶The servant answered, There is a man of God in this town who has a great reputation, because everything he says

comes true. Suppose we go there; he may tell us which way to take.

⁷Saul said, If we go, what shall we offer him? There is no food left in our packs and we have no present to give the man of God, nothing at all.

⁸The servant answered him again, Wait! I have here a quarter-shekel of silver. I can give that to the man, to tell us the way.

⁹(In Israel in days gone by, when someone wished to consult God, he would say, Let us go to the seer. For what is nowadays called a prophet used to be called a seer.)

¹⁰Saul said, Good! Let us go to him. So they went to the town where the man of God lived.

¹¹As they were going up the ascent to the town they met some girls coming out to draw water and asked them, Shall we find the seer there?

¹²Yes, they answered, he is ahead of you; hurry now, for he has just arrived in the town because there is a feast at the shrine today.

¹³As you enter the town you will meet him before he goes up to the shrine to

eat; the people will not start until he comes, for he has to bless the sacrifice before the invited company can eat. Go up now, and you will find him at once.

¹⁴So they went up to the town and, just as they were going in, there was Samuel coming towards them on his way up to the shrine.

¹⁵The day before Saul's arrival there, the LORD had disclosed his intention to Samuel:

¹⁶At this time tomorrow, he said, I shall send you a man from the territory of Benjamin, and you are to anoint him prince over my people Israel. He will deliver my people from the Philistines; for I have seen the sufferings of my people, and their cry has reached my ears.

¹⁷The moment Saul appeared the LORD said to Samuel, Here is the man of whom I spoke to you. This man will govern my people.

¹⁸Saul came up to Samuel in the gateway and said, Tell me, please, where the seer lives.

¹⁹Samuel replied, I am the seer. Go on ahead of me to the shrine and eat with

me today; in the morning I shall set you on your way, after telling you what you have on your mind.

²⁰Trouble yourself no more about the donkeys lost three days ago; they have been found. To whom does the tribute of all Israel belong? It belongs to you and to your whole ancestral house.

²¹But I am a Benjamite, said Saul, from the smallest of the tribes of Israel, and my family is the least important of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin. Why do you say this to me?

²²Samuel brought Saul and his servant into the dining-hall and gave them a place at the head of the invited company, about thirty in number.

²³He said to the cook, Bring the portion that I gave you and told you to put on one side.

²⁴The cook took up the whole haunch and leg and put it before Saul; and Samuel said, Here is the portion of meat kept for you. Eat it: it has been reserved for you at this feast to which I have invited the people. Saul dined with Samuel that day,

²⁵and when they came down from the shrine to the town a bed was spread on the roof for Saul, and he stayed there that night.

²⁶At dawn Samuel called to Saul on the roof, Get up, and I shall set you on your way. When Saul rose, he and Samuel went outside together,

²⁷and as they came to the edge of the town, Samuel said to Saul, Tell the boy to go on ahead. He did so; then Samuel said, Stay here a moment, and I shall tell you what God has said.

10¹Samuel took a flask of oil and poured it over Saul's head; he kissed him and said, The LORD anoints you prince over his people Israel. You are to rule the people of the LORD and deliver them from the enemies round about. You will receive a sign that the LORD has anointed you prince to govern his possession:

²when you leave me today, you will meet two men by Rachel's tomb at Zelzah in the territory of Benjamin. They will tell you that the donkeys you set out to look for have been found and that your father is concerned for them

no longer; he is anxious about you and keeps saying, What shall I do about my son?

³From there go across country as far as the terebinth of Tabor, where three men going up to Bethel to worship God will meet you. One of them will be carrying three young goats, the second three loaves, and the third a skin of wine.

⁴They will greet you and offer you two loaves, which you will accept.

⁵Then when you reach the hill of God, where the Philistine governor resides, you will meet a company of prophets coming down from the shrine, led by lute, drum, fife, and lyre, and filled with prophetic rapture.

⁶The spirit of the LORD will suddenly take possession of you, and you too will be rapt like a prophet and become another man.

⁷When these signs happen, do whatever the occasion demands; God will be with you.

⁸You are to go down to Gilgal ahead of me, and I shall come to you to sacrifice whole-offerings and shared-offerings.

Wait seven days until I join you; then I shall tell you what to do.

⁹As Saul turned to leave Samuel, God made him a different person. On that same day all these signs happened.

¹⁰When they reached the hill there was a company of prophets coming to meet him, and the spirit of God suddenly took possession of him, so that he too was filled with prophetic rapture.

¹¹When people who had known him previously saw that he was rapt like the prophets, they said to one another, What can have happened to the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?

¹²One of the men of that place said, And whose sons are they? Hence the proverb, Is Saul also among the prophets?

¹³When the prophetic rapture had passed, he went home.

¹⁴Saul's uncle said to him and the boy, Where have you been? Saul answered, To look for the donkeys, and when we could not find them, we went to Samuel.

¹⁵His uncle said, Tell me what Samuel said.

¹⁶He told us that the donkeys had been found, replied Saul; but he did not repeat what Samuel had said about his being king.

¹⁷Samuel summoned the Israelites to the LORD at Mizpah

¹⁸and said to them, This is the word of the LORD the God of Israel: I brought Israel up from Egypt; I delivered you from the Egyptians and from all the kingdoms that oppressed you.

¹⁹But today you have rejected your God who saved you from all your misery and distress; you have said, No, set a king over us. Therefore take up your positions now before the LORD tribe by tribe and clan by clan.

²⁰Samuel presented all the tribes of Israel, and Benjamin was picked by lot.

²¹Then he presented the tribe of Benjamin, family by family, and the family of Matri was picked. He presented the family of Matri, man by man, and Saul son of Kish was picked; but when search was made he was not to be found.

²²They went on to ask the LORD, Will the man be coming? The LORD

answered, There he is, hiding among the baggage.

²³ So some ran and fetched him out, and as he took his stand among the people, he was a head taller than anyone else.

²⁴ Samuel said to the people, Look at the man whom the LORD has chosen; there is no one like him in this whole nation. They all acclaimed him, shouting, Long live the king!

²⁵ Samuel explained to the people the nature of a king, and made a written record of it on a scroll which he deposited before the LORD. He then dismissed them to their homes.

²⁶ Saul too went home to Gibeah, and with him went some fighting men whose hearts God had moved.

²⁷ But there were scoundrels who said, How can this fellow deliver us? They thought nothing of him and brought him no gifts.

11 ¹ About a month later Nahash the Ammonite attacked and besieged Jabesh-gilead. The men of Jabesh said to Nahash, Grant us terms and we will be your subjects.

²Nahash answered, On one condition only shall I grant you terms: that I gouge out the right eye of every one of you and bring disgrace on all Israel.

³The elders of Jabesh-gilead said, Give us seven days' respite to send messengers throughout Israel and then, if no one relieves us, we shall surrender to you.

⁴The messengers came to Gibeah, where Saul lived, and delivered their message, and all the people broke into lamentation and weeping.

⁵Saul was just coming from the field, driving in the oxen, and asked why the people were lamenting; and they told him what the men of Jabesh had said.

⁶When Saul heard this, the spirit of God suddenly seized him; in anger

⁷he took a pair of oxen, cut them in pieces, and sent messengers with the pieces all through Israel to proclaim that the same would be done to the oxen of any man who did not follow Saul and Samuel to battle. The fear of the LORD fell upon the people and they came out to a man.

⁸Saul mustered them in Bezek, three hundred thousand men from Israel and thirty thousand from Judah.

⁹He said to the messengers, Tell the men of Jabesh-gilead, Victory will be yours tomorrow by the time the sun is hot. When they received this message, the men of Jabesh took heart;

¹⁰but they said to Nahash, Tomorrow we shall surrender to you, and then you may deal with us as you think fit.

¹¹Next day Saul with his men in three columns forced a way right into the enemy camp during the morning watch and massacred the Ammonites until the day grew hot; those who survived were scattered until no two of them were left together.

¹²The people said to Samuel, Who said that Saul should not reign over us? Hand the men over to us to be put to death.

¹³But Saul said, No man is to be put to death on a day when the LORD has won such a victory in Israel.

¹⁴Samuel said to the people, Let us now go to Gilgal and there establish the kingship anew.

¹⁵ So they all went to Gilgal and invested Saul there as king in the presence of the LORD. They sacrificed shared-offerings before the LORD, and Saul and all the Israelites celebrated with great joy.

12 ¹ SAMUEL thus addressed the assembled Israelites: I have listened to your request and installed a king to rule over you.

² The king is now your leader, while I am old and white-haired and my sons are with you; but I have been your leader from my youth to the present.

³ Here I am! Cite your complaints against me in the presence of the LORD and of his anointed one. Whose ox have I taken, whose donkey have I taken? Whom have I wronged, whom have I oppressed? From whom have I taken a bribe to turn a blind eye? Tell me, and I shall make restitution to you.

⁴ They answered, You have not wronged us, you have not oppressed us, nor have you taken anything from anyone.

⁵ Samuel said to them, This day the LORD is witness among you, his anointed king is witness, that you have found

nothing in my hands. They said, He is witness.

⁶Samuel said to the people, The LORD is witness, the LORD who appointed Moses and Aaron and brought your fathers up from Egypt.

⁷Now stand up, and here in the presence of the LORD I shall put the case against you and recite all the victories which he has won for you and for your forefathers.

⁸After Jacob and his sons had gone down to Egypt and suffered at the hands of the Egyptians, your forefathers appealed to the LORD for help, and he sent Moses and Aaron, who brought them out of Egypt and settled them in this place.

⁹But they forgot the LORD their God, and he abandoned them to Sisera, commander-in-chief of King Jabin of Hazor, to the Philistines, and to the king of Moab, and they had to fight against them.

¹⁰Then your forefathers cried to the LORD for help: We have sinned in forsaking the LORD and worshipping the baalim and the ashtaroth. But now,

deliver us from our enemies, and we shall worship you.

¹¹The LORD sent Jerubbaal and Barak, Jephthah and Samson, and delivered you from your enemies on every side; and you lived in security.

¹²Yet when you saw Nahash king of the Ammonites coming against you, you said to me, No, let us have a king to rule over us, although the LORD your God was your king.

¹³Now here is the king you chose; you asked for a king, and the LORD has set one over you.

¹⁴If you will revere the LORD and give true and loyal service, if you do not rebel against his commands, and if you and the king who reigns over you are faithful to the LORD your God, well and good;

¹⁵but if you do not obey the LORD, and if you rebel against his commands, then his hand will be against you and against your king.

¹⁶Stand now, and witness the great wonder which the LORD will perform before your eyes.

¹⁷It is now wheat harvest. When I call upon the LORD and he sends thunder

and rain, you will know and see how displeasing it was to the LORD for you to ask for a king.

¹⁸So Samuel called to the LORD and he sent thunder and rain that day; and all the people were in great fear of the LORD and of Samuel.

¹⁹The people all said to Samuel, Pray for us your servants to the LORD your God, to save us from death; for we have added to all our other sins the great wickedness of asking for a king.

²⁰Samuel answered, Do not be afraid; although you have been so wicked, do not give up the worship of the LORD, but serve him with all your heart.

²¹Do not turn to the worship of sham gods which can neither help nor save, because they are a sham.

²²For his great name's sake the LORD will not cast you off, because he has resolved to make you his own people.

²³As for me, God forbid that I should sin against the LORD by ceasing to pray for you. I shall show you what is right and good:

²⁴ to revere the LORD and worship him faithfully with all your heart; for consider what great things he has done for you.

²⁵ But if you persist in wickedness, both you and your king will be swept away.

13 ¹ SAUL was thirty years old when he became king, and he reigned over Israel for twenty-two years.

² Saul picked three thousand men from Israel, two thousand to be with him in Michmash and the hill-country of Bethel and a thousand to be with Jonathan in Gibeah of Benjamin; the rest of the army he dismissed to their homes.

³ Jonathan defeated the Philistine garrison in Geba, and the news spread among the Philistines that the Hebrews were in revolt. Saul sounded the trumpet all through the land;

⁴ and when the Israelites heard that Saul had defeated a Philistine garrison and that the very name of Israel was offensive among the Philistines, they answered the call to arms and rallied to Saul at Gilgal.

⁵ The Philistines mustered to attack Israel; they had thirty thousand chariots and six thousand horse, with infantry as

countless as sand on the seashore. They went up and camped at Michmash, to the east of Beth-aven.

⁶The Israelites found themselves in sore straits, for the army was hard pressed, so they hid themselves in caves and holes and among the rocks, in pits and cisterns.

⁷Some of them crossed the Jordan into the district of Gad and Gilead, but Saul remained at Gilgal, and all his followers were in a state of alarm.

⁸He waited seven days for his meeting with Samuel, but Samuel failed to appear, and when the people began to drift away,

⁹Saul said, Bring me the whole-offering and the shared-offerings, and he offered up the whole-offering.

¹⁰Saul had just finished the sacrifice, when Samuel arrived, and he went out to greet him.

¹¹Samuel said, What have you done? Saul answered, I saw that the people were drifting away from me, and you yourself had not come at the time fixed, and the Philistines were mustering at Michmash;

¹²and I thought, The Philistines will now fall on me at Gilgal, and I have not ensured the LORD's favour; so I felt compelled to make the whole-offering myself.

¹³Samuel said to Saul, You have acted foolishly! You have not kept the command laid on you by the LORD your God; if you had, he would have established your dynasty over Israel for all time.

¹⁴But now your line will not endure; the LORD will seek out a man after his own heart, and appoint him prince over his people, because you have not kept the LORD's command.

¹⁵Without more ado Samuel left Gilgal and went on his way. The rest of the people followed Saul, as he moved from Gilgal towards the enemy. At Gibeah of Benjamin he mustered his followers; they were about six hundred men.

¹⁶Saul, his son Jonathan, and their men took up their quarters in Gibeah of Benjamin, while the Philistines were encamped in Michmash.

¹⁷Raiding parties went out from the Philistine camp in three directions. One

party headed towards Ophrah in the district of Shual,

¹⁸ another towards Beth-horon, and the third towards the range of hills overlooking the valley of Zeboim and the wilderness beyond.

¹⁹ No blacksmith was to be found in the whole of Israel, for the Philistines were determined to prevent the Hebrews from making swords and spears.

²⁰ The Israelites had all to go down to the Philistines for their ploughshares, mattocks, axes, and sickles to be sharpened.

²¹ The charge was two thirds of a shekel for ploughshares and mattocks, and one third of a shekel for sharpening the axes and pointing the goads.

²² So when war broke out the followers of Saul and Jonathan had neither sword nor spear; only Saul and Jonathan carried arms.

²³ The Philistines had posted a company of troops to hold the pass of Michmash,

14¹ and one day Saul's son Jonathan said to his armour-bearer, Come, let us go over to the Philistine outpost across there. He did not tell his father,

²who at the time had his tent under the pomegranate tree at Migron on the outskirts of Gibeah; with him were about six hundred men.

³The ephod was carried by Ahijah son of Ahitub, Ichabod's brother, son of Phinehas son of Eli, the priest of the LORD at Shiloh. Nobody knew that Jonathan had gone.

⁴On either side of the pass through which Jonathan sought to make his way to the Philistine post stood two sharp columns of rock, called Bozez and Seneh;

⁵one of them was on the north towards Michmash, and the other on the south towards Geba.

⁶Jonathan said to his armour-bearer, Let us go and pay a visit to the post of the uncircumcised yonder. Perhaps the LORD will do something for us. Nothing can stop him from winning a victory, by many or by few.

⁷The armour-bearer answered, Do what you will, go ahead; I am with you whatever you do.

⁸Jonathan said, We shall cross over and let the men see us.

⁹If they say, Stay there till we come to you, then we shall stay where we are and not go up to them.

¹⁰But if they say, Come up to us, we shall go up; that will be the proof that the LORD has given them into our power.

¹¹The two showed themselves to the Philistine outpost. Look! said the Philistines. Hebrews coming out of the holes where they have been hiding!

¹²And they called across to Jonathan and his armour-bearer, Come up to us; we shall show you something. Jonathan said to the armour-bearer, Come on, the LORD has put them into Israel's power.

¹³Jonathan climbed up on hands and feet, and the armour-bearer followed him. The Philistines fell before Jonathan, and the armour-bearer, coming behind, dispatched them.

¹⁴In that first attack Jonathan and his armour-bearer killed about twenty of them, like men cutting a furrow across a half-acre field.

¹⁵Terror spread throughout the army in the camp and in the field; the men at the post and the raiding parties were

terrified. The very ground quaked, and there was great panic.

¹⁶Saul's men on the watch in Gibeah of Benjamin saw the mob of Philistines surging to and fro in confusion.

¹⁷Saul ordered his forces to call the roll to find out who was missing and, when it was called, they found that Jonathan and his armour-bearer were absent.

¹⁸Saul said to Ahijah, Bring forward the ephod, for it was he who at that time carried the ephod before Israel.

¹⁹While Saul was speaking, the confusion in the Philistine camp kept increasing, and he said to the priest, Hold your hand.

²⁰Then Saul and all his men made a concerted rush for the battlefield, where they found the enemy in complete disorder, every man's sword against his fellow.

²¹Those Hebrews who up to now had been under the Philistines, and had been with them in camp, changed sides and joined the Israelites under Saul and Jonathan.

²²When all the Israelites in hiding in the hill-country of Ephraim heard that

the Philistines were in flight, they also joined in and set off in close pursuit.

²³That day the LORD delivered Israel, and the fighting passed on beyond Beth-aven.

²⁴The Israelites had been driven to exhaustion on that day. Saul had issued this warning to the troops: A curse on any man who takes food before nightfall and before I have taken vengeance on my enemies. So no one tasted any food.

²⁵There was honeycomb in the countryside;

²⁶but when his men came upon it, dripping with honey though it was, not one of them put his hand to his mouth for fear of the curse.

²⁷Jonathan, however, had not heard his father's interdict to the army, and he stretched out the stick that was in his hand, dipped the end of it in the honeycomb, put it to his mouth, and was refreshed.

²⁸One of the people said to him, Your father strictly forbade this, saying, A curse on the man who eats food today! And the men are faint.

²⁹ Jonathan said, My father has done the people great harm; see how I am refreshed by this mere taste of honey.

³⁰ How much better if the army had eaten today whatever they took from their enemies by way of spoil! Then there would indeed have been a great slaughter of Philistines.

³¹ Israel defeated the Philistines that day, and pursued them from Michmash to Aijalon. But the troops were so faint with hunger

³² that they turned to plunder and seized sheep, cattle, and calves; they slaughtered them on the bare ground, and ate the meat with the blood in it.

³³ Someone told Saul that the people were sinning against the LORD by eating meat with the blood in it. This is treacherous behaviour! cried Saul. Roll a great stone here at once.

³⁴ He then said, Go about among the troops and tell them to bring their oxen and sheep, and to slaughter and eat them here; and so they will not sin against the LORD by eating meat with the blood in it. So as night fell each

man came, driving his own ox, and slaughtered it there.

³⁵ Thus Saul came to erect an altar to the LORD, and this was the first altar to the LORD that he erected.

³⁶ Saul said, Let us go down and make a night attack on the Philistines and harry them till daylight; we will not spare a single one of them. His men answered, Do what you think best, but the priest said, Let us first consult God.

³⁷ Saul enquired of God, Shall I pursue the Philistines? Will you put them into Israel's power? But this time he received no answer.

³⁸ So he said, Let all the leaders of the people come forward and let us find out where the sin lies this day.

³⁹ As the LORD, the deliverer of Israel, lives, even if the sin lies in my son Jonathan, he shall die. Not a soul answered him.

⁴⁰ Then he said to the Israelites, All of you stand on one side, and I and my son Jonathan will stand on the other. His men answered, Do what you think best.

⁴¹ Saul said to the LORD the God of Israel, Why have you not answered your

servant today? LORD God of Israel, if this guilt lies in me or in my son Jonathan, let the lot be Urim; if it lies in your people Israel, let it be Thummim. Jonathan and Saul were taken, and the people were cleared.

⁴²Then Saul said, Cast lots between me and my son Jonathan; and Jonathan was taken.

⁴³Saul said to Jonathan, Tell me what you have done. Jonathan told him, True, I did taste a little honey on the tip of my stick. Here I am; I am ready to die.

⁴⁴Then Saul swore a solemn oath that Jonathan should die.

⁴⁵But his men said to Saul, Shall Jonathan die, Jonathan who has won this great victory in Israel? God forbid! As the LORD lives, not a hair of his head shall fall to the ground, for he has been at work with God today. So the army delivered Jonathan and he did not die.

⁴⁶Saul broke off the pursuit of the Philistines, who then made their way home.

⁴⁷When Saul had made his throne secure in Israel, he gave battle to his enemies on every side, the Moabites, the

Ammonites, the Edomites, the king of Zobah, and the Philistines; and wherever he turned he met with victory.

⁴⁸He displayed his strength by defeating the Amalekites and freeing Israel from hostile raids.

⁴⁹Saul's sons were: Jonathan, Ishyo, and Malchishua. These were the names of his two daughters: Merab the elder and Michal the younger.

⁵⁰His wife was Ahinoam daughter of Ahimaaz, and his commander-in-chief was Abner, son of Saul's uncle, Ner;

⁵¹Saul's father Kish and Abner's father Ner were sons of Abiel.

⁵²There was bitter warfare with the Philistines throughout Saul's lifetime; any strong man and any brave man that he found he took into his service.

15 ¹SAMUEL said to Saul, The LORD sent me to anoint you king over his people Israel. Now listen to the voice of the LORD:

²this is the very word of the LORD of Hosts: I shall punish the Amalekites for what they did to Israel, when they opposed them on their way up from Egypt.

³Go now, fall upon the Amalekites, destroy them, and put their property under ban. Spare no one; put them all to death, men and women, children and babes in arms, herds and flocks, camels and donkeys.

⁴Saul called out the levy and reviewed them at Telaim: there were two hundred thousand foot-soldiers and another ten thousand from Judah.

⁵When he reached the city of Amalek, he halted for a time in the valley.

⁶Meanwhile he sent word to the Kenites to leave the Amalekites and come down, or, he said, I shall destroy you as well as them; but you were friendly to Israel as they came up from Egypt. So the Kenites left the Amalekites.

⁷Saul inflicted defeat on the Amalekites all the way from Havilah to Shur on the borders of Egypt.

⁸Agag king of the Amalekites he took alive, but he destroyed all the people, putting them to the sword.

⁹Saul and his army spared Agag and the best of the sheep and cattle, the fat beasts and the lambs, and everything worth keeping; these they were unwilling

to destroy, but anything that was useless and of no value they destroyed.

¹⁰The word of the LORD came to Samuel:

¹¹I repent of having made Saul king, for he has turned away from me and has not obeyed my instructions. Samuel was angry; all night long he cried aloud to the LORD.

¹²Early next morning he went to meet Saul, but was told that he had gone to Carmel, for he had set up a monument to himself there, and then had turned and gone on down to Gilgal.

¹³There Samuel found him, and Saul greeted him with the words, The LORD's blessing on you! I have carried out the LORD's instructions.

¹⁴What then is this bleating of sheep in my ears? demanded Samuel. How do I come to hear the lowing of cattle?

¹⁵Saul answered, The troops have taken them from the Amalekites. These are what they spared, the best of the sheep and cattle, to sacrifice to the LORD your God; the rest we completely destroyed.

¹⁶Samuel said to Saul, Be quiet! Let me tell you what the LORD said to me last night. Tell me, said Saul.

¹⁷So Samuel went on, Once you thought little of yourself, but now you are head of the tribes of Israel. The LORD, who anointed you king over Israel,

¹⁸charged you with the destruction of that wicked nation, the Amalekites; you were to go and wage war against them until you had wiped them out.

¹⁹Why then did you not obey the LORD? Why did you swoop on the spoil, so doing what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD?

²⁰Saul answered, But I did obey the LORD; I went where the LORD sent me, and I have brought back Agag king of the Amalekites.

²¹The rest of them I destroyed. Out of the spoil the troops took sheep and oxen, the choicest of the animals laid under ban, to sacrifice to the LORD your God at Gilgal.

²²Samuel then said: Does the LORD desire whole-offerings and sacrifices as he desires obedience? To obey is better

than sacrifice, and to listen to him better than the fat of rams.

²³ Rebellion is as sinful as witchcraft, arrogance as evil as idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has rejected you as king.

²⁴ Saul said to Samuel, I have sinned. I have not complied with the LORD's command or with your instructions: I was afraid of the troops and gave in to them.

²⁵ But now forgive my sin, I implore you, and come back with me, and I shall bow in worship before the LORD.

²⁶ Samuel answered, I shall not come back with you; you have rejected the word of the LORD and therefore the LORD has rejected you as king over Israel.

²⁷ As he turned to go, Saul caught the corner of his cloak and it tore.

²⁸ And Samuel said to him, The LORD has torn the kingdom of Israel from your hand today and will give it to another, a better man than you.

²⁹ God who is the Splendour of Israel does not deceive, nor does he change his mind, as a mortal might do.

³⁰ Saul pleaded, I have sinned; but honour me this once before the elders of my people and before Israel and come back with me, and I will bow in worship before the LORD your God.

³¹ Samuel went back with Saul, and Saul worshipped the LORD.

³² Samuel said, Bring Agag king of the Amalekites. So Agag came to him with faltering step and said, Surely the bitterness of death has passed.

³³ Samuel said, As your sword has made women childless, so your mother will be childless among women. Then Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the LORD at Gilgal.

³⁴ Saul went to his own home at Gibeah, and Samuel went to Ramah;

³⁵ and he never saw Saul again to his dying day, but he grieved for him, because the LORD had repented of having made him king over Israel.

16 ¹ THE LORD said to Samuel, How long will you grieve because I have rejected Saul as king of Israel? Fill your horn with oil and take it with you; I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem;

for I have chosen myself a king from among his sons.

²Samuel answered, How can I go? If Saul hears of it, he will kill me. Take a heifer with you, said the LORD; say you have come to offer a sacrifice to the LORD,

³and invite Jesse to the sacrifice; then I shall show you what you must do. You are to anoint for me the man whom I indicate to you.

⁴Samuel did as the LORD had told him, and went to Bethlehem, where the elders came in haste to meet him, saying, Why have you come? Is all well?

⁵All is well, said Samuel; I have come to sacrifice to the LORD. Purify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice. He himself purified Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice.

⁶When they came, and Samuel saw Eliab, he thought, Surely here, before the LORD, is his anointed king.

⁷But the LORD said to him, Pay no attention to his outward appearance and stature, for I have rejected him. The LORD does not see as a mortal sees;

mortals see only appearances but the LORD sees into the heart.

⁸Then Jesse called Abinadab and had him pass before Samuel, but he said, No, the LORD has not chosen this one.

⁹Next he presented Shammah, of whom Samuel said, Nor has the LORD chosen him.

¹⁰Seven of his sons were presented to Samuel by Jesse, but he said, The LORD has not chosen any of these.

¹¹Samuel asked, Are these all the sons you have? There is still the youngest, replied Jesse, but he is looking after the sheep. Samuel said to Jesse, Send and fetch him; we will not sit down until he comes.

¹²So he sent and fetched him. He was handsome, with ruddy cheeks and bright eyes. The LORD said, Rise and anoint him: this is the man.

¹³Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and the spirit of the LORD came upon David and was with him from that day onwards. Then Samuel set out on his way to Ramah.

¹⁴The spirit of the LORD had forsaken Saul, and at times an evil spirit from the LORD would seize him suddenly.

¹⁵His servants said to him, You see how an evil spirit from God seizes you;

¹⁶sir, why do you not command your servants here to go and find someone who can play on the lyre? Then, when an evil spirit from God comes on you, he can play and you will recover.

¹⁷Saul said to his servants, Find me someone who can play well and bring him to me.

¹⁸One of his attendants said, I have seen a son of Jesse of Bethlehem who can play; he is a brave man and a good fighter, wise in speech and handsome, and the LORD is with him.

¹⁹Saul therefore dispatched messengers to ask Jesse to send him his son David, who was with the sheep.

²⁰Jesse took a batch of bread, a skin of wine, and a kid, and sent them to Saul by his son David.

²¹David came to Saul and entered his service; Saul loved him dearly, and David became his armour-bearer.

²²Saul sent word to Jesse: Allow David to stay in my service, for I am pleased with him.

²³And whenever an evil spirit from God came upon Saul, David would take his lyre and play it, so that relief would come to Saul; he would recover and the evil spirit would leave him alone.

17 ¹The Philistines mustered their forces for war; they massed at Socoh in Judah and encamped between Socoh and Azekah at Ephes-dammim.

²Saul and the Israelites also mustered, and they encamped in the valley of Elah. They drew up their lines of battle facing the Philistines,

³the Philistines occupying a position on one hill and the Israelites on another, with a valley between them.

⁴A champion came out from the Philistine camp, a man named Goliath, from Gath; he was over nine feet in height.

⁵He had a bronze helmet on his head, and he wore plate armour of bronze, weighing five thousand shekels.

⁶On his legs were bronze greaves, and one of his weapons was a bronze dagger.

⁷The shaft of his spear was like a weaver's beam, and its head, which was of iron, weighed six hundred shekels. His shield-bearer marched ahead of him.

⁸The champion stood and shouted to the ranks of Israel, Why do you come out to do battle? I am the Philistine champion and you are Saul's men. Choose your man to meet me.

⁹If he defeats and kills me in fair fight, we shall become your slaves; but if I vanquish and kill him, you will be our slaves and serve us.

¹⁰Here and now I challenge the ranks of Israel. Get me a man, and we will fight it out.

¹¹When Saul and the Israelites heard what the Philistine said, they were all shaken and deeply afraid.

¹²David was the son of an Ephrathite called Jesse, who had eight sons, and who by Saul's time had become old, well advanced in years.

¹³His three eldest sons had followed Saul to the war; the eldest was called Eliab, the next Abinadab, and the third Shamamah;

¹⁴ David was the youngest. When the three eldest followed Saul,

¹⁵ David used to go from attending Saul to minding his father's flocks at Bethlehem.

¹⁶ Morning and evening for forty days the Philistine came forward and took up his stance.

¹⁷ Then one day Jesse said to his son David, Take your brothers an ephah of this roasted grain and these ten loaves of bread, and go with them as quickly as you can to the camp.

¹⁸ These ten cream-cheeses are for you to take to their commanding officer. See if your brothers are well and bring back some token from them.

¹⁹ Saul and the brothers and all the Israelites were in the valley of Elah, fighting the Philistines.

²⁰ Early next morning David, having left someone in charge of the sheep, set out on his errand and went as Jesse had told him. He reached the lines just as the army was going out to take up position and was raising the war cry.

²¹ The Israelites and the Philistines drew up their ranks opposite each other.

²² David left his things in the charge of the quartermaster, ran to the line, and went up to his brothers to greet them.

²³ While he was talking with them the Philistine champion, Goliath from Gath, came out from the Philistine ranks and issued his challenge in the same words as before; and David heard him.

²⁴ When the Israelites saw the man they fell back before him in fear.

²⁵ Look at this man who comes out day after day to defy Israel, they said. The king is to give a rich reward to the man who kills him; he will also give him his daughter in marriage and will exempt his family from service due in Israel.

²⁶ David asked the men near him, What is to be done for the man who kills this Philistine and wipes out this disgrace? And who is he, an uncircumcised Philistine, to defy the armies of the living God?

²⁷ The soldiers, repeating what had been said, told him what was to be done for the man who killed him.

²⁸ David's elder brother Eliab overheard him talking with the men and angrily demanded, What are you doing here?

And whom have you left to look after those few sheep in the wilderness? I know you, you impudent young rascal; you have only come to see the fighting.

²⁹David answered, Now what have I done? I only asked a question.

³⁰He turned away from him to someone else and repeated his question, but everybody gave him the same answer.

³¹David's words were overheard and reported to Saul, who sent for him.

³²David said to him, Let no one lose heart! I shall go and fight this Philistine.

³³Saul answered, You are not able to fight this Philistine; you are only a lad, and he has been a fighting man all his life.

³⁴David said to Saul, Sir, I am my father's shepherd; whenever a lion or bear comes and carries off a sheep from the flock,

³⁵I go out after it and attack it and rescue the victim from its jaws. Then if it turns on me, I seize it by the beard and batter it to death.

³⁶I have killed lions and bears, and this uncircumcised Philistine will fare no

better than they; he has defied the ranks of the living God.

³⁷The LORD who saved me from the lion and the bear will save me from this Philistine. Go then, said Saul; and the LORD be with you.

³⁸He put his own tunic on David, placed a bronze helmet on his head, and gave him a coat of mail to wear;

³⁹he then fastened his sword on David over his tunic. But David held back, because he had not tried them, and said to Saul, I cannot go with these, because I am not used to them. David took them off,

⁴⁰then picked up his stick, chose five smooth stones from the wadi, and put them in a shepherd's bag which served as his pouch, and, sling in hand, went to meet the Philistine.

⁴¹The Philistine, preceded by his shield-bearer, came on towards David.

⁴²He looked David up and down and had nothing but disdain for this lad with his ruddy cheeks and bright eyes.

⁴³He said to David, Am I a dog that you come out against me with sticks? He cursed him in the name of his god,

⁴⁴ and said, Come, I shall give your flesh to the birds and the beasts.

⁴⁵ David answered, You have come against me with sword and spear and dagger, but I come against you in the name of the LORD of Hosts, the God of the ranks of Israel which you have defied.

⁴⁶ The LORD will put you into my power this day; I shall strike you down and cut your head off and leave your carcass and the carcasses of the Philistines to the birds and the wild beasts; the whole world will know that there is a God in Israel.

⁴⁷ All those who are gathered here will see that the LORD saves without sword or spear; the battle is the LORD's, and he will put you all into our power.

⁴⁸ When the Philistine began moving closer to attack, David ran quickly to engage him.

⁴⁹ Reaching into his bag, he took out a stone, which he slung and struck the Philistine on the forehead. The stone sank into his head, and he fell prone on the ground.

⁵⁰ So with sling and stone David proved the victor; though he had no sword, he struck down the Philistine and gave him a mortal wound.

⁵¹ He ran up to the Philistine and stood over him; then, grasping his sword, he drew it out of the scabbard, dispatched him, and cut off his head. When the Philistines saw the fate of their champion, they turned and fled.

⁵² The men of Israel and Judah at once raised the war cry and closely pursued them all the way to Gath and up to the gates of Ekron. The road that runs to Shaaraim, Gath, and Ekron was strewn with their dead.

⁵³ On their return from the pursuit of the Philistines, the Israelites plundered their camp.

⁵⁴ David took Goliath's head and carried it to Jerusalem, but he put Goliath's weapons in his own tent.

⁵⁵ As Saul watched David go out to meet the Philistine, he said to Abner his commander-in-chief, That youth there, Abner, whose son is he? By your life, your majesty, replied Abner, I do not know.

⁵⁶The king said, Go and find out whose son the stripling is.

⁵⁷When David came back after killing the Philistine, Abner took him and presented him to Saul with the Philistine's head still in his hand.

⁵⁸Saul asked him, Whose son are you, young man? and David answered, I am the son of your servant Jesse of Bethlehem.

18¹ That same day, when Saul had finished talking with David, he kept him and would not let him return any more to his father's house, for he saw that Jonathan had given his heart to David and had grown to love him as himself.

² (18: 1)

³Jonathan and David made a solemn compact because each loved the other as dearly as himself.

⁴Jonathan stripped off the cloak and tunic he was wearing, and gave them to David, together with his sword, his bow, and his belt.

⁵David succeeded so well in every venture on which Saul sent him that he was given command of the fighting

forces, and his promotion pleased all ranks, even the officials round Saul.

⁶At the homecoming of the army and the return of David from slaying the Philistine, the women from all the cities and towns of Israel came out singing and dancing to meet King Saul, rejoicing with tambourines and three-stringed instruments.

⁷The women as they made merry sang to one another: Saul struck down thousands, but David tens of thousands.

⁸Saul was furious, and the words rankled. He said, They have ascribed to David tens of thousands and to me only thousands. What more can they do but make him king?

⁹From that time forward Saul kept a jealous eye on David.

¹⁰Next day an evil spirit from God seized on Saul. He fell into a frenzy in the house, and David played the lyre to him as he had done before. Saul had a spear in his hand,

¹¹and he hurled it at David, meaning to pin him to the wall; but twice David dodged aside.

¹²After this Saul was afraid of David, because he saw that the LORD had forsaken him and was with David.

¹³He therefore removed David from his household and appointed him to the command of a thousand men. David led his men into action,

¹⁴and succeeded in everything that he undertook, because the LORD was with him.

¹⁵When Saul saw how successful he was, he was more afraid of him than ever.

¹⁶But all Israel and Judah loved David because he took the field at their head.

¹⁷Saul said to David, Here is my elder daughter Merab; I shall give her to you in marriage, but in return you must serve me valiantly and fight the LORD's battles. For Saul meant David to meet his end not at his hands but at the hands of the Philistines.

¹⁸David answered Saul, Who am I and what are my father's people, my kinsfolk, in Israel, that I should become the king's son-in-law?

¹⁹However, when the time came for Saul's daughter Merab to be married to

David, she had already been given to Adriel of Meholah.

²⁰But Michal, Saul's other daughter, fell in love with David, and when Saul was told of this, he saw that it suited his plans.

²¹He said to himself, I will give her to him; let her be the bait that lures him to his death at the hands of the Philistines. So Saul proposed a second time to make David his son-in-law,

²²and ordered his courtiers to say to David privately, The king is well disposed to you and you are dear to us all; now is the time for you to marry into the king's family.

²³When they spoke in this way to David, he said to them, Do you think that marrying the king's daughter is a matter of so little consequence that a poor man of no account, like myself, can do it?

²⁴The courtiers reported what David had said,

²⁵and Saul replied, Tell David this: all the king wants as the bride-price is the foreskins of a hundred Philistines, by way of vengeance on his enemies. Saul

was counting on David's death at the hands of the Philistines.

²⁶The courtiers told David what Saul had said, and marriage with the king's daughter on these terms pleased him well. Before the appointed time,

²⁷David went out with his men and slew two hundred Philistines; he brought their foreskins and counted them out to the king in order to be accepted as his son-in-law. Saul then married his daughter Michal to David.

²⁸He saw clearly that the LORD was with David, and knew that Michal his daughter had fallen in love with him;

²⁹and he grew more and more afraid of David and was his enemy for the rest of his life.

³⁰The Philistine commanders continued to make forays, but whenever they took the field David had more success against them than all the rest of Saul's men, and he won a great name for himself.

19¹ SAUL incited Jonathan his son and all his household to kill David.

²But Jonathan was devoted to David and told him that his father Saul was seeking to kill him. Be on your guard

tomorrow morning, he said; conceal yourself, and remain in hiding.

³I shall come out and join my father in the open country where you are and speak to him about you, and if I discover anything I shall tell you.

⁴Jonathan spoke up for David to his father Saul and said to him, Sir, do not wrong your servant David; he has not wronged you; his achievements have all benefited you greatly.

⁵Did he not take his life in his hands when he killed the Philistine, and the LORD brought about a great victory for all Israel? You saw it and shared in the rejoicing. Why should you wrong an innocent man and put David to death without cause?

⁶Saul heeded Jonathan's plea and swore solemnly by the LORD that David should not be put to death.

⁷Jonathan called David and reported all this; then he brought him to Saul to be in attendance on the king as before.

⁸When hostilities broke out again and David advanced to the attack, he inflicted such a severe defeat on the Philistines that they fled before him.

⁹An evil spirit from the LORD came on Saul as he was sitting in the house with a spear in his hand; and David was playing on the lyre.

¹⁰Saul tried to pin David to the wall with the spear, but he dodged the king's thrust so that Saul drove the spear into the wall. David escaped and got safely away. That night

¹¹Saul sent servants to keep watch on David's house, intending to kill him in the morning. But David's wife Michal warned him to get away that night, or tomorrow, she said, you will be a dead man.

¹²She let David down through a window and he slipped away and escaped.

¹³Michal then took their household god and put it on the bed; at its head she laid a goat's-hair rug and covered it all with a cloak.

¹⁴When the men arrived to arrest David she told them he was ill.

¹⁵Saul, however, sent them back to see David for themselves. Bring him to me, bed and all, he ordered, so that I may kill him.

¹⁶When they came, there was the household god on the bed and the goat's-hair rug at its head.

¹⁷Saul said to Michal, Why have you played this trick on me and let my enemy get away? Michal answered, He said to me, Help me to escape or I shall kill you.

¹⁸Meanwhile David made good his escape, and coming to Samuel at Ramah, he described how Saul had treated him. He and Samuel went to Naioth and stayed there.

¹⁹When Saul was told that David was at Naioth,

²⁰he sent a party of men to seize him. But at the sight of the company of prophets in a frenzy, with Samuel standing at their head, the spirit of God came upon them and they fell into prophetic frenzy.

²¹When this was reported to Saul he sent another party; these also fell into a frenzy, and when he sent men a third time, they did the same.

²²Saul himself then set out for Ramah and came to the great cistern in Secu. He asked where Samuel and David were

and was told that they were at Naioth in Ramah.

²³On his way there the spirit of God came upon him too and he went on, in a prophetic frenzy as he went, till he came to Naioth in Ramah.

²⁴There he too stripped off his clothes and like the rest fell into a frenzy before Samuel and lay down naked all that day and throughout that night. That is the reason for the saying, Is Saul also among the prophets?

20¹David made his escape from Naioth in Ramah and came to Jonathan. What have I done? he asked. What is my offence? What wrong does your father think I have done, that he seeks my life?

²Jonathan answered, God forbid! There is no thought of putting you to death. I am sure my father will not do anything whatever without telling me. Why should my father hide such a thing from me? I cannot believe it!

³David said, I am ready to swear to it: your father has said to himself, Jonathan must not know this or he will resent it, because he knows that you have a high

regard for me. As the LORD lives, your life upon it, I am only a step away from death.

⁴ Jonathan said to David, What do you want me to do for you?

⁵ David answered, It is new moon tomorrow, and I am to dine with the king. But let me go and lie hidden in the fields until the third evening,

⁶ and if your father misses me, say, David asked me for leave to hurry off on a visit to his home in Bethlehem, for it is the annual sacrifice there for the whole family.

⁷ If he says, Good, it will be well for me; but if he flies into a rage, you will know that he is set on doing me harm.

⁸ My lord, keep faith with me; for you and I have entered into a solemn compact before the LORD. Kill me yourself if I am guilty, but do not let me fall into your father's hands.

⁹ God forbid! cried Jonathan. If I find my father set on doing you harm, I shall tell you.

¹⁰ David answered Jonathan, How will you let me know if he answers harshly?

¹¹ Jonathan said, Let us go into the fields, and so they went there together.

¹² Jonathan said, I promise you, David, in the sight of the LORD the God of Israel, this time tomorrow I shall sound my father for the third time and, if he is well disposed to you, I shall send and let you know.

¹³ If my father means mischief, may the LORD do the same to me and more, if I do not let you know and get you safely away. The LORD be with you as he has been with my father!

¹⁴ I know that as long as I live you will show me faithful friendship, as the LORD requires; and if I should die,

¹⁵ you will continue loyal to my family for ever. When the LORD rids the earth of all David's enemies,

¹⁶ may the LORD call him to account if he and his house are no longer my friends.

¹⁷ Jonathan pledged himself afresh to David because of his love for him, for he loved him as himself.

¹⁸ Jonathan said, Tomorrow is the new moon, and you will be missed when your place is empty.

¹⁹ So the day after tomorrow go down at nightfall to the place where you hid on the day when the affair started; stay by the mound there.

²⁰ I shall shoot three arrows towards it as though aiming at a target.

²¹ Then I shall send my boy to find the arrows. If I say to him, Look, the arrows are on this side of you; pick them up, then you can come out of hiding. You will be quite safe, I swear it, for there will be nothing amiss.

²² But if I say to him, Look, the arrows are on the other side of you, farther on, then the LORD has said that you must go;

²³ the LORD stands witness between us for ever to the pledges we have exchanged.

²⁴ David hid in the fields, and when the new moon came the king sat down to eat at mealtime.

²⁵ Saul took his customary seat by the wall, and Abner sat beside him; Jonathan too was present, but David's place was empty.

²⁶ That day Saul said nothing, for he thought that David was absent by some

chance, perhaps because he was ritually unclean.

²⁷ But on the second day, the day after the new moon, David's place was still empty, and Saul said to his son Jonathan, Why has the son of Jesse not come to the feast, either yesterday or today?

²⁸ Jonathan answered, David asked permission to go to Bethlehem.

²⁹ He asked my leave and said, Our family is holding a sacrifice in the town and my brother himself has told me to be there. Now, if you have any regard for me, let me slip away to see my brothers. That is why he has not come to the king's table.

³⁰ Saul's anger blazed up against Jonathan and he said, You son of a crooked and rebellious mother! I know perfectly well you have made a friend of the son of Jesse only to bring shame on yourself and dishonour on your mother.

³¹ But as long as Jesse's son remains alive on the earth, neither you nor your kingdom will be established. Send at once and fetch him; he deserves to die.

³² Jonathan answered his father, Deserves to die? Why? What has he done?

³³ At that, Saul picked up his spear and threatened to kill him; and Jonathan knew that his father was bent on David's death.

³⁴ He left the table in a rage and ate nothing on the second day of the festival; for he was indignant on David's behalf and because his father had humiliated him.

³⁵ Next morning Jonathan, accompanied by a young boy, went out into the fields to keep the appointment with David.

³⁶ He said to the boy, Run ahead and find the arrows I shoot. As the boy ran on, he shot the arrows over his head.

³⁷ When the boy reached the place where the arrows had fallen, Jonathan called out after him, Look, the arrows are beyond you.

³⁸ Hurry! Go quickly! Do not delay. The boy gathered up the arrows and brought them to his master;

³⁹ but only Jonathan and David knew what this meant; the boy knew nothing.

⁴⁰ Jonathan handed his weapons to the boy and told him to take them back to the town.

⁴¹ When the boy had gone, David got up from behind the mound and bowed humbly three times. Then they kissed one another and shed tears together, until David's grief was even greater than Jonathan's.

⁴² Jonathan said to David, Go in safety; we have pledged each other in the name of the LORD who is witness for ever between you and me and between your descendants and mine. David went off at once, while Jonathan returned to the town.

21 ¹ David made his way to Nob to the priest Ahimelech, who hurried out to meet him and asked, Why are you alone and unattended?

² David answered Ahimelech, I am under orders from the king: I was to let no one know about the mission on which he was sending me or what these orders were. When I took leave of my men I told them to meet me in such and such a place.

³ Now, what have you got by you? Let me have five loaves, or as many as you can find.

⁴ The priest answered David, I have no ordinary bread available. There is only the sacred bread; but have the young men kept themselves from women?

⁵ David answered the priest, Women have been denied us as hitherto when I have been on campaign, even an ordinary campaign, and the young men's bodies have remained holy; and how much more will they be holy today!

⁶ So, as there was no other bread there, the priest gave him the sacred bread, the Bread of the Presence, which had just been taken from the presence of the LORD to be replaced by freshly baked bread on the day that the old was removed.

⁷ One of Saul's servants happened to be there that day, detained before the LORD; his name was Doeg the Edomite, and he was the chief of Saul's herdsmen.

⁸ David said to Ahimelech, Have you a spear or sword here at hand? I have no sword or other weapon with me, because the king's business was urgent.

⁹The priest answered, There is the sword of Goliath the Philistine whom you slew in the valley of Elah; it is wrapped up in a cloak behind the ephod. If you want to take that, take it; there is no other weapon here. David said, There is no sword like it; give it to me.

¹⁰That day David went on his way, fleeing from Saul, and came to King Achish of Gath.

¹¹The servants of Achish said to him, Surely this is David, the king of his country, the man of whom they sang as they danced: Saul struck down thousands, but David tens of thousands.

¹²These comments were not lost on David, and he became very much afraid of King Achish of Gath.

¹³So he altered his behaviour in public and acted like a madman in front of them all, scrabbling on the double doors of the city gate and dribbling down his beard.

¹⁴Achish said to his servants, The man is insane! Why bring him to me?

¹⁵Am I short of madmen that you bring this one to plague me? Must I have this fellow in my house?

22¹ DAVID stole away from there and went to the cave of Adullam, and, when his brothers and all the members of his family heard where he was, they went down and joined him there.

² Everyone in any kind of distress or in debt or with a grievance gathered round him, about four hundred in number, and he became their chief.

³ From there David went to Mizpeh in Moab and said to the king of Moab, Let my father and mother come and take shelter with you until I know what God will do for me.

⁴ He left them at the court of the king of Moab, and they stayed there as long as David remained in his stronghold.

⁵ The prophet Gad said to David, You must not stay in your stronghold; go at once into Judah. David went as far as the forest of Hareth.

⁶ News that the whereabouts of David and his men was known reached Saul while he was in Gibeah, sitting under the tamarisk tree on the hilltop with his spear in his hand and all his retainers standing about him.

⁷ He said to them, Listen to me, you Benjamites: do you expect the son of Jesse to give you all fields and vineyards, or make you all officers over units of a thousand and a hundred?

⁸ Is that why you have all conspired against me? Not one of you told me when my son made a compact with the son of Jesse; none of you spared a thought for me or told me that my son had set against me my own servant, who is lying in wait for me now.

⁹ Doeg the Edomite, who was standing with Saul's servants, spoke up: I saw the son of Jesse coming to Nob, to Ahimelech son of Ahitub.

¹⁰ Ahimelech consulted the LORD on his behalf, then gave him food and handed over to him the sword of Goliath the Philistine.

¹¹ The king sent for Ahimelech the priest and his whole family, who were priests at Nob, and they all came to him.

¹² Saul said, Now listen, you son of Ahitub, and the man answered, Yes, my lord?

¹³ Saul said to him, Why have you and the son of Jesse plotted against me?

You gave him food and a sword, and consulted God on his behalf; and now he has risen against me and is at this moment lying in wait for me.

¹⁴And who among all your servants, answered Ahimelech, is like David, a man to be trusted, the king's son-in-law, appointed to your staff and holding an honourable place in your household?

¹⁵Have I on this occasion done something profane in consulting God on his behalf? God forbid! I trust that my lord the king will not accuse me or my family; for I know nothing whatever about it.

¹⁶But the king said, Ahimelech, you shall die, you and all your family.

¹⁷He then said to the bodyguard attending him, Turn on the priests of the LORD and kill them; for they are in league with David, and, though they knew that he was a fugitive, they did not inform me. The king's men, however, were unwilling to raise a hand against the priests of the LORD.

¹⁸The king therefore said to Doeg the Edomite, You, Doeg, go and fall on the priests; so Doeg went and fell upon the

priests, killing that day with his own hand eighty-five men who wore the linen ephod.

¹⁹He put to the sword every living thing in Nob, the town of the priests: men and women, children and babes in arms, oxen, donkeys, and sheep.

²⁰One of Ahimelech's sons named Abiathar made his escape and joined David.

²¹He told David how Saul had killed the priests of the LORD,

²²and David said to him, When Doeg the Edomite was there that day, I knew that he would certainly tell Saul. I have brought this on all the members of your father's house.

²³Stay here with me, have no fear; he who seeks your life seeks mine, and you will be safe with me.

23¹The Philistines had launched an assault on Keilah and were plundering the threshing-floors. When this was reported to David,

²he consulted the LORD and asked whether he should go and attack these Philistines. The LORD answered, Go, attack them, and relieve Keilah.

³But David's men said to him, Here in Judah we are afraid. How much worse if we challenge the Philistine forces at Keilah!

⁴David consulted the LORD once again and got the answer, Go down at once to Keilah; I shall give the Philistines into your hands.

⁵David and his men marched to Keilah, fought the Philistines, and carried off their livestock; they inflicted a heavy defeat on them and relieved the inhabitants of Keilah.

⁶When Abiathar son of Ahimelech fled and joined David at Keilah, he brought an ephod with him.

⁷It was reported to Saul that David had entered Keilah, and he said, God has put him into my hands; for he has walked into a trap by entering a walled town with its barred gates.

⁸He called out all the army to march on Keilah and besiege David and his men.

⁹When David learnt how Saul planned his overthrow, he told Abiathar the priest to bring the ephod,

¹⁰and then he prayed, LORD God of Israel, I your servant have heard that

Saul intends to come to Keilah and destroy the town because of me.

¹¹ Will the townspeople of Keilah surrender me to him? Will Saul come down as I have heard? LORD God of Israel, I pray you, tell your servant. The LORD answered, He will come.

¹² David asked, Will the citizens of Keilah surrender me and my men to Saul? and the LORD answered, They will.

¹³ At once David left Keilah with his men, who numbered about six hundred, and moved about from place to place. When it was reported to Saul that David had escaped from Keilah, he called off the operation.

¹⁴ David was living in the fastnesses of the wilderness of Ziph, in the hill-country, and though Saul went daily in search of him, God did not put him into his power.

¹⁵ David was at Horesh in the wilderness of Ziph, when he learnt that Saul had come out to seek his life.

¹⁶ Saul's son Jonathan came to David at Horesh and gave him fresh courage in God's name:

¹⁷ Do not be afraid, he said; my father's hand will not touch you. You will become

king of Israel and I shall rank after you. This my father knows.

¹⁸After the two of them had made a solemn compact before the LORD, David remained in Horesh and Jonathan went home.

¹⁹The Ziphites brought to Saul at Gibeah the news that David was in hiding among them in the fastnesses of Horesh on the hill of Hachilah, south of Jeshimon.

²⁰Let your majesty come down whenever you will, they said, and it will be our business to surrender him to you.

²¹Saul replied, The LORD's blessing on you; you have rendered me a service.

²²Go now and make further enquiry, and find out exactly where he is and who saw him there. They tell me that he is crafty enough to outwit me.

²³Find out which of his hiding-places he is using; then come back to me at such and such a place, and I shall go with you. So long as he stays in this country, I shall hunt him down, if I have to go through all the clans of Judah one by one.

²⁴They left for Ziph without delay, ahead of Saul. David and his men were in the wilderness of Maon in the Arabah to the south of Jeshimon.

²⁵Saul set off with his men to look for him; but David got word of it and went down to a refuge in the rocks, and there he stayed in the wilderness of Maon. On hearing this, Saul went into the wilderness after him;

²⁶he was on one side of the hill, David and his men on the other. While David and his men were trying desperately to get away, and Saul and his followers were closing in for the capture,

²⁷a runner brought a message to Saul: Come at once! The Philistines are invading the land.

²⁸Saul called off the pursuit of David and turned back to face the Philistines. This is why that place is called the Dividing Rock.

²⁹David went up from there and lived in the fastnesses of En-gedi.

24¹ On his return from the pursuit of the Philistines, Saul learnt that David was in the wilderness of En-gedi.

²Taking three thousand men picked from the whole of Israel, he went in search of David and his followers to the east of the Rocks of the Mountain Goats.

³There beside the road were some sheepfolds, and nearby was a cave, in the inner recesses of which David and his men were concealed. Saul came to the cave and went in to relieve himself.

⁴David's men said to him, The day has come: the LORD has put your enemy into your hands, as he promised he would. You may do what you please with him. David said to his men, God forbid that I should harm my master, the LORD's anointed, or lift a hand against him. He is after all the LORD's anointed. So David reproved his men and would not allow them to attack Saul. He himself got up stealthily and cut off a piece of Saul's cloak; but after he had cut it off, he was struck with remorse. Saul left the cave and went on his way;

⁵(24: 4)

⁶(24: 4)

⁷(24: 4)

⁸whereupon David also came out of the cave and called after Saul, My lord

king! When Saul looked round, David prostrated himself in obeisance

⁹and said to him, Why do you listen to those who say that David means to do you harm?

¹⁰Today you can see for yourself that the LORD put you into my power in the cave. Though urged to kill you, I spared your life. I cannot lift my hand against my master, I said, for he is the LORD's anointed.

¹¹Look, my dear lord, see this piece of your cloak in my hand. I cut it off, but I did not kill you. This shows that I have no thought of violence or treachery against you, and that I have done you no wrong. Yet you are resolved to take my life.

¹²May the LORD judge between us! But though he may take vengeance on you for my sake, my hand will not be against you.

¹³As the old proverb has it, One wrong begets another; yet my hand will not be against you.

¹⁴Against whom has the king of Israel come out? What are you pursuing? A dead dog? A flea?

¹⁵ May the LORD be judge and decide between us; let him consider my cause; he will plead for me and acquit me.

¹⁶ When David had finished speaking, Saul said, Is that you, David my son? and he burst into tears.

¹⁷ He said, The right is on your side, not mine: you have treated me so well; I have treated you so badly.

¹⁸ You have made plain today the good you have done me; the LORD put me at your mercy, but you did not kill me.

¹⁹ Not often does a man find his enemy and let him go unharmed. May the LORD reward you well for what you have done for me today!

²⁰ I know now that you will surely become king, and that the kingdom of Israel will flourish under your rule.

²¹ Swear to me now by the LORD that you will not exterminate my descendants and blot out my name from my father's house.

²² David swore this on oath to Saul. Then Saul went to his home, while David and his men went up to their fastness.

25 ¹ SAMUEL died, and all Israel gathered to mourn for him, and

they buried him at his home in Ramah. Afterwards David went down to the wilderness of Paran.

²There was a man in Maon who had property at Carmel and owned three thousand sheep and a thousand goats; and he was shearing his flocks in Carmel.

³His name was Nabal and his wife's name Abigail; she was a beautiful and intelligent woman, but her husband, a Calebite, was surly and mean.

⁴David heard in the wilderness that Nabal was shearing his flocks,

⁵and sent ten of his young men, saying to them, Go up to Carmel, find Nabal, and give him my greetings.

⁶You are to say, All good wishes for the year ahead! Prosperity to yourself, your household, and all that is yours!

⁷I hear that you are shearing. Your shepherds have been with us lately and we did not molest them; nothing of theirs was missing all the time they were in Carmel.

⁸Ask your own men and they will tell you. Receive my men kindly, for this is an auspicious day with us, and give

what you can to David your son and your servant.

⁹David's servants came and delivered this message to Nabal in David's name. When they paused,

¹⁰Nabal answered, Who is David? Who is this son of Jesse? In these days there are many slaves who break away from their masters.

¹¹Am I to take my food and my wine and the meat I have provided for my shearers, and give it to men who come from I know not where?

¹²David's servants turned and made their way back to him and told him all this.

¹³He said to his followers, Buckle on your swords, all of you. So they buckled on their swords, as did David, and they followed him, four hundred of them, while two hundred stayed behind with the baggage.

¹⁴One of Nabal's servants said to Abigail, Nabal's wife, David sent messengers from the wilderness to ask our master politely for a present, and he flared up at them.

¹⁵The men have been very good to us and have not molested us, nor did we miss anything all the time we were going about with them in the open country.

¹⁶They were as good as a wall round us, night and day, while we were minding the flocks.

¹⁷Consider carefully what you had better do, for it is certain ruin for our master and his whole house; he is such a wretched fellow that it is no good talking to him.

¹⁸Abigail hastily collected two hundred loaves and two skins of wine, five sheep ready dressed, five measures of roasted grain, a hundred bunches of raisins, and two hundred cakes of dried figs, and loaded them on donkeys,

¹⁹but told her husband nothing about it. She said to her servants, Go on ahead, I shall follow you.

²⁰As she made her way on her donkey, hidden by the hill, there were David and his men coming down towards her, and she met them.

²¹David had said, It was a waste of time to protect this fellow's property in the wilderness so well that nothing of his

was missing. He has repaid me evil for good.

²²David swore a solemn oath: God do the same to me and more if I leave him a single mother's son alive by morning!

²³When Abigail saw David she dismounted in haste and prostrated herself before him, bowing low to the ground

²⁴at his feet, and said, Let me take the blame, my lord, but allow your humble servant to speak out, and let my lord give me a hearing.

²⁵How can you take any notice of this wretched fellow? He is just what his name Nabal means: Churl is his name, and churlish his behaviour. Sir, I did not myself see the men you sent.

²⁶And now, sir, the LORD has restrained you from starting a blood feud and from striking a blow for yourself. As the LORD lives, your life upon it, your enemies and all who want to see you ruined will be like Nabal.

²⁷Here is the present which I, your humble servant, have brought; give it to the young men under your command.

²⁸Forgive me, my lord, if I am presuming; for the LORD will establish your family for ever, because you have fought his battles. No calamity will overtake you as long as you live.

²⁹If anyone tries to pursue you and take your life, the LORD your God will wrap your life up and put it with his own treasure, but the lives of your enemies he will hurl away like stones from a sling.

³⁰When the LORD has made good all his promises to you, and has made you ruler of Israel,

³¹there will be no reason why you should stumble or your courage should falter because you have shed innocent blood or struck a blow for yourself. Then when the LORD makes all you do prosper, remember me, your servant.

³²David said to Abigail, Blessed be the LORD the God of Israel who today has sent you to meet me.

³³A blessing on your good sense, a blessing on you because you have saved me today from the guilt of bloodshed and from striking a blow for myself.

³⁴For I swear by the life of the LORD the God of Israel who has kept me from

doing you wrong: if you had not come at once to meet me, not a man of Nabal's household, not a single mother's son, would have been left alive by morning.

³⁵Then David accepted from her what she had brought him and said, Go home in peace; I have listened to you and I grant your request.

³⁶On her return she found Nabal holding a right royal banquet in his house. He grew merry and became very drunk, so drunk that his wife said nothing at all to him till daybreak.

³⁷In the morning, when the wine had worn off, she told him everything, and he had a seizure and lay there like a log.

³⁸Some ten days later the LORD struck him and he died.

³⁹When David heard that Nabal was dead he said, Blessed be the LORD, who has himself punished Nabal for his insult, and has kept me his servant from doing wrong. The LORD has made Nabal's wrongdoing recoil on his own head. David then sent a message to Abigail proposing that she should become his wife.

⁴⁰His servants came to her at Carmel and said, David has sent us to fetch you to be his wife.

⁴¹She rose and prostrated herself with her face to the ground, and said, I am his slave to command; I would wash the feet of my lord's servants.

⁴²Abigail made her preparations with all speed and, with her five maids in attendance and accompanied by David's messengers, she set out on a donkey; and she became David's wife.

⁴³David had also married Ahinoam of Jezreel; both these women became his wives.

⁴⁴Saul meanwhile had given his daughter Michal, David's wife, to Palti son of Laish from Gallim.

26¹THE Ziphites came to Saul at Gibeah with the news that David was in hiding on the hill of Hachilah overlooking Jeshimon.

²Saul went down at once to the wilderness of Ziph, taking with him three thousand picked men, to search for David there.

³He encamped beside the road on the hill of Hachilah overlooking Jeshimon,

while David was still in the wilderness. As soon as David learnt that Saul had come to the wilderness in pursuit of him, ⁴he sent out scouts and found that Saul had reached such and such a place.

⁵He went at once to the place where Saul had pitched his camp, and observed where Saul and Abner son of Ner, the commander-in-chief, were lying. Saul lay within the lines with his troops encamped in a circle round him.

⁶David turned to Ahimelech the Hittite and Abishai son of Zeruah, Joab's brother, and said, Who will venture with me into the camp to Saul? Abishai answered, I will.

⁷David and Abishai entered the camp at night, and there was Saul lying asleep within the lines with his spear thrust into the ground beside his head. Abner and the army were asleep all around him.

⁸Abishai said to David, God has put your enemy into your power today. Let me strike him and pin him to the ground with one thrust of the spear. I shall not have to strike twice.

⁹David said to him, Do him no harm. Who has ever lifted his hand against the LORD's anointed and gone unpunished?

¹⁰As the LORD lives, David went on, the LORD will strike him down; either his time will come and he will die, or he will go down to battle and meet his end.

¹¹God forbid that I should lift my hand against the LORD's anointed! But now let us take the spear which is by his head, and the water-jar, and go.

¹²So David took the spear and the water-jar from beside Saul's head, and they left. The whole camp was asleep; no one saw him, no one knew anything, no one woke. A deep sleep sent by the LORD had fallen on them.

¹³Then David crossed over to the other side and stood on the top of a hill at some distance; there was a wide stretch between them.

¹⁴David shouted across to the army and hailed Abner son of Ner, Answer me, Abner! He answered, Who are you to shout to the king?

¹⁵David said to Abner, Do you call yourself a man? Is there anyone like you in Israel? Why, then, did you not keep

watch over your lord the king, when someone came to harm your lord the king?

¹⁶This was not well done. As the LORD lives, you deserve to die, all of you, because you have not kept watch over your master the LORD's anointed. Look! Where are the king's spear and the water-jar that were by his head?

¹⁷Saul recognized David's voice and said, Is that you, David my son? Yes, your majesty, it is, said David.

¹⁸Why must my lord pursue me? What have I done? What mischief am I plotting?

¹⁹Listen, my lord king, to what I have to say. If it is the LORD who has set you against me, may an offering be acceptable to him; but if it is mortals, a curse on them in the LORD's name! For they have ousted me today from my share in the LORD's possession and have banished me to serve other gods!

²⁰Do not let my blood be shed on foreign soil, far from the presence of the LORD, just because the king of Israel came out to look for a flea, as one might hunt a partridge over the hills.

²¹ Saul said, I have done wrong; come back, David my son. You have held my life precious this day, and I will never harm you again. I have been a fool, I have been sadly in the wrong.

²² David answered, Here is the king's spear; let one of your men come across and fetch it.

²³ The LORD who rewards uprightness and loyalty will reward the man into whose power he put you today, for I refused to lift my hand against the LORD's anointed.

²⁴ As I held your life precious today, so may the LORD hold mine precious and deliver me from every distress.

²⁵ Saul said to David, A blessing on you, David my son! You will do great things and be triumphant. With that David went on his way and Saul returned home.

27 ¹ DAVID thought to himself, One of these days I shall be killed by Saul. The best thing for me to do will be to escape into Philistine territory; then Saul will give up all further hope of finding me anywhere in Israel, search as he may, and I shall escape his clutches.

² So David and his six hundred men set out and crossed the frontier to Achish son of Maach, king of Gath.

³ David settled in Gath with Achish, taking with him his men and their families and his two wives, Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail of Carmel, Nabal's widow.

⁴ Saul was told that David had escaped to Gath, and he abandoned the search.

⁵ David said to Achish, If I stand well in your opinion, grant me a place in one of your country towns where I may settle. Why should I remain in the royal city with your majesty?

⁶ Achish granted him Ziklag on that day: that is why Ziklag still belongs to the kings of Judah.

⁷ David spent a year and four months in Philistine country.

⁸ He and his men would sally out and raid the Geshurites, the Gizrites, and the Amalekites, for it was they who inhabited the country from Telaim all the way to Shur and Egypt.

⁹ When David raided any territory he left no one alive, man or woman; he took flocks and herds, donkeys and camels,

and clothes too, and then came back again to Achish.

¹⁰Achish would ask, Where was your raid today? and David would answer, The Negeb of Judah or The Negeb of the Jerahmeelites or The Negeb of the Kenites.

¹¹He let neither man nor woman survive to be brought back to Gath, for fear that they might denounce him and his men for what they had done. This was his practice as long as he remained with the Philistines.

¹²Achish trusted him, thinking that David had made himself so obnoxious among his own people the Israelites that he would remain his vassal all his life.

28¹AT that time the Philistines mustered their army for an attack on Israel, and Achish said to David, You know that you and your men must take the field with me.

²David answered, Good, you will learn what your servant can do. Achish said, I will make you my bodyguard for life.

³By this time Samuel was dead, and all Israel had mourned for him and buried him in Ramah, his own town; and Saul

had banished from the land all who trafficked with ghosts and spirits.

⁴The Philistines mustered and encamped at Shunem, and Saul mustered all the Israelites and encamped at Gilboa.

⁵At the sight of the Philistine forces, Saul was afraid, indeed struck to the heart by terror.

⁶He enquired of the LORD, but the LORD did not answer him, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets.

⁷So he said to his servants, Find a woman who has a familiar spirit, and I will go and enquire through her. They told him that there was such a woman at En-dor.

⁸Saul put on different clothes and went in disguise with two of his men. He came to the woman by night and said, Tell me my fortune by consulting the dead, and call up the man I name to you.

⁹The woman answered, Surely you know what Saul has done, how he has made away with those who call up ghosts and spirits; why do you press me to do what will lead to my death?

¹⁰Saul swore her an oath: As the LORD lives, no harm shall come to you for this.

¹¹The woman asked whom she should call up, and Saul answered, Samuel.

¹²When the woman saw Samuel appear, she shrieked and said to Saul, Why have you deceived me? You are Saul!

¹³The king said to her, Do not be afraid. What do you see? The woman answered, I see a ghostly form coming up from the earth.

¹⁴What is it like? he asked; she answered, Like an old man coming up, wrapped in a cloak. Then Saul knew it was Samuel, and he bowed low with his face to the ground, and prostrated himself.

¹⁵Samuel said to Saul, Why have you disturbed me and raised me? Saul answered, I am in great trouble; the Philistines are waging war against me, and God has turned away; he no longer answers me through prophets or through dreams, and I have summoned you to tell me what I should do.

¹⁶Samuel said, Why do you ask me, now that the LORD has turned from you and become your adversary?

¹⁷ He has done what he foretold through me. He has wrested the kingdom from your hand and given it to another, to David.

¹⁸ You have not obeyed the LORD, or executed the judgement of his fierce anger against the Amalekites; that is why he has done this to you today.

¹⁹ For the same reason the LORD will let your people Israel fall along with you into the hands of the Philistines. What is more, tomorrow you and your sons will be with me. I tell you again: the LORD will give the Israelite army into the power of the Philistines.

²⁰ Saul was overcome, and terrified by Samuel's words he fell full length to the ground. He had no strength left, for he had eaten nothing all day and all night.

²¹ The woman went to Saul and, seeing how deeply shaken he was, she said, I listened to what you said and I risked my life to obey you.

²² Now listen to me: let me set before you a little food to give you strength for your journey.

²³ He refused to eat anything, but when his servants joined the woman in

pressing him, he yielded, rose from the ground, and sat on the couch.

²⁴The woman had a fattened calf at home, which she quickly slaughtered; she also took some meal, kneaded it, and baked unleavened loaves.

²⁵She set the food before Saul and his servants, and when they had eaten they set off that same night.

29¹The Philistines mustered their entire army at Aphek; the Israelites encamped at En-harod in Jezreel.

²While the Philistine lords were advancing with their troops in units of a hundred and a thousand, David and his men were in the rear of the column with Achish.

³The Philistine commanders asked, What are those Hebrews doing here? Achish answered, This is David, the servant of King Saul of Israel who has been with me now for a year or more. Ever since he came over to me I have had no fault to find with him.

⁴The commanders were indignant and said, Send the man back to the place you allotted to him. He must not fight

side by side with us, for he may turn traitor in the battle. What better way to buy his master's favour, than at the price of our lives?

⁵This is that David of whom they sang, as they danced: Saul struck down thousands, but David tens of thousands.

⁶Achish summoned David and said to him, As the LORD lives, you are an upright man and your service on my campaigns has well satisfied me. I have had no fault to find with you ever since you joined me, but the lords are not willing to accept you.

⁷Now go home in peace, and you will then be doing nothing that they can regard as wrong.

⁸David protested, What have I done, or what fault have you found in me from the day I first entered your service till now, that I should not come and fight against the enemies of my lord the king?

⁹Achish answered, I agree that you have been as true to me as an angel of God, but the Philistine commanders insist that you are not to fight alongside them.

¹⁰ Now rise early tomorrow with those of your lord's subjects who have followed you, and go to the town which I allotted to you; harbour no resentment, for I am well satisfied with you. Be up early and start as soon as it is light.

¹¹ So in the morning David and his men made an early start to go back to the land of the Philistines, while the Philistines went on to Jezreel.

30¹ On the third day David and his men reached Ziklag. In the mean time the Amalekites had made a raid into the Negeb, attacked Ziklag, and set it on fire.

² They had taken captive all the women, young and old. They did not put any to death, but carried them off as they continued their march.

³ When David and his men came to the town, they found it destroyed by fire, and their wives, their sons, and their daughters taken captive.

⁴ David and the people with him wept aloud until they could weep no more.

⁵ David's two wives, Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail widow of Nabal of Carmel, were among the captives.

⁶David was in a desperate position because the troops, embittered by the loss of their sons and daughters, threatened to stone him. David sought strength in the LORD his God,

⁷and told Abiathar the priest, son of Ahimelech, to bring the ephod. When Abiathar had brought the ephod,

⁸David enquired of the LORD, Shall I pursue these raiders? And shall I overtake them? The answer came, Pursue them: you will overtake them and rescue everyone.

⁹David and his six hundred men set out and reached the wadi of Besor.

¹⁰Two hundred of them who were too exhausted to cross the wadi stayed behind, and David with four hundred pressed on in pursuit.

¹¹In the open country they came across an Egyptian and took him to David. They gave him food to eat and water to drink,

¹²also a lump of dried figs and two bunches of raisins. When he had eaten he revived; for he had had nothing to eat or drink for three days and nights.

¹³David asked him, Whose slave are you, and where have you come from? I

am an Egyptian, he answered, the slave of an Amalekite, but my master left me behind because three days ago I fell ill.

¹⁴We had raided the Negeb of the Kerethites, part of Judah, and the Negeb of Caleb; we also burned down Ziklag.

¹⁵David asked, Can you guide me to the raiders? Swear to me by God, he answered, that you will not put me to death or hand me back to my master, and I shall guide you to them.

¹⁶He led him down, and there they found the Amalekites scattered everywhere, eating and drinking and celebrating the great mass of spoil taken from the Philistine and Judaeen territories.

¹⁷David attacked from dawn to dusk and continued till next day; only four hundred young men mounted on camels got away.

¹⁸David rescued all those whom the Amalekites had taken captive, including his two wives.

¹⁹No one was missing, young or old, sons or daughters, nor was any of the spoil missing, anything they had

seized for themselves: David recovered everything.

²⁰They took all the flocks and herds, drove the cattle before him and said, This is David's spoil.

²¹When David returned to the two hundred men who had been too exhausted to follow him and whom he had left behind at the wadi of Besor, they came forward to meet him and his men. David greeted them all, enquiring how things were with them.

²²But some of those who had gone with David, rogues and scoundrels, broke in and said, These men did not go with us; we will not allot them any of the spoil that we have recaptured, except that each of them may take his wife and children and go.

²³That, said David, you must not do, considering what the LORD has given us, and how he has kept us safe and given the raiding party into our hands.

²⁴Who could agree with what you propose? Those who stayed with the stores are to have the same share as those who went into battle. All must share and share alike.

²⁵From that time onwards, this has been the established custom in Israel down to this day.

²⁶When David reached Ziklag, he sent some of the spoil to the elders of Judah and to his friends, with this message: This is a present for you out of the spoil taken from the LORD's enemies.

²⁷He sent to those in Bethuel, in Ramoth-negeb, in Jattir,

²⁸in Ararah, in Siphmoth, in Eshtemoa,

²⁹in Rachal, in the cities of the Jerahmeelites, in the towns of the Kenites,

³⁰in Hormah, in Borashan, in Athak,

³¹in Hebron, and in all the places over which he and his men had ranged.

31 ¹The Philistines engaged Israel in battle, and the Israelites were routed, leaving their dead on Mount Gilboa.

²The Philistines closely pursued Saul and his sons, and Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malchishua, the sons of Saul, were killed.

³The battle went hard for Saul, and when the archers caught up with him they wounded him severely.

⁴ He said to his armour-bearer, Draw your sword and run me through, so that these uncircumcised brutes may not come and taunt me and make sport of me. But the armour-bearer refused; he dared not do it. Thereupon Saul took his own sword and fell on it.

⁵ When the armour-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he too fell on his sword and died with him.

⁶ So they died together on that day, Saul, his three sons, and his armour-bearer, as well as all his men.

⁷ When the Israelites in the neighbourhood of the valley and of the Jordan saw that the other Israelites had fled and that Saul and his sons had perished, they fled likewise, abandoning their towns; and the Philistines moved in and occupied them.

⁸ Next day, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, they found Saul and his three sons lying dead on Mount Gilboa.

⁹ They cut off his head and stripped him of his armour; then they sent messengers through the length and breadth of their land to carry the good news to idols and people alike.

¹⁰They deposited his armour in the temple of Ashtoreth and nailed his body on the wall of Beth-shan.

¹¹When the inhabitants of Jabesh-gilead heard what the Philistines had done to Saul,

¹²all the warriors among them set out and journeyed through the night to recover the bodies of Saul and his sons from the wall of Beth-shan. They brought them back to Jabesh and burned them;

¹³they took the bones and buried them under the tamarisk tree in Jabesh, and for seven days they fasted.

2 Samuel

1 ¹ AFTER Saul's death David returned from his victory over the Amalekites and spent two days in Ziklag.

² On the third day a man came from Saul's camp; his clothes were torn and there was dust on his head. Coming into David's presence he fell to the ground and did obeisance.

³ David asked him where he had come from, and he replied, I have escaped from the Israelite camp.

⁴ David said, What is the news? Tell me. The army has been driven from the field, he answered, many have fallen in battle, and Saul and Jonathan his son are dead.

⁵ David said to the young man who brought the news, How do you know that Saul and Jonathan are dead?

⁶ He answered, It so happened that I was on Mount Gilboa and saw Saul leaning on his spear with the chariots and horsemen closing in on him.

⁷ He turned and, seeing me, called to me. I said, What is it, sir?

⁸He asked me who I was, and I said, An Amalekite.

⁹He said to me, Come and stand over me and dispatch me. I still live, but the throes of death have seized me.

¹⁰So I stood over him and dealt him the death blow, for I knew that, stricken as he was, he could not live. Then I took the crown from his head and the armlet from his arm, and I have brought them here to you, my lord.

¹¹At that David and all the men with him took hold of their clothes and tore them.

¹²They mourned and wept, and they fasted till evening because Saul and Jonathan his son and the army of the LORD and the house of Israel had fallen in battle.

¹³David said to the young man who brought him the news, Where do you come from? and he answered, I am the son of an alien, an Amalekite.

¹⁴How is it, said David, that you were not afraid to raise your hand to kill the LORD's anointed?

¹⁵Summoning one of his own young men he ordered him to fall upon the

Amalekite. The young man struck him down and he died.

¹⁶David said, Your blood be on your own head; for out of your own mouth you condemned yourself by saying, I killed the LORD's anointed.

¹⁷David raised this lament over Saul and Jonathan his son;

¹⁸and he ordered that this dirge over them should be taught to the people of Judah. It was written down and may be found in the Book of Jashar:

¹⁹Israel, upon your heights your beauty lies slain! How are the warriors fallen!

²⁰Do not tell it in Gath or proclaim it in the streets of Ashkelon, in case the Philistine maidens rejoice, and the daughters of the uncircumcised exult.

²¹Hills of Gilboa, let no dew or rain fall on you, no showers on the uplands! For there the shields of the warriors lie tarnished, and the shield of Saul, no longer bright with oil.

²²The bow of Jonathan never held back from the breast of the foeman, from the blood of the slain; the sword of Saul never returned empty to the scabbard.

²³ Beloved and lovely were Saul and Jonathan; neither in life nor in death were they parted. They were swifter than eagles, stronger than lions.

²⁴ Daughters of Israel, weep for Saul, who clothed you in scarlet and rich embroideries, who spangled your attire with jewels of gold.

²⁵ How are the warriors fallen on the field of battle! Jonathan lies slain on your heights.

²⁶ I grieve for you, Jonathan my brother; you were most dear to me; your love for me was wonderful, surpassing the love of women.

²⁷ How are the warriors fallen, and their armour abandoned on the battlefield!

2¹ Afterwards David enquired of the LORD, Shall I go up into one of the towns of Judah? The LORD answered, Go. David asked, Where shall I go? and the answer was, To Hebron.

² So David went up there with his two wives, Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail widow of Nabal of Carmel.

³ David also brought the men who had joined him, with their families, and they

settled in Hebron and the neighbouring towns.

⁴The men of Judah came, and there they anointed David king over the house of Judah. It was reported to David that the men of Jabesh-gilead had buried Saul,

⁵and he sent them this message: The LORD bless you because you kept faith with Saul your lord and buried him.

⁶For this may the LORD keep faith and truth with you, and I for my part will show you favour too, because you have done this.

⁷Be strong, be valiant, now that Saul your lord is dead, and the people of Judah have anointed me to be king over them.

⁸Meanwhile Saul's commander-in-chief, Abner son of Ner, had taken Saul's son Ishbosheth, brought him across to Mahanaim,

⁹and made him king over Gilead, the Asherites, Jezreel, Ephraim, and Benjamin, and all Israel.

¹⁰Ishbosheth was forty years old when he became king over Israel, and he

reigned for two years. The tribe of Judah, however, followed David.

¹¹ David's rule over Judah in Hebron lasted seven and a half years.

¹² Abner son of Ner, with the troops of Saul's son Ishbosheth, marched out from Mahanaim to Gibeon,

¹³ and Joab son of Zeruiah marched out with David's troops from Hebron. They met at the pool of Gibeon and took up their positions, one force on one side of the pool and the other on the opposite side.

¹⁴ Abner said to Joab, Let the young men come forward and join in single combat before us. Joab agreed.

¹⁵ So they came up, one by one, and took their places, twelve for Benjamin and Ishbosheth and twelve from David's men.

¹⁶ Each man seized his opponent by the head and thrust his sword into his opponent's side; and thus they fell together. That is why that place, which lies in Gibeon, was called the Field of Blades.

¹⁷ There ensued a very hard-fought battle that day, and Abner and the

men of Israel were defeated by David's troops.

¹⁸All three sons of Zeruah were there, Joab, Abishai, and Asahel. Asahel, who was swift as a gazelle of the plains,

¹⁹chased after Abner, swerving to neither right nor left in his pursuit.

²⁰Abner glanced back and said, Is it you, Asahel? Asahel answered, It is.

²¹Abner said, Turn aside to right or left; tackle one of the young men and win his belt for yourself. But Asahel would not abandon the pursuit.

²²Abner again urged him to give it up. Why should I kill you? he said. How could I look Joab your brother in the face?

²³When he still refused to turn away, Abner struck him in the belly with a back-thrust of his spear so that the spear came out through his back, and he fell dead in his tracks. All who came to the place where Asahel lay dead stopped there.

²⁴But Joab and Abishai kept up the pursuit of Abner, until, at sunset, they reached the hill of Ammah, opposite Giah on the road leading to the pastures of Gibeon.

²⁵The Benjamites rallied to Abner and, forming themselves into a single group, took their stand on the top of a hill.

²⁶Abner called to Joab, Must the slaughter go on for ever? Can you not see the bitterness that will result? How long before you recall the troops from the pursuit of their kinsmen?

²⁷Joab answered, As God lives, if you had not spoken, they would not have given up the pursuit till morning.

²⁸Then Joab sounded the trumpet, and the troops all halted; they abandoned the pursuit of the Israelites, and the fighting ceased.

²⁹Abner and his men moved along the Arabah all that night, crossed the Jordan, and continued all morning till they reached Mahanaim.

³⁰After Joab returned from the pursuit of Abner, he mustered his troops and found that, besides Asahel, nineteen of David's men were missing.

³¹David's forces had routed the Benjamites and the followers of Abner, killing three hundred and sixty of them.

³²They took up Asahel and buried him in his father's tomb at Bethlehem. Joab

and his men marched all night, and as day broke they reached Hebron.

3¹ THE war between the house of Saul and the house of David was long drawn out, David growing steadily stronger while the house of Saul became weaker.

² Sons were born to David at Hebron. His eldest was Amnon, whose mother was Ahinoam from Jezreel;

³ his second Cileab, whose mother was Abigail widow of Nabal from Carmel; the third Absalom, whose mother was Maacah daughter of Talmai king of Geshur;

⁴ the fourth Adonijah, whose mother was Haggith; the fifth Shephatiah, whose mother was Abital;

⁵ and the sixth Ithream, whose mother was David's wife Eglah. These were born to David at Hebron.

⁶ As the war between the houses of Saul and David went on, Abner gradually strengthened his position in the house of Saul.

⁷ Now Saul had had a concubine named Rizpah daughter of Aiah. Ishbosheth

challenged Abner, Why have you slept with my father's concubine?

⁸Abner, angered by this, exclaimed, Do you take me for a Judahite dog? Up to now I have been loyal to the house of your father Saul, to his brothers and friends, and I have not betrayed you into David's hands; yet you choose this moment to charge me with an offence over a woman.

⁹But now, so help me God, I shall do all I can to bring about what the LORD swore to do for David:

¹⁰I shall set to work to overthrow the house of Saul and to establish David's throne over Israel and Judah from Dan to Beersheba.

¹¹Ishbosheth dared not say another word; he was too much afraid of Abner.

¹²Abner sent envoys on his own behalf to David with the message, Who is to control the land? Let us come to terms, and you will have my support in bringing the whole of Israel over to you.

¹³David's answer was: Good, I will come to terms with you, but on one condition: that you do not come into

my presence without bringing Saul's daughter Michal to me.

¹⁴David also sent messengers to Saul's son Ishbosheth with the demand: Hand over to me my wife Michal for whom I gave a hundred Philistine foreskins as the bride-price.

¹⁵Thereupon Ishbosheth sent and took her from her husband, Paltiel son of Laish.

¹⁶Her husband followed her as far as Bahurim, weeping all the way, until Abner ordered him back, and he went.

¹⁷Abner conferred with the elders of Israel: For some time past, he said, you have wanted David for your king.

¹⁸Now is the time to act, for this is the word of the LORD about David: By the hand of my servant David I shall deliver my people Israel from the Philistines and from all their enemies.

¹⁹Abner spoke also to the Benjamites and then went to report to David at Hebron all that the Israelites and the Benjamites had agreed.

²⁰When Abner, attended by twenty men, arrived, David gave a feast for him and his men.

²¹ Abner said to David, I shall now go and bring the whole of Israel over to your majesty. They will make a covenant with you, and you will be king over a realm after your own heart. David dismissed Abner, granting him safe conduct.

²² Just then David's men and Joab returned from a raid, bringing a great quantity of plunder with them. Abner, having been dismissed, was no longer with David in Hebron.

²³ Joab and the whole force with him were greeted on their arrival with the news that Abner son of Ner had been with the king and had departed under safe conduct.

²⁴ Joab went in to the king and said, What have you done? You have had Abner here with you. How could you let him go and get clean away?

²⁵ You know Abner son of Ner: his purpose in coming was to deceive you, to learn about your movements, and to find out everything you are doing.

²⁶ Leaving David's presence, Joab sent messengers after Abner, and they brought him back from the Pool of Sirah; but David knew nothing of this.

²⁷ On Abner's return to Hebron, Joab drew him aside in the gateway, as though to speak privately with him, and there, in revenge for his brother Asahel, he stabbed him in the belly, and he died.

²⁸ When David heard the news he said, In the sight of the LORD I and my kingdom are for ever innocent of the blood of Abner son of Ner.

²⁹ May it recoil on the head of Joab and on all his family! May the house of Joab never be free from running sore or foul disease, nor lack a son fit only to ply the distaff or doomed to die by the sword or beg his bread!

³⁰ Joab and Abishai his brother slew Abner because he had killed their brother Asahel in battle at Gibeon.

³¹ Then David ordered Joab and all the troops with him to tear their clothes, put on sackcloth, and mourn for Abner, and the king himself walked behind the bier.

³² They buried Abner in Hebron and the king wept aloud at the tomb, while all the people wept with him.

³³ The king made this lament for Abner: Must Abner die so base a death?

³⁴Your hands were not bound, your feet not fettered; you fell as one who falls at the hands of a criminal. The people all wept again for him.

³⁵They came to urge David to eat something; but it was still day and he took an oath, So help me God! I refuse to touch food of any kind before sunset.

³⁶The people noted this with approval; indeed, everything the king did pleased them all.

³⁷It was then known throughout Israel that the king had had no hand in the murder of Abner son of Ner.

³⁸The king said to his servants, You must know that a warrior, a great man, has fallen this day in Israel.

³⁹Anointed king though I am, I feel weak and powerless in face of these ruthless sons of Zeruah; they are too much for me. May the LORD requite the wrongdoer as his wrongdoing deserves.

4¹When Saul's son Ishbosheth heard that Abner had met his death in Hebron, his courage failed him, and all Israel was alarmed.

²Ishbosheth had two officers, who were captains of raiding parties, and whose

names were Baanah and Rechab; they were Benjamites, sons of Rimmon of Beeroth, Beeroth being reckoned part of Benjamin;

³but the Beerothites had sought refuge in Gittaim, where they have lived as aliens ever since.

⁴(Saul's son Jonathan had a son lame in both feet. He was five years old when word of the death of Saul and Jonathan came from Jezreel. His nurse had picked him up and fled, but as she hurried to get away he fell and was crippled. His name was Mephibosheth.)

⁵Rechab and Baanah, the sons of Rimmon of Beeroth, came to Ishbosheth's house in the heat of the day, while he was taking his midday rest.

⁶The door-keeper had been sifting wheat, but she had grown drowsy and fallen asleep, so Rechab and his brother Baanah slipped past,

⁷found their way to the room where Ishbosheth was asleep on the bed, and attacked and killed him. They cut off his head and took it with them and, making their way along the Arabah all night, came to Hebron.

⁸They brought Ishbosheth's head to David there and said to the king, Here is the head of Ishbosheth son of Saul, your enemy, who sought your life. The LORD has avenged your majesty today on Saul and on his family.

⁹David answered Rechab and his brother Baanah: As the LORD lives, who has delivered me from all my troubles,

¹⁰I seized the man who brought me word that Saul was dead and thought he was bringing good news; I killed him in Ziklag. That was how I rewarded him for his news!

¹¹How much more shall I reward wicked men who have killed an innocent man on his bed in his own house! Am I not to take vengeance on you now for the blood you have shed, and rid the earth of you?

¹²David gave the word, and the young men killed them; they cut off their hands and feet and hung them up beside the pool in Hebron; but the head of Ishbosheth they took and buried in Abner's tomb at Hebron.

5¹ALL the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said to him, We are your own flesh and blood.

²In the past, while Saul was still king over us, it was you that led the forces of Israel on their campaigns. To you the LORD said, You are to be shepherd of my people Israel; you are to be their prince.

³The elders of Israel all came to the king at Hebron; there David made a covenant with them before the LORD, and they anointed David king over Israel.

⁴David came to the throne at the age of thirty and reigned for forty years.

⁵In Hebron he had ruled over Judah for seven and a half years, and in Jerusalem he reigned over Israel and Judah combined for thirty-three years.

⁶The king and his men went to Jerusalem to attack the Jebusites, the inhabitants of that region. The Jebusites said to David, You will never come in here, not till you have disposed of the blind and the lame, stressing that David would never come in.

⁷None the less David did capture the stronghold of Zion, and it is now known as the City of David.

⁸On that day David had said, Everyone who is eager to attack the Jebusites, let him get up the water-shaft to reach

the lame and the blind, David's bitter enemies. That is why they say, No one who is blind or lame is to come into the LORD's house.

⁹David took up his residence in the stronghold and called it the City of David. He built up the city around it, starting at the Millo and working inwards.

¹⁰David steadily grew more and more powerful, for the LORD the God of Hosts was with him.

¹¹KING Hiram of Tyre sent envoys to David with cedar logs, and with them carpenters and stonemasons, who built David a house.

¹²David knew by now that the LORD had confirmed him as king over Israel and had enhanced his royal power for the sake of his people Israel.

¹³After he had moved from Hebron he took more concubines and wives in Jerusalem, and more sons and daughters were born to him.

¹⁴These are the names of the children born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon,

¹⁵Ibhar, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia,

¹⁶Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet.

¹⁷When the Philistines learnt that David had been anointed king over Israel, they came up in force to seek him out. David, getting wind of this, went down to the stronghold for refuge.

¹⁸When the Philistines had come and overrun the valley of Rephaim,

¹⁹David enquired of the LORD, 'If I attack the Philistines, will you deliver them into my hands?' The LORD answered, 'Go, I shall deliver the Philistines into your hands.'

²⁰He went and attacked and defeated them at Baal-perazim. The LORD has broken through my enemies' lines', David said, 'as a river breaks its banks. That is why the place was named Baal-perazim.'

²¹The Philistines abandoned their idols there, and David and his men carried them off.

²²The Philistines made another attack and overran the valley of Rephaim.

²³David enquired of the LORD, who said, 'Do not attack now but make a detour and come on them towards the rear opposite the aspens.'

²⁴As soon as you hear a rustling sound in the treetops, move at once; for then

the LORD will have gone out before you to defeat the Philistine army.

²⁵David did as the LORD had commanded, and drove the Philistines in flight all the way from Geba to Gezer.

6¹ David again summoned the picked men of Israel, thirty thousand in all,
²and went with the whole army that was then with him to Baalath-judah to fetch from there the Ark of God which bore the name of the LORD of Hosts, who is enthroned upon the cherubim.

³They mounted the Ark of God on a new cart and conveyed it from Abinadab's house on the hill, with Uzzah and Ahio, sons of Abinadab, guiding the cart.

⁴They led it with the Ark of God upon it from Abinadab's house on the hill, with Ahio walking in front.

⁵David and all Israel danced for joy before the LORD with all their might to the sound of singing, of lyres, lutes, tambourines, castanets, and cymbals.

⁶When they came to a certain threshing-floor, the oxen stumbled, and Uzzah reached out and held the Ark of God.

⁷The LORD was angry with Uzzah and struck him down for his imprudent action, and he died there beside the Ark of God.

⁸David was vexed because the LORD's anger had broken out on Uzzah, and he called the place Perez-uzzah, the name it still bears.

⁹David was afraid of the LORD that day and said, How can the Ark of the LORD come to me?

¹⁰He felt he could not take the Ark of the LORD with him to the City of David; he turned aside and carried it to the house of Obed-edom the Gittite.

¹¹The Ark of the LORD remained at Obed-edom's house for three months, and the LORD blessed Obed-edom and his whole household.

¹²When David was informed that the LORD had blessed Obed-edom's family and all that he possessed because of the Ark of God, he went and brought the Ark of God from the house of Obed-edom up to the City of David amid rejoicing.

¹³When the bearers of the Ark of the LORD had gone six steps he sacrificed a bull and a buffalo.

¹⁴He was wearing a linen ephod, and he danced with abandon before the LORD,

¹⁵as he and all the Israelites brought up the Ark of the LORD with acclamation and blowing of trumpets.

¹⁶As the Ark of the LORD was entering the City of David, Saul's daughter Michal looked down from a window and saw King David leaping and whirling before the LORD, and she despised him in her heart.

¹⁷After they had brought the Ark of the LORD, they put it in its place inside the tent that David had set up for it, and David offered whole-offerings and shared-offerings before the LORD.

¹⁸Having completed these sacrifices, David blessed the people in the name of the LORD of Hosts,

¹⁹and distributed food to them all, a flat loaf of bread, a portion of meat, and a cake of raisins, to every man and woman in the whole gathering of the Israelites. Then all the people went home.

²⁰David returned to greet his household, and Michal, Saul's daughter, came out to meet him. She said, What a glorious day for the king of Israel, when

he made an exhibition of himself in the sight of his servants slave-girls, as any vulgar clown might do!'

²¹ David answered her, But it was done in the presence of the LORD, who chose me instead of your father and his family and appointed me prince over Israel, the people of the LORD. Before the LORD I shall dance for joy, yes,

²² and I shall earn yet more disgrace and demean myself still more in your eyes; but those slave-girls of whom you speak, they will hold me in honour for it.

²³ To her dying day Michal, Saul's daughter, was childless.

7 ¹ Once the king was established in his palace and the LORD had given him security from his enemies on all sides,

² he said to Nathan the prophet, Here I am living in a house of cedar, while the Ark of God is housed in a tent.

³ Nathan answered, Do whatever you have in mind, for the LORD is with you.

⁴ But that same night the word of the LORD came to Nathan:

⁵ Go and say to David my servant, This is the word of the LORD: Are you to build me a house to dwell in?

⁶Down to this day I have never dwelt in a house since I brought Israel up from Egypt; I lived in a tent and a tabernacle.

⁷Wherever I journeyed with Israel, did I ever ask any of the judges whom I appointed shepherds of my people Israel why they had not built me a cedar house?

⁸Then say this to my servant David: This is the word of the LORD of Hosts: I took you from the pastures and from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel.

⁹I have been with you wherever you have gone, and have destroyed all the enemies in your path. I shall bring you fame like the fame of the great ones of the earth.

¹⁰I shall assign a place for my people Israel; there I shall plant them to dwell in their own land. They will be disturbed no more; never again will the wicked oppress them as they did in the past,

¹¹from the day when I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I shall give you peace from all your enemies. The LORD has told you that he would build up your royal house.

¹²When your life ends and you rest with your forefathers, I shall set up one of your family, one of your own children, to succeed you, and I shall establish his kingdom.

¹³It is he who is to build a house in honour of my name, and I shall establish his royal throne for all time.

¹⁴I shall be a father to him, and he will be my son. When he does wrong, I shall punish him as any father might, and not spare the rod.

¹⁵But my love will never be withdrawn from him as I withdrew it from Saul, whom I removed from your path.

¹⁶Your family and your kingdom will be established for ever in my sight; your throne will endure for all time.

¹⁷Nathan recounted to David all that had been said to him and all that had been revealed.

¹⁸Then King David went into the presence of the LORD and, taking his place there, said, Who am I, Lord GOD, and what is my family, that you have brought me thus far?

¹⁹It was a small thing in your sight, Lord GOD, to have planned for your servant's house in days long past.

²⁰What more can I say? Lord GOD, you yourself know your servant David.

²¹For the sake of your promise and in accordance with your purpose you have done all this great thing to reveal it to your servant.

²²Lord GOD, you are great. There is none like you; there is no God but you, as everything we have heard bears witness.

²³And your people Israel, to whom can they be compared? Is there any other nation on earth whom you, God, have set out to redeem from slavery to be your people? You have won renown for yourself by great and awesome deeds, driving out other nations and their gods to make way for your people whom you redeemed from Egypt.

²⁴You have established your people Israel as your own for ever, and you, LORD, have become their God.

²⁵Now, LORD God, perform for all time what you have promised for your servant

and his house; make good what you have promised.

²⁶May your fame be great for evermore, and let people say, The LORD of Hosts is God over Israel; and may the house of your servant David be established before you.

²⁷LORD of Hosts, God of Israel, you have shown me your purpose, in saying to your servant, I shall build up your house; and therefore I have made bold to offer this prayer to you.

²⁸Now, Lord GOD, you are God and your promises will come true; you have made these noble promises to your servant.

²⁹Be pleased now to bless your servant's house so that it may continue always before you; you, Lord GOD, have promised, and may your blessing rest on your servant's house for ever.

8¹After this David attacked and subdued the Philistines, and took from them Metheg-ha-ammah.

²He defeated the Moabites and made them lie along the ground, where he measured them off with a length of cord; for every two lengths that were to be

put to death one full length was spared. The Moabites became subject to him and paid tribute.

³David also defeated Hadadezer the Rehobite, king of Zobah, who was on his way to restore his monument of victory by the river Euphrates.

⁴From him David captured seventeen hundred horse and twenty thousand foot-soldiers; he hamstringed all the chariot-horses, except a hundred which he retained.

⁵When the Aramaeans of Damascus came to the aid of King Hadadezer of Zobah, David destroyed twenty-two thousand of them,

⁶and stationed garrisons among these Aramaeans; they became subject to him and paid tribute. Thus the LORD gave David victory wherever he went.

⁷David took the gold shields borne by Hadadezer's attendants and brought them to Jerusalem;

⁸he also removed from Hadadezer's cities, Betah and Berothai, a great quantity of bronze.

⁹When King Toi of Hamath heard that David had defeated Hadadezer's entire army,

¹⁰he sent his son Joram to King David to greet him and to congratulate him on his victory over Hadadezer, for Hadadezer had been at war with Toi; Joram brought with him vessels of silver, gold, and bronze.

¹¹These King David dedicated to the LORD, along with the silver and gold taken from all the nations he had subdued,

¹²from Edom and Moab, from the Ammonites, the Philistines, and Amalek, as well as part of the spoil taken from Hadadezer the Rehobite, king of Zobah.

¹³David made a great name for himself by the slaughter of eighteen thousand Edomites in the Valley of Salt.

¹⁴He stationed garrisons throughout Edom, and all the Edomites became subject to him. The LORD gave David victory wherever he went.

¹⁵David ruled over the whole of Israel and maintained law and justice among all his people.

¹⁶Joab son of Zeruiah was in command of the army; Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was secretary of state;

¹⁷Zadok and Abiathar son of Ahimelech, son of Ahitub, were priests; Seraiah was adjutant-general;

¹⁸Benaiah son of Jehoiada commanded the Kerethite and Pelethite guards. David's sons were priests.

9¹David enquired, Is any member of Saul's family left, to whom I can show kindness for Jonathan's sake?

²A servant of Saul's family named Ziba was summoned to David, who asked, Are you Ziba? He answered, Your servant, sir.

³The king asked, Is there any member of Saul's family still alive to whom I may show the kindness that God requires? Yes, said Ziba, there is still a son of Jonathan alive; he is a cripple, lame in both feet.

⁴Where is he? said the king, and Ziba answered, He is staying with Machir son of Ammiel in Lo-debar.

⁵The king had him fetched from Lodebar, from the house of Machir son of Ammiel,

⁶and when Mephibosheth, son of Jonathan and grandson of Saul, entered David's presence, he prostrated himself and did obeisance. David said to him, Mephibosheth! and he answered, Your servant, sir.

⁷Then David said, Do not be afraid; I mean to show you kindness for your father Jonathan's sake; I shall restore to you the whole estate of your grandfather Saul and you will have a regular place at my table.

⁸Mephibosheth prostrated himself again and said, Who am I that you should spare a thought for a dead dog like me?

⁹David summoned Saul's servant Ziba and said, I assign to your master's grandson all the property that belonged to Saul and his family.

¹⁰You and your sons and your slaves must cultivate the land and bring in the harvest to provide for your master's household, but Mephibosheth your master's grandson shall have a regular place at my table. Ziba, who had fifteen sons and twenty slaves,

¹¹ answered: I shall do all that your majesty commands. So Mephibosheth took his place in the royal household like one of the king's sons.

¹² He had a young son, named Mica; and the members of Ziba's household were all Mephibosheth's servants,

¹³ while Mephibosheth lived in Jerusalem and had his regular place at the king's table, crippled as he was in both feet.

10¹ SOME time afterwards the king of the Ammonites died and was succeeded by his son Hanun.

² David said, I must keep up the same loyal friendship with Hanun son of Nahash as his father showed me, and he sent a mission to condole with him on the death of his father. When David's envoys entered the country of the Ammonites,

³ the Ammonite princes said to Hanun their lord, Do you suppose David means to do honour to your father when he sends envoys to condole with you? These men of his are spies whom he has sent to find out how to overthrow the city.

⁴ So Hanun took David's servants, shaved off half their beards and cut off

half their garments up to the buttocks, and then dismissed them.

⁵Hearing how they had been treated, David ordered them to be met, for they were deeply humiliated; he told them to wait in Jericho and not return until their beards had grown again.

⁶The Ammonites, realizing they had given offence to David, hired the Aramaeans of Beth-rehob and of Zobah to come to their help with twenty thousand infantry; they hired also the king of Maacah with a thousand men, and twelve thousand men from Tob.

⁷When this was reported to David, he sent Joab out with all the fighting men.

⁸The Ammonites came on and took up their position at the entrance to the city gate, while the Aramaeans of Zobah and of Rehob and the men of Tob and Maacah took up theirs in the open country.

⁹When Joab saw that he was threatened from both front and rear, he detailed some picked Israelite troops and drew them up facing the Aramaeans.

¹⁰The rest of his forces he put under his brother Abishai, who took up a position facing the Ammonites.

¹¹ If the Aramaeans prove too strong for me, he said, you must come to my relief; and if the Ammonites prove too strong for you, I shall come to yours.

¹² Courage! Let us fight bravely for our people and for the cities of our God. And may the LORD's will be done.

¹³ Joab and his men engaged the Aramaeans closely and put them to flight;

¹⁴ and when the Ammonites saw them in flight, they too fled before Abishai and withdrew into the city. Then Joab returned from the battle against the Ammonites and came to Jerusalem.

¹⁵ The Aramaeans, reviewing their defeat by Israel, rallied their forces,

¹⁶ and Hadadezer sent to summon other Aramaeans from the Great Bend of the Euphrates, and they advanced to Helam under Shobach, commander of Hadadezer's army.

¹⁷ Their movement was reported to David, who immediately mustered all the forces of Israel, crossed the Jordan, and advanced to Helam. The Aramaeans took up positions facing David and engaged him,

¹⁸but were put to flight by Israel. David slew seven hundred Aramaeans in chariots and forty thousand horsemen, mortally wounding Shobach, who died on the field.

¹⁹When all the vassal kings of Hadadezer saw that they had been worsted by Israel, they sued for peace and submitted to the Israelites. The Aramaeans never dared to help the Ammonites again.

11 ¹AT the turn of the year, when kings go out to battle, David sent Joab out with his other officers and all the Israelite forces, and they ravaged Ammon and laid siege to Rabbah. David remained in Jerusalem,

²and one evening, as he got up from his couch and walked about on the roof of the palace, he saw from there a woman bathing, and she was very beautiful.

³He made enquiries about the woman and was told, It must be Bathsheba daughter of Eliam and wife of Uriah the Hittite.

⁴He sent messengers to fetch her, and when she came to him, he had intercourse with her, though she was still

purifying herself after her period, and then she went home.

⁵She conceived, and sent word to David that she was pregnant.

⁶David ordered Joab to send Uriah the Hittite to him. Joab did so,

⁷and when Uriah arrived, David asked him for news of Joab and the troops and how the campaign was going,

⁸and then said to him, Go down to your house and wash your feet after your journey. As he left the palace, a present from the king followed him.

⁹Uriah, however, did not return to his house; he lay down by the palace gate with all the king's servants.

¹⁰David, learning that Uriah had not gone home, said to him, You have had a long journey; why did you not go home?

¹¹Uriah answered, Israel and Judah are under canvas, and so is the Ark, and my lord Joab and your majesty's officers are camping in the open; how can I go home to eat and drink and to sleep with my wife? By your life, I cannot do this!

¹²David then said to Uriah, Stay here another day, and tomorrow I shall let

you go. So Uriah stayed in Jerusalem that day.

¹³On the following day David invited him to eat and drink with him and made him drunk. But in the evening Uriah went out to lie down in his blanket among the king's servants and did not go home.

¹⁴In the morning David wrote a letter to Joab and sent it with Uriah.

¹⁵In it he wrote, Put Uriah opposite the enemy where the fighting is fiercest and then fall back, and leave him to meet his death.

¹⁶So Joab, during the siege of the city, stationed Uriah at a point where he knew the enemy had expert troops.

¹⁷The men of the city sallied out and engaged Joab, and some of David's guards fell; Uriah the Hittite was also killed.

¹⁸Joab sent David a dispatch with all the news of the battle

¹⁹and gave the messenger these instructions: When you have finished your report to the king,

²⁰he may be angry and ask, Why did you go so near the city during the fight?

You must have known there would be shooting from the wall.

²¹ Remember who killed Abimelech son of Jerubbesheth. Was it not a woman who threw down an upper millstone on him from the wall of Thebez and killed him? Why did you go near the wall? -- if he asks this, then tell him, Your servant Uriah the Hittite also is dead.

²² The messenger set out and, when he came to David, he made his report as Joab had instructed him. David, angry with Joab, said to the messenger, Why did you go so near the city during the fight? You must have known you would be struck down from the wall. Remember who killed Abimelech son of Jerubbesheth. Was it not a woman who threw down an upper millstone on him from the wall of Thebez and killed him? Why did you go near the wall?

²³ He answered, The enemy massed against us and sallied out into the open; we drove them back as far as the gateway.

²⁴ There the archers shot down at us from the wall and some of your majesty's

men fell; and your servant Uriah the Hittite is dead.

²⁵David told the messenger to say this to Joab: Do not let the matter distress you -- there is no knowing where the sword will strike. Press home your attack on the city, take it, and raze it to the ground; and to tell him to take heart.

²⁶When Uriah's wife heard that her husband was dead, she mourned for him.

²⁷Once the period of mourning was over, David sent for her and brought her into the palace; she became his wife and bore him a son. But what David had done was wrong in the eyes of the LORD.

12¹The LORD sent Nathan the prophet to David, and when he entered the king's presence, he said, In a certain town there lived two men, one rich, the other poor.

²The rich man had large flocks and herds;

³the poor man had nothing of his own except one little ewe lamb he had bought. He reared it, and it grew up in his home together with his children. It shared his food, drank from his cup,

and nestled in his arms; it was like a daughter to him.

⁴One day a traveller came to the rich man's house, and he, too mean to take something from his own flock or herd to serve to his guest, took the poor man's lamb and served that up.

⁵David was very angry, and burst out, As the LORD lives, the man who did this deserves to die!

⁶He shall pay for the lamb four times over, because he has done this and shown no pity.

⁷Nathan said to David, You are the man! This is the word of the LORD the God of Israel to you: I anointed you king over Israel, I rescued you from the power of Saul,

⁸I gave you your master's daughter and his wives to be your own, I gave you the daughters of Israel and Judah; and, had this not been enough, I would have added other favours as well.

⁹Why then have you flouted the LORD's word by doing what is wrong in my eyes? You have struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword; the man himself you murdered by the sword of the

Ammonites, and you have stolen his wife.

¹⁰Now, therefore, since you have despised me and taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own wife, your family will never again have rest from the sword.

¹¹This is the word of the LORD: I shall bring trouble on you from within your own family. I shall take your wives and give them to another man before your eyes, and he will lie with them in broad daylight.

¹²What you did was done in secret; but I shall do this in broad daylight for all Israel to see.

¹³David said to Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. Nathan answered, The LORD has laid on another the consequences of your sin: you will not die,

¹⁴but, since by this deed you have shown your contempt for the LORD, the child who will be born to you shall die.

¹⁵After Nathan had gone home, the LORD struck the boy whom Uriah's wife had borne to David, and he became very ill.

¹⁶David prayed to God for the child; he fasted and went in and spent the nights lying in sackcloth on the ground.

¹⁷The older men of his household tried to get him to rise, but he refused and would eat no food with them.

¹⁸On the seventh day the child died, and David's servants were afraid to tell him. While the boy was alive, they said, we spoke to him, and he did not listen to us; how can we now tell him that the boy is dead? He may do something desperate.

¹⁹David saw his servants whispering among themselves and realized that the boy was dead. He asked, Is the child dead? and they answered, Yes, he is dead.

²⁰David then rose from the ground, bathed and anointed himself, and put on fresh clothes; he entered the house of the LORD and prostrated himself there. Afterwards he returned home; he ordered food to be brought and, when it was set before him, ate it.

²¹His servants asked him, What is this? While the boy lived you fasted and wept

for him, but now that he is dead you rise and eat.

²²While the boy was still alive, he answered, I fasted and wept, thinking, It may be that the LORD will be gracious to me, and the boy will live.

²³But now that he is dead, why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him; he will not come back to me.

²⁴David consoled Bathsheba his wife; he went to her and had intercourse with her, and she gave birth to a son and called him Solomon. And because the LORD loved him,

²⁵he sent word through Nathan the prophet that for the LORD's sake he should be given the name Jedidiah.

²⁶Joab attacked the Ammonite city of Rabbah and took the King's Pool.

²⁷He sent this report to David: I have attacked Rabbah and have taken the pool.

²⁸Now muster the rest of the army, besiege the city, and take it; otherwise I myself shall take the city and the name to be proclaimed over it will be mine.

²⁹David accordingly mustered his whole force, marched on Rabbah, and attacked and captured it.

³⁰The crown, which weighed a talent of gold and was set with a precious stone, was taken from the head of Milcom and placed on David's head; David also removed a vast quantity of booty from the city.

³¹He brought out its inhabitants and set them to work with saws and other iron tools, sharp and toothed, and made them labour at the brick-kilns. David did this to all the Ammonite towns; then he and all his army returned to Jerusalem.

13¹THE following occurred some time later. David's son Absalom had a beautiful sister named Tamar, and David's son Amnon fell in love with her.

²Amnon was so tormented that he became ill with love for his half-sister; for he thought it an impossible thing to approach her since she was a virgin.

³But Amnon had a friend, a very shrewd man named Jonadab, son of David's brother Shimeah,

⁴and he said to Amnon, Why are you, the king's son, so low-spirited morning

after morning? Will you not tell me? Amnon told him that he was in love with Tamar, his brother Absalom's sister.

⁵Jonadab said to him, Take to your bed and pretend to be ill. When your father comes to visit you, say to him, Please let my sister Tamar come and give me my food. Let her prepare it in front of me, so that I may watch her and then take it from her own hands.

⁶So Amnon lay down and pretended to be ill. When the king came to visit him, he said, Sir, let my sister Tamar come and make a few bread-cakes in front of me, and serve them to me with her own hands.

⁷David sent a message to Tamar in the palace: Go to your brother Amnon's quarters and prepare a meal for him.

⁸Tamar came to her brother and found him lying down. She took some dough, kneaded it, and made cakes in front of him; having baked them,

⁹she took the pan and turned them out before him. But Amnon refused to eat and ordered everyone out of the room. When they had all gone,

¹⁰he said to Tamar, Bring the food over to the recess so that I may eat from your own hands. Tamar took the cakes she had made and brought them to Amnon her brother in the recess.

¹¹When she offered them to him, he caught hold of her and said, Sister, come to bed with me.

¹²She answered, No, my brother, do not dishonour me. Such things are not done in Israel; do not behave so infamously.

¹³Where could I go and hide my disgrace? You would sink as low as the most infamous in Israel. Why not speak to the king for me? He will not refuse you leave to marry me.

¹⁴But he would not listen; he overpowered and raped her.

¹⁵Then Amnon was filled with intense revulsion; his revulsion for her was stronger than the love he had felt; he said to her, Get up and go.

¹⁶She answered, No, this great wrong, your sending me away, is worse than anything else you have done to me. He would not listen to her;

¹⁷he summoned the servant who attended him and said, Rid me of this

woman; put her out and bolt the door after her.

¹⁸The servant turned her out and bolted the door. She had on a long robe with sleeves, the usual dress of unmarried princesses.

¹⁹Tamar threw ashes over her head, tore the robe that she was wearing, put her hand on her head, and went away, sobbing as she went.

²⁰Her brother Absalom asked her, Has your brother Amnon been with you? Keep this to yourself; he is your brother. Do not take it to heart. Forlorn and desolate, Tamar remained in her brother Absalom's house.

²¹When King David heard the whole story he was very angry; but he would not hurt Amnon because he was his eldest son and he loved him.

²²Absalom did not speak a single word to Amnon, friendly or unfriendly, but he hated him for having dishonoured his sister Tamar.

²³Two years later Absalom invited all the king's sons to his sheep-shearing at Baal-hazor, near Ephron.

²⁴He approached the king and said, Sir, I am shearing; will your majesty and your servants come?

²⁵The king answered, No, my son, we must not all come and be a burden to you. Absalom pressed him, but David was still unwilling to go and dismissed him with his blessing.

²⁶Absalom said, If you will not come, may my brother Amnon come with us? Why should he go with you? the king asked;

²⁷but Absalom pressed him again, so he let Amnon and all the other princes go with him.

²⁸Absalom prepared a feast fit for a king, and gave this order to his servants: Watch your chance, and when Amnon is merry with wine and I say to you, Strike Amnon, then kill him. You have nothing to fear; these are my orders. Be bold and resolute.

²⁹Absalom's servants did to Amnon as Absalom had ordered, whereupon all the king's sons immediately mounted their mules and fled.

³⁰While they were on their way, a rumour reached David that Absalom had

murdered all the royal princes and that not one was left alive.

³¹ The king stood up and tore his clothes and then threw himself on the ground; all his servants were standing round him with their clothes torn.

³² Then Jonadab, son of David's brother Shimeah, said, My lord must not think that all the young princes have been murdered; only Amnon is dead. Absalom has gone about with a scowl on his face ever since Amnon ravished his sister Tamar.

³³ Your majesty must not pay attention to what is no more than a rumour that all the princes are dead; only Amnon is dead.

³⁴ Absalom meanwhile had made good his escape. The sentry on duty saw a crowd of people coming down the hill from the direction of Horonaim. He came and reported to the king, I see men coming down the hill from Horonaim.

³⁵ Jonadab said to the king, Here come the royal princes, just as I said they would.

³⁶ As he finished speaking, the princes came in and broke into loud

lamentations; the king and all his servants also wept bitterly.

³⁷ Absalom went to take refuge with Talmai son of Ammihud king of Geshur; and for a long while the king mourned for Amnon.

³⁸ Absalom, having escaped to Geshur, stayed there for three years;

³⁹ and David's heart went out to him with longing, as he became reconciled to the death of Amnon.

14 ¹ Joab son of Zeruiah saw that the king longed in his heart for Absalom,

² so he sent for a wise woman from Tekoah and said to her, Pretend to be a mourner; put on mourning garb, go without anointing yourself, and behave like a woman who has been bereaved these many days.

³ Then go to the king and repeat what I tell you. He told her exactly what she was to say.

⁴ When the woman from Tekoah came into the king's presence, she bowed to the ground in homage and cried, Help, your majesty!

⁵The king asked, What is it? She answered, Sir, I am a widow; my husband is dead.

⁶I had two sons; they came to blows out in the country where there was no one to part them, and one struck the other and killed him.

⁷Now, sir, the kinsmen have confronted me with the demand, Hand over the one who killed his brother, so that we can put him to death for taking his brother's life, and so cut off the succession. If they do this, they will stamp out my last live ember and leave my husband without name or descendant on the earth.

⁸Go home, said the king to the woman, and I shall settle your case.

⁹But the woman continued, The guilt be on me, your majesty, and on my father's house; let the king and his throne be blameless.

¹⁰The king said, If anyone says anything more to you, bring him to me and he will not trouble you again.

¹¹Then the woman went on, Let your majesty call upon the LORD your God, to prevent the next-of-kin from doing their worst and destroying my son. The king

swore, As the LORD lives, not a hair of your son's head shall fall to the ground.

¹²The woman then said, May I add one word more, your majesty? Say on, said the king.

¹³So she continued, How then could it enter your head to do this same wrong to God's people? By the decision you have pronounced, your majesty, you condemn yourself in that you have refused to bring back the one you banished.

¹⁴We shall all die; we shall be like water that is spilt on the ground and lost; but God will spare the man who does not set himself to keep the outlaw in banishment.

¹⁵I came to say this to your majesty because the people have threatened me: I thought, If I can only speak to the king, perhaps he will attend to my case;

¹⁶for he will listen, and he will save me from anyone who is seeking to cut off me and my son together from God's own possession.

¹⁷I thought too that the words of my lord the king would be a comfort to me; for your majesty is like the angel of God

and can decide between right and wrong. May the LORD your God be with you!

¹⁸The king said to the woman, Tell me no lies: I shall now ask you a question. Let your majesty speak, she said.

¹⁹The king asked, Is the hand of Joab behind you in all this? Your life upon it, sir! she answered. When your majesty asks a question, there is no way round it, right or left. Yes, your servant Joab did prompt me; it was he who put the whole story into my mouth.

²⁰He did it to give a new turn to this affair. Your majesty is as wise as the angel of God and knows all that goes on in the land.

²¹The king said to Joab, You have my consent; go and bring back the young man Absalom.

²²Then Joab humbly prostrated himself, took leave of the king with a blessing, and said, Now I know that I have found favour with your majesty, because you have granted my humble petition.

²³Joab went at once to Geshur and brought Absalom to Jerusalem.

²⁴But the king said, Let him go to his own quarters; he shall not come into

my presence. So Absalom repaired to his own quarters and did not enter the king's presence.

²⁵In all Israel no man was so much admired for his beauty as Absalom; from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot he was without flaw.

²⁶When he cut his hair (as had to be done every year, for he found it heavy), it weighed two hundred shekels by the royal standard.

²⁷Three sons were born to Absalom, and a daughter named Tamar, who became a very beautiful woman.

²⁸Absalom lived in Jerusalem for two whole years without entering the king's presence.

²⁹Then he summoned Joab, intending to send a message by him to the king, but Joab refused to come; he sent for him a second time, but he still refused.

³⁰Absalom said to his servants, You know that Joab has a field next to mine with barley growing in it; go and set fire to it. When Absalom's servants set fire to the field,

³¹ Joab promptly came to Absalom in his own quarters and demanded, Why have your servants set fire to my field?

³² Absalom answered, I had sent for you to come here, so that I could ask you to give the king this message from me: Why did I leave Geshur? It would be better for me if I were still there. Let me now come into your majesty's presence and, if I have done any wrong, put me to death.

³³ When Joab went to the king and told him, he summoned Absalom, who came and prostrated himself humbly, and the king greeted him with a kiss.

15 ¹ AFTER this Absalom provided himself with a chariot and horses and fifty outrunners.

² He made it a practice to rise early and stand by the road leading through the city gate, and would hail everyone who had a case to bring before the king for judgement and ask him which town he came from. When he answered, I come, sir, from such and such a tribe of Israel,

³ Absalom would say to him, I can see that you have a very good case, but you will get no hearing from the king.

⁴ He would add, If only I were appointed judge in the land, it would be my business to see that everyone with a lawsuit or a claim got justice from me.

⁵ Whenever a man approached to prostrate himself, Absalom would stretch out his hand, take hold of him, and kiss him.

⁶ By behaving like this to every Israelite who sought justice from the king, Absalom stole the affections of the people.

⁷ At the end of four years, Absalom said to the king, Give me leave to go to Hebron to fulfil a vow there that I made to the LORD.

⁸ When I lived at Geshur in Aram, I vowed, If the LORD brings me back to Jerusalem, I shall worship the LORD in Hebron.

⁹ The king answered, You may go; so he set off and went to Hebron.

¹⁰ Absalom sent runners through all the tribes of Israel with this message: As soon as you hear the sound of the trumpet, then say, Absalom has become king in Hebron.

¹¹ Two hundred men accompanied Absalom from Jerusalem; they were invited as guests and went in all innocence, knowing nothing of the affair.

¹² Absalom also sent to summon Ahithophel the Gilonite, David's counsellor, from Giloh his town, where he was offering the customary sacrifices. The conspiracy gathered strength, and Absalom's supporters increased in number.

¹³ A messenger brought the news to David that the men of Israel had transferred their allegiance to Absalom.

¹⁴ The king said to those who were with him in Jerusalem, We must get away at once, or there will be no escape from Absalom for any of us. Make haste, or else he will soon be upon us, bringing disaster and putting the city to the sword.

¹⁵ The king's servants said to him, Whatever your majesty thinks best; we are ready.

¹⁶ The king set out, and all his household followed him except ten concubines whom he left in charge of the palace.

¹⁷ At the Far House the king and all the people who were with him halted.

¹⁸ His own servants then stood at his side, while the Kerethite and Pelethite guards and Ittai with the six hundred Gittites under him marched past the king.

¹⁹ The king said to Ittai the Gittite, Why should you come with us? Go back and stay with the new king, for you are a foreigner and, what is more, an exile from your own country.

²⁰ You came only yesterday, and must you today be compelled to share my wanderings when I do not know where I am going? Go back home and take your countrymen with you; and may the LORD ever be your steadfast friend.

²¹ Ittai answered, As the LORD lives, your life upon it, wherever you may be whether for life or death, I, your servant, shall be there.

²² David said to Ittai, It is well, march on! And Ittai the Gittite marched on with his whole company and all the dependants who were with him.

²³ The whole countryside resounded with their weeping. The king remained

standing while all the people crossed the wadi of the Kidron before him, by way of the olive tree in the wilderness.

²⁴Zadok also was there and all the Levites with him, carrying the Ark of the Covenant of God. They set it down beside Abiathar until all the army had passed out of the city.

²⁵The king said to Zadok, Take the Ark of God back into the city. If I find favour with the LORD, he will bring me back and let me see the Ark and its dwelling-place again.

²⁶But if he says he does not want me, then here I am; let him do what he pleases with me.

²⁷The king went on to say to Zadok the priest, Are you not a seer? You may safely go back to the city, you and Abiathar, and take with you the two young men, Ahimaaz your son and Abiathar's son Jonathan.

²⁸I shall wait at the Fords of the Wilderness until you can send word to me.

²⁹Then Zadok and Abiathar took the Ark of God back to Jerusalem and remained there.

³⁰ David wept as he went up the slope of the mount of Olives; he was bareheaded and went barefoot. The people with him all had their heads uncovered and wept as they went.

³¹ David had been told that Ahithophel was among the conspirators with Absalom, and he prayed, LORD, frustrate the counsel of Ahithophel.

³² As David was approaching the top of the ridge where it was the custom to prostrate oneself to God, Hushai the Archite was there to meet him with his tunic torn and dust on his head.

³³ David said to him, If you come with me you will only be a hindrance;

³⁴ but you can help me to frustrate Ahithophel's plans if you go back to the city and say to Absalom, I shall be your majesty's servant. In the past I was your father's servant; now I shall be yours.

³⁵ You will have with you, as you know, the priests Zadok and Abiathar; report to them everything that you hear in the royal palace.

³⁶ They have with them Zadok's son Ahimaaz and Abiathar's son Jonathan,

and through them you may pass on to me everything you hear.

³⁷ So Hushai, David's Friend, came to the city as Absalom was entering Jerusalem.

16 ¹ When David had moved on a little from the top of the ridge, he was met by Ziba the servant of Mephibosheth, who had with him a pair of donkeys saddled and loaded with two hundred loaves of bread, a hundred clusters of raisins, a hundred bunches of summer fruit, and a skin of wine.

² The king asked, What are you doing with these? Ziba answered, The donkeys are for the king's family to ride on, the bread and the summer fruit are for his servants to eat, and the wine for anyone who becomes exhausted in the wilderness.

³ The king asked, Where is your master's grandson? He is staying in Jerusalem, said Ziba, for he thought that the Israelites might now restore to him his grandfather's kingdom.

⁴ The king said to Ziba, You shall have everything that belongs to Mephibosheth. Ziba said, I am your

humble servant, sir; may I always find favour with your majesty.

⁵As King David approached Bahurim, a man of Saul's family, whose name was Shimei son of Gera, came out, cursing all the while.

⁶He showered stones right and left on David and on all the king's servants and on everyone, soldiers and people alike.

⁷With curses Shimei shouted: Get out, get out, you murderous scoundrel!

⁸The LORD has taken vengeance on you for the blood of the house of Saul whose throne you took, and he has given the kingdom to your son Absalom. You murderer, see how your crimes have overtaken you!

⁹Abishai son of Zeruiah said to the king, Why let this dead dog curse your majesty? I will go across and strike off his head.

¹⁰But the king said, What has this to do with us, you sons of Zeruiah? If he curses because the LORD has told him to curse David, who can question it?

¹¹David said to Abishai and to all his servants, If my very own son is out to kill me, who can wonder at this Benjamite?

Let him be, let him curse; for the LORD has told him to.

¹²Perhaps the LORD will mark my sufferings and bestow a blessing on me in place of the curse laid on me this day.

¹³David and his men continued on their way, and Shimei kept abreast along the ridge of the hill parallel to David's path, cursing as he went and hurling stones across the valley at him and covering him with dust.

¹⁴When the king and all the people with him reached the Jordan, they rested there, for they were worn out.

¹⁵By now Absalom and all his Israelites had reached Jerusalem, and Ahithophel was with him.

¹⁶When Hushai the Archite, David's Friend, met Absalom he said, Long live the king! Long live the king!

¹⁷But Absalom retorted, Is this your loyalty to your friend? Why did you not go with him?

¹⁸Hushai answered, Because I mean to attach myself to the man chosen by the LORD and by this people and by all the men of Israel, and with him I shall stay.

¹⁹After all, whom ought I to serve? Should I not serve the son? I shall serve you as I have served your father.

²⁰Absalom said to Ahithophel, Give us your advice: how shall we act?

²¹Ahithophel answered, Lie with your father's concubines whom he left in charge of the palace. Then all Israel will come to hear that you have given great cause of offence to your father, and this will confirm the resolution of your followers.

²²So they set up a tent for Absalom on the roof, and he lay with his father's concubines in the sight of all Israel.

²³In those days a man would seek counsel of Ahithophel as if he were making an enquiry of the word of God; that was how Ahithophel's counsel was esteemed by both David and Absalom.

17 ¹Ahithophel said to Absalom, Let me pick twelve thousand men to go in pursuit of David tonight.

²If I overtake him when he is tired and dispirited I shall cut him off from his people and they will all scatter; I shall kill no one but the king.

³I shall bring all the people over to you as a bride is brought to her husband. It is only one man's life that you are seeking; the rest of the people will be unharmed.

⁴Absalom and all the elders of Israel approved of Ahithophel's advice;

⁵but Absalom said, Now summon Hushai the Archite and let us also hear what he has to say.

⁶When Hushai came, Absalom told him what Ahithophel had said and asked him, Shall we do as he advises? If not, speak up.

⁷Hushai said to Absalom, For once the counsel that Ahithophel has given is not good.

⁸You know, he went on, that your father and the men with him are hardened warriors and savage as a bear in the wilds robbed of her cubs. Your father is an old campaigner and will not spend the night with the main body;

⁹even now he will be lying hidden in a pit or in some such place. Then if any of your men are killed at the outset, whoever hears the news will

say, Disaster has overtaken Absalom's followers.

¹⁰The courage of the most resolute and lion-hearted will melt away, for all Israel knows that your father is a man of war and has seasoned warriors with him.

¹¹Here is my advice. Wait until the whole of Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, is gathered about you, countless as grains of sand on the seashore, and then march to battle with them in person.

¹²When we come on him somewhere, wherever he may be, and descend on him like dew falling on the ground, not a man of his family or of his followers will be left alive.

¹³If he retreats into a town, all Israel will bring ropes to that town, and we shall drag it into a ravine until not a stone can be found on the site.

¹⁴Absalom and all the Israelites said, Hushai the Archite has given us better advice than Ahithophel. It was the LORD's purpose to frustrate Ahithophel's good advice and so bring disaster on Absalom.

¹⁵Hushai told Zadok and Abiathar the priests all the advice that Ahithophel

had given to Absalom and the elders of Israel, and also what he himself had advised.

¹⁶Now send quickly to David, he said, and warn him not to spend the night at the Fords of the Wilderness but to cross the river at once, before an overwhelming blow can be launched at the king and his followers.

¹⁷Jonathan and Ahimaaz were waiting at En-rogel, and a servant-girl used to go and tell them what happened and they would pass it on to King David; for they dared not risk being seen entering the city.

¹⁸But a lad saw them and told Absalom; so the two of them hurried to Bahurim to the house of a man who had a cistern in his courtyard, and they climbed down into it.

¹⁹The man's wife took a covering, spread it over the mouth of the cistern, and scattered grain over it, so that nothing would be noticed.

²⁰Absalom's servants came to the house and asked the woman, Where are Ahimaaz and Jonathan? She answered, They went past the pool. The men

searched, but not finding them they returned to Jerusalem.

²¹ As soon as they had gone the two climbed out of the cistern and went off to report to King David. They said to him, Get over the water at once, and with all speed! and they told him Ahithophel's plan against him.

²² So David and all his company began at once to cross the Jordan; by daybreak there was not one who had not reached the other bank.

²³ When Ahithophel saw that his advice had not been taken he saddled his donkey, went straight home to his own town, gave his last instructions to his household, and then hanged himself. So he died and was buried in his father's grave.

²⁴ By the time that Absalom had crossed the Jordan with the Israelites, David was already at Mahanaim.

²⁵ Absalom had appointed Amasa as commander-in-chief in Joab's place; he was the son of a man named Ithra, an Ishmaelite, by Abigail daughter of Nahash and sister to Joab's mother Zeruah.

²⁶The Israelites and Absalom camped in the district of Gilead.

²⁷When David came to Mahanaim, he was met by Shobi son of Nahash from the Ammonite town Rabbah, Machir son of Ammiel from Lo-debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite from Rogelim,

²⁸bringing mattresses and blankets, bowls, and jugs. They brought also wheat and barley, flour and roasted grain, beans and lentils,

²⁹honey and curds, sheep and fat cattle, and offered them to David and his people to eat, knowing that the people must be hungry and thirsty and weary in the wilderness.

18¹David reviewed the troops who were with him, and appointed officers over units of a thousand and of a hundred.

²He divided his army in three, one division under the command of Joab, one under Joab's brother Abishai son of Zeruiah, and the third under Ittai the Gittite. The king announced to the troops that he himself was coming out with them.

³But they said, No, you must not; if we take to flight, no one will care, nor will they even if half of us are killed; but you are worth ten thousand of us, and it would be better now for you to remain in the town in support.

⁴The king answered, I shall do what you think best. He stood beside the gate, while all the army marched past by hundreds and by thousands,

⁵and he gave this order to Joab, Abishai, and Ittai: Deal gently with the young man Absalom for my sake. The whole army heard the king giving each of the officers the order about Absalom.

⁶The army took the field against the Israelites, and a battle was fought in the forest of Ephron.

⁷There the Israelites were routed before the onslaught of David's men, and the loss of life was great, for twenty thousand fell.

⁸The fighting spread over the whole countryside, and the forest took toll of more people that day than the sword.

⁹Some of David's men caught sight of Absalom; he was riding his mule and, as it passed beneath a large oak, his head

was caught in its boughs; he was left in mid-air, while the mule went on from under him.

¹⁰One of the men who saw this told Joab, I saw Absalom hanging from an oak.

¹¹While the man was telling him, Joab broke in, You saw him? Why did you not strike him to the ground then and there? I would have given you ten pieces of silver and a belt.

¹²The man answered, If you were to put into my hands a thousand pieces of silver, I would not lift a finger against the king's son; we all heard the king giving orders to you and Abishai and Ittai to take care of the young man Absalom.

¹³If I had dealt him a treacherous blow, the king would soon have known, and you would have kept well out of it.

¹⁴That is a lie! said Joab. I will make a start and show you. He picked up three javelins and drove them into Absalom's chest while he was held fast in the tree and still alive.

¹⁵Then ten young men who were Joab's armour-bearers closed in on Absalom, struck at him, and killed him.

¹⁶Joab sounded the trumpet, and the army came back from the pursuit of Israel, because he had called on them to halt.

¹⁷They took Absalom's body and flung it into a large pit in the forest, and raised over it a great cairn of stones. The Israelites all fled to their homes.

¹⁸The pillar in the King's Valley had been set up by Absalom in his lifetime, for he said, I have no son to carry on my name. He had named the pillar after himself, and to this day it is called Absalom's Monument.

¹⁹Ahimaaz son of Zadok said, Let me run and take the news to the king that the LORD has avenged him and delivered him from his enemies.

²⁰But Joab replied, This is no day for you to be the bearer of news. Another day you may have news to carry, but not today, because the king's son is dead.

²¹Joab told a Cushite to go and report to the king what he had seen. The Cushite bowed to Joab and set off running.

²²Ahimaaz pleaded again with Joab, Come what may, he said, let me run

after the Cushite. Why should you, my son? asked Joab. You will get no reward for your news.

²³ Come what may, he said, let me run. Go, then, said Joab. So Ahimaaz ran by the road through the plain of the Jordan and outstripped the Cushite.

²⁴ David was sitting between the inner and outer gates and the watchman had gone up to the roof of the gatehouse by the wall of the town. Looking out and seeing a man running alone,

²⁵ the watchman called to the king and told him. If he is alone, said the king, then he is bringing news. The man continued to approach,

²⁶ and then the watchman saw another man running. He called down into the gate, Look, there is another man running alone. The king said, He too brings news.

²⁷ The watchman said, I see by the way he runs that the first runner is Ahimaaz son of Zadok. The king said, He is a good man and shall earn the reward for good news.

²⁸ Ahimaaz called out to the king, All is well! He bowed low before him and said, Blessed be the LORD your God who

has given into your hands the men who rebelled against your majesty.

²⁹The king asked, Is all well with the young man Absalom? Ahimaaz answered, Sir, when your servant Joab sent me, I saw a great commotion, but I did not know what had happened.

³⁰The king told him to stand on one side; so he turned aside and waited there.

³¹Then the Cushite came in and said, Good news for my lord the king! The LORD has avenged you this day on all those who rebelled against you.

³²The king said to the Cushite, Is all well with the young man Absalom? The Cushite answered, May all the king's enemies and all rebels intent on harming you be as that young man is.

³³The king was deeply moved and went up to the roof-chamber over the gate and wept, crying out as he went, O, my son! Absalom my son, my son Absalom! Would that I had died instead of you! O Absalom, my son, my son.

19¹Joab was told that the king was weeping and mourning for Absalom;

²and that day's victory was turned for the whole army into mourning, because the troops heard how the king grieved for his son;

³they stole into the city like men ashamed to show their faces after fleeing from a battle.

⁴The king covered his face and cried aloud, My son Absalom; O Absalom, my son, my son.

⁵Joab came into the king's quarters and said to him, All your servants, who have saved you and your sons and daughters, your wives and your concubines, you have covered with shame this day

⁶by showing love for those who hate you and hate for those who love you. Today you have made it clear to officers and men alike that we are nothing to you; I realize that if Absalom were still alive and all of us dead, you would be content.

⁷Now go at once and give your servants some encouragement; if you refuse, I swear by the LORD that by nightfall not a man will remain with you, and that would be a worse disaster than any you have suffered since your earliest days.

⁸At that the king rose and took his seat by the gate; and when the army was told that the king was sitting at the gate, they assembled before him there. MEANWHILE the Israelites had scattered to their homes.

⁹Throughout all the tribes of Israel people were discussing it among themselves and saying, The king has saved us from our enemies and freed us from the power of the Philistines, and now he has fled the country because of Absalom.

¹⁰But Absalom, whom we anointed king, has fallen in battle; so now why have we no plans for bringing the king back?

¹¹What all Israel was saying came to the king's ears, and he sent word to Zadok and Abiathar the priests: Ask the elders of Judah why they should be the last to bring the king back to his palace.

¹²Tell them, You are my brothers, my own flesh and blood; why are you last to bring me back?

¹³And say to Amasa, You are my own flesh and blood. So help me God, you

shall be my commander-in-chief for the rest of your life in place of Joab.

¹⁴Thus David swayed the hearts of all in Judah, and one and all they sent to the king, urging him and his men to return.

¹⁵When on his way back the king reached the Jordan, the men of Judah came to Gilgal to meet him and escort him across the river.

¹⁶Shimei son of Gera the Benjamite from Bahurim hastened down among the men of Judah to meet King David

¹⁷with a thousand men from Benjamin; Ziba was there too, the servant of Saul's family, with his fifteen sons and twenty servants. They rushed into the Jordan under the king's eyes

¹⁸and crossed to and fro conveying his household in order to win his favour. Shimei son of Gera, when he had crossed the river, threw himself down before the king

¹⁹and said, I beg your majesty not to remember how disgracefully your servant behaved when your majesty left Jerusalem; do not hold it against me.

²⁰I humbly acknowledge that I did wrong, and today I am the first of all the

house of Joseph to come down to meet your majesty.

²¹ Abishai son of Zeruah objected. Ought not Shimei to be put to death, he said, because he cursed the LORD's anointed prince?

²² David answered, What right have you, you sons of Zeruah, to oppose me today? Should anyone be put to death this day in Israel? I know now that I am king of Israel.

²³ The king said to Shimei, You shall not die, and he confirmed it with an oath.

²⁴ Saul's grandson Mephibosheth also went down to meet the king. He had not bathed his feet, trimmed his beard, or washed his clothes, from the day the king went away until he returned victorious.

²⁵ When he came from Jerusalem to meet the king, David said to him, Why did you not go with me, Mephibosheth?

²⁶ He answered, Sir, my servant deceived me; I did intend to harness my donkey and ride with the king (for I am lame),

²⁷ but his stories set your majesty against me. Your majesty is like the

angel of God; you must do what you think right.

²⁸My father's whole family, one and all, deserved to die at your majesty's hands, but you gave me, your servant, my place at your table. What further favour can I expect of the king?

²⁹The king answered, You have said enough. My decision is that you and Ziba are to share the estate.

³⁰Mephibosheth said, Let him have it all, now that your majesty has come home victorious.

³¹Barzillai the Gileadite too had come down from Rogelim, and he went as far as the Jordan with the king to escort him on his way.

³²Barzillai was very old, eighty years of age; it was he who had provided for the king while he was at Mahanaim, for he was a man of great wealth.

³³The king said to Barzillai, Cross over with me and I shall provide for you in my household in Jerusalem.

³⁴Barzillai answered, Your servant is far too old to go up with your majesty to Jerusalem.

³⁵I am now eighty years old. I cannot tell what is pleasant and what is not; I cannot taste what I eat or drink; I can no longer listen to the voices of men and women singing. Why should I be a further burden on your majesty?

³⁶Your servant will attend the king for a short way across the Jordan; and why should the king reward me so handsomely?

³⁷Let me go back and end my days in my own town near the grave of my father and mother. Here is my son Kimham; let him cross over with your majesty, and do for him what you think best.

³⁸The king answered, Let Kimham cross with me, and I shall do for him whatever you think best; and I shall do for you whatever you ask.

³⁹All the people crossed the Jordan while the king waited. The king then kissed Barzillai and gave him his blessing. Barzillai returned home;

⁴⁰the king crossed to Gilgal, Kimham with him. The whole army of Judah had escorted the king over the river, as had also half the army of Israel.

⁴¹ But the Israelites all kept coming to the king and saying, Why should our brothers of Judah have got possession of the king's person by joining King David's own men and then escorting him and his household across the Jordan?

⁴² The answer of all the men of Judah to the Israelites was, Because his majesty is our near kinsman. Why should you resent it? Have we eaten at the king's expense? Have we received any gifts?

⁴³ The men of Israel answered, We have ten times your interest in the king and, what is more, we are senior to you; why do you disparage us? Were we not the first to speak of bringing the king back? The men of Judah used language even fiercer than the men of Israel.

20¹ A scoundrel named Sheba son of Bichri, a man of Benjamin, happened to be there. He sounded the trumpet and cried out: We have no share in David, no lot in the son of Jesse. Every man to his tent, O Israel!

² All the men of Israel deserted David to follow Sheba son of Bichri, but the men of Judah stood by their king and followed him from the Jordan to Jerusalem.

³When David went up to his palace in Jerusalem he took the ten concubines whom he had left in charge of the palace and put them in a house under guard; he maintained them but did not have intercourse with them. They were kept in seclusion, living as if they were widows until the day of their death.

⁴The king said to Amasa, Call up the men of Judah and appear before me again in three days' time.

⁵Amasa went to call up the men of Judah, but he took longer than the time fixed by the king.

⁶David said to Abishai, Sheba son of Bichri will give us more trouble than Absalom; take the royal bodyguard and follow him closely in case he occupies some fortified cities and escapes us.

⁷Joab, along with the Kerethite and Pelethite guards and all the fighting men, marched out behind Abishai, and left Jerusalem in pursuit of Sheba son of Bichri.

⁸When they reached the great stone in Gibeon, Amasa came to meet them. Joab was wearing his tunic and over it a belt

supporting a sword in its scabbard. He came forward, concealing his treachery,⁹ and said to Amasa, I hope you are well, my brother, and with his right hand he grasped Amasa's beard to kiss him.

¹⁰Amasa was not on his guard against the sword in Joab's hand. Joab struck him with it in the belly and his entrails poured out to the ground; he did not have to strike a second blow, for Amasa was dead. Joab with his brother Abishai went on in pursuit of Sheba son of Bichri.

¹¹One of Joab's men stood over Amasa and called out, Follow Joab, all who are for Joab and for David!

¹²Amasa's body lay soaked in blood in the middle of the road, and when the man saw how all the people stopped, he rolled him off the road into the field and threw a cloak over him; for everyone who came by stopped at the sight of the body.

¹³When it had been removed from the road, they all went on and followed Joab in pursuit of Sheba son of Bichri.

¹⁴Sheba passed through all the tribes of Israel until he came to Abel-beth-

maacah, and all the clan of Bichri rallied to him and followed him into the city.

¹⁵Joab's forces came up and besieged him in Abel-beth-maacah, raised a siege-ramp against it, and began undermining the wall to bring it down.

¹⁶Then a wise woman stood on the rampart and called from the city, Listen, listen! Tell Joab to come here and let me speak with him.

¹⁷When he came forward the woman said, Are you Joab? He answered, I am. Listen to what I have to say, sir, she said. I am listening, he replied.

¹⁸In the old days, she went on, there was a saying, Go to Abel for the answer, and that settled the matter.

¹⁹My town is known to be one of the most peaceable and loyal in Israel; she is like a watchful mother in Israel, and you are seeking to kill her. Would you destroy the LORD's own possession?

²⁰Joab answered, God forbid, far be it from me to ruin or destroy!

²¹That is not our aim; but a man from the hill-country of Ephraim named Sheba son of Bichri has raised a revolt against King David. Surrender this one man, and

I shall retire from the city. The woman said to Joab, His head will be thrown over the wall to you.

²²Then the woman went to the people, who, persuaded by her wisdom, cut off Sheba's head and threw it to Joab. He then sounded the trumpet, and the whole army withdrew from the town; they dispersed to their homes, while Joab went back to the king in Jerusalem.

²³JOAB was in command of the whole army in Israel, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada commanded the Kerethite and Pelethite guards.

²⁴Adoram was in charge of the forced levy, and Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was secretary of state.

²⁵Sheva was adjutant-general, and Zadok and Abiathar were priests;

²⁶Ira the Jairite was David's priest.

21 ¹IN David's reign there was a famine that lasted for three successive years. David consulted the LORD, who answered, Blood-guilt rests on Saul and on his family because he put the Gibeonites to death.

²(The Gibeonites were not of Israelite descent; they were a remnant of Amorite

stock whom the Israelites had sworn that they would spare. Saul, however, in his zeal for Israel and Judah had sought to exterminate them.) King David summoned the Gibeonites, therefore, and said to them,

³What can be done for you? How can I make expiation, so that you may have cause to bless the LORD's own people?

⁴The Gibeonites answered, Our feud with Saul and his family cannot be settled in silver or gold, and there is no other man in Israel whose death would content us. Then what do you want me to do for you? asked David.

⁵They answered, Let us make an end of the man who caused our undoing and ruined us, so that he will never again have his place within the borders of Israel.

⁶Hand over to us seven of that man's descendants, and we shall hurl them down to their death before the LORD in Gibeah of Saul, the LORD's chosen one. The king agreed to hand them over.

⁷He spared Mephibosheth son of Jonathan, son of Saul, because of the

oath that had been taken in the LORD's name by David and Saul's son Jonathan,⁸ but the king took the two sons whom Rizpah daughter of Aiah had borne to Saul, Armoni and Mephibosheth, and the five sons whom Merab, Saul's daughter, had borne to Adriel son of Barzillai of Meholah.

⁹He handed them over to the Gibeonites, and they flung them down from the mountain before the LORD; the seven of them fell together. They were put to death in the first days of harvest at the beginning of the barley harvest.

¹⁰Rizpah daughter of Aiah took sackcloth and spread it out as a bed for herself on the rock, from the beginning of harvest until the rains came and fell from the heavens on the bodies. She kept the birds away from them by day and the wild beasts by night.

¹¹When David was told what Rizpah the concubine of Saul had done,

¹²he went and got the bones of Saul and his son Jonathan from the citizens of Jabesh-gilead, who had carried them off from the public square at Beth-shan,

where the Philistines had hung them on the day they defeated Saul at Gilboa.

¹³He removed the bones of Saul and Jonathan from there and gathered up the bones of the men who had been hurled to death.

¹⁴They buried the bones of Saul and his son Jonathan at Zela in Benjamin, in the grave of his father Kish. Everything was done as the king ordered, and thereafter the LORD was willing to accept prayers offered for the country.

¹⁵Once again war broke out between the Philistines and Israel. David and his men went down to the battle, but as he fought with the Philistines he fell exhausted.

¹⁶When Benob, one of the race of the Rephaim, whose bronze spear weighed three hundred shekels and who wore a belt of honour, was about to kill David,

¹⁷Abishai son of Zeruiah came to the king's aid; he struck the Philistine down and killed him. Then David's officers swore that he should never again go out with them to war, for fear that the lamp of Israel might be extinguished.

¹⁸Some time later war with the Philistines broke out again in Gob: it was then that Sibbechai from Hushah killed Saph, a descendant of the Rephaim.

¹⁹In another campaign against the Philistines in Gob, Elhanan son of Jair of Bethlehem killed Goliath of Gath, whose spear had a shaft like a weaver's beam.

²⁰In yet another campaign in Gath there appeared a giant with six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot, twenty-four in all. He too was descended from the Rephaim;

²¹when he defied Israel, Jonathan son of David's brother Shimeai killed him.

²²These four giants were the descendants of the Rephaim in Gath, and they all fell at the hands of David and his men.

22¹ THESE are the words of the song David sang to the LORD on the day when the LORD delivered him from the power of all his enemies and from the power of Saul:

²The LORD is my lofty crag, my fortress, my champion,

³my God, my rock in whom I find shelter, my shield and sure defender, my

strong tower, my refuge, my deliverer who saves me from violence.

⁴I shall call to the LORD to whom all praise is due; then I shall be made safe from my enemies.

⁵When the waves of death encompassed me and destructive torrents overtook me,

⁶the bonds of Sheol tightened about me, the snares of death were set to catch me.

⁷When in anguish of heart I cried to the LORD and called to my God, he heard me from his temple, and my cry reached his ears.

⁸The earth shook and quaked. Heaven's foundations trembled, shaking because of his anger.

⁹Smoke went up from his nostrils, devouring fire from his mouth, glowing coals and searing heat.

¹⁰He parted the heavens and came down; thick darkness lay under his feet.

¹¹He flew on the back of a cherub; he swooped on the wings of the wind.

¹²He made darkness around him his covering, dense vapour his canopy.

¹³Thick clouds came from the radiance before him; glowing coals burned brightly.

¹⁴GOD thundered from the heavens; the Most High raised his voice.

¹⁵He loosed arrows, he sped them far and wide, his lightning shafts, and sent them echoing.

¹⁶The channels of the sea were exposed, earth's foundations laid bare at the LORD's rebuke, at the blast of breath from his nostrils.

¹⁷He reached down from on high and took me, he drew me out of mighty waters,

¹⁸he delivered me from my enemies, strong as they were, from my foes when they grew too powerful for me.

¹⁹They confronted me in my hour of peril, but the LORD was my buttress.

²⁰He brought me into untrammelled liberty; he rescued me because he delighted in me.

²¹The LORD repaid me as my righteousness deserved; because my conduct was spotless he rewarded me,

²² for I have kept to the ways of the LORD and have not turned from my God to wickedness.

²³ All his laws I keep before me, and have never failed to follow his decrees.

²⁴ In his sight I was blameless and kept myself from wrongdoing;

²⁵ because I was spotless in his eyes the LORD rewarded me as my righteousness deserved.

²⁶ To the loyal you show yourself loyal and blameless to the blameless.

²⁷ To the pure you show yourself pure, but skilful in your dealings with the perverse.

²⁸ You bring humble folk to safety, but humiliate those who look so high and mighty.

²⁹ LORD, you are my lamp; my God will lighten my darkness.

³⁰ With your help I storm a rampart; by my God's aid I leap over a wall.

³¹ The way of God is blameless; the LORD's word has stood the test; he is the shield of all who take refuge in him.

³² What god is there but the LORD?
What rock but our God:

³³ the God who girds me with strength
and makes my way free from blame,

³⁴ who makes me swift as a hind and
sets me secure on the heights,

³⁵ who trains my hands for battle so
that my arms can aim a bronze-tipped
bow?

³⁶ You have given me the shield of your
salvation; you stoop down to make me
great.

³⁷ You made room for my steps; my
feet have not slipped.

³⁸ I pursue and destroy my enemies,
until I have made an end of them I do
not turn back.

³⁹ I make an end of them, I strike
them down; they rise no more, but fall
prostrate at my feet.

⁴⁰ You gird me with strength for the
battle and subdue my assailants beneath
me.

⁴¹ You set my foot on my enemies'
necks, and I wipe out those who hate
me.

⁴² They cry, but there is no one to save
them; they cry to the LORD, but he does
not answer.

⁴³I shall beat them fine as dust on the ground, like mud in the streets I shall trample them.

⁴⁴You set me free from the people who challenge me, and make me master of nations. A people I never knew will be my subjects.

⁴⁵Foreigners will come fawning to me; as soon as they hear tell of me, they will submit.

⁴⁶Foreigners will be disheartened and come trembling from their strongholds.

⁴⁷The LORD lives! Blessed is my rock! High above all is God, my safe refuge.

⁴⁸You grant me vengeance, God, laying nations prostrate at my feet;

⁴⁹you free me from my enemies, setting me over my assailants; you are my deliverer from violent men.

⁵⁰Therefore, LORD, I shall praise you among the nations and sing psalms to your name,

⁵¹to one who gives his king great victories and keeps faith with his anointed, with David and his descendants for ever.

23¹ These are the last words of David: The word of David son of

Jesse, the word of the man whom the High God raised up, the anointed of the God of Jacob and the singer of Israel's psalms:

²The spirit of the LORD has spoken through me, and his word is on my lips.

³The God of Israel spoke, the Rock of Israel said of me: He who rules people in justice, who rules in the fear of God,

⁴is like the light of morning at sunrise, a morning that is cloudless after rain and makes the grass from the earth sparkle.

⁵Surely my house is true to God; for he has made an everlasting covenant with me, its terms spelled out and faithfully kept; that is my whole salvation, all my delight.

⁶But the ungodly put forth no shoots, they are all like briars thrown aside; none dare put out his hand to pick them up,

⁷none touch them but with a tool of iron or wood; they are fit only for burning where they lie.

⁸THESE are the names of David's heroes. First came Ishbosheth the Hachmonite, chief of the three; it was

he who brandished his spear over eight hundred, all slain at one time.

⁹Next to him was Eleazar son of Dodo the Ahohite, one of the heroic three. He was with David at Pas-dammim where the Philistines had gathered for battle. When the Israelites fell back,

¹⁰he stood his ground and rained blows on the Philistines until, from sheer weariness, his hand stuck to his sword. The LORD brought about a great victory that day. Afterwards the people rallied to him, but it was only to strip the dead.

¹¹Next to him was Shammah son of Agee a Hararite. The Philistines had gathered at Lehi, where there was a field with a fine crop of lentils; and, when the Philistines put the people to flight,

¹²he stood his ground in the field, defended it, and defeated the foe. So the LORD brought about a great victory.

¹³Towards the beginning of the harvest three of the thirty went down to join David at the cave of Adullam, while a band of Philistines was encamped in the valley of Rephaim.

¹⁴David was then in the stronghold, and a Philistine garrison held Bethlehem.

¹⁵One day David exclaimed with longing, If only I could have a drink of water from the well by the gate at Bethlehem!

¹⁶At this the heroic three made their way through the Philistine lines and drew water from the well by the gate of Bethlehem and brought it to David. But he refused to drink it; he poured it out to the LORD

¹⁷saying, The LORD forbid that I should do such a thing! Can I drink the blood of these men who went at the risk of their lives? So he would not drink it. Such were the exploits of the heroic three.

¹⁸Abishai the brother of Joab son of Zeruah was chief of the thirty; he it was who brandished his spear over three hundred dead. He was famous among the thirty,

¹⁹and some think he surpassed in reputation the rest of the thirty; he became their captain, but he did not rival the three.

²⁰Benaiah son of Jehoiada, from Kabzeel, was a hero of many exploits. It was he who slew the two champions of

Moab, and who once went down into a pit and killed a lion on a snowy day.

²¹ He also killed an Egyptian, a man of striking appearance armed with a spear. Benaiah went to meet him with a club, wrested the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and killed him with his own weapon.

²² Such were the exploits of Benaiah son of Jehoiada, famous among the heroic thirty.

²³ He was more famous than the rest of the thirty, but he did not rival the three. David appointed him to his household.

²⁴ Asahel the brother of Joab was one of the thirty; Elhanan son of Dodo from Bethlehem;

²⁵ Shammah from Harod; Elikah from Harod;

²⁶ Helez from a place unknown; Ira son of Ikkesh from Tekoa;

²⁷ Abiezer from Anathoth; Mebunnai from Hushah;

²⁸ Zalmon the Ahohite; Maharai from Netophah;

²⁹ Heled son of Baanah from Netophah; Ittai son of Ribai from Gibeah of Benjamin;

³⁰ Benaiah from Pirathon; Hiddai from the wadis of Gaash;

³¹ Abi-albon from Beth-arabah; Azmoth from Bahurim;

³² Eliahba from Shaalbon; Hashem the Gizonite; Jonathan son of

³³ Shammah the Hararite; Ahiam son of Sharar the Hararite;

³⁴ Eliphelet son of Ahasbai son of the Maacathite; Eliam son of Ahithophel the Gilonite;

³⁵ Hezrai from Carmel; Paarai the Arbite;

³⁶ Igal son of Nathan from Zobah; Bani the Gadite;

³⁷ Zelek the Ammonite; Naharai from Beeroth, armour-bearer to Joab son of Zeruiah;

³⁸ Ira the Ithrite; Gareb the Ithrite;

³⁹ Uriah the Hittite: there were thirty-seven in all.

24¹ ONCE again the Israelites felt the LORD's anger, when he incited David against them and instructed him to take a census of Israel and Judah.

² The king commanded Joab and the officers of the army with him to go round all the tribes of Israel, from Dan

to Beersheba, and make a record of the people and report back the number to him.

³Joab answered, Even if the LORD your God should increase the people a hundredfold and your majesty should live to see it, what pleasure would that give your majesty?

⁴But Joab and the officers, being overruled by the king, left his presence in order to take the census.

⁵They crossed the Jordan and began at Aroer and the town at the wadi, proceeding towards Gad and Jazer.

⁶They came to Gilead and to the land of the Hittites, to Kadesh, and then to Dan and Iyyon and so round towards Sidon.

⁷They went as far as the walled city of Tyre and all the towns of the Hivites and Canaanites, and then went on to the Negeb of Judah at Beersheba.

⁸They covered the whole country and arrived back at Jerusalem after nine months and twenty days.

⁹Joab reported to the king the numbers recorded: the number of able-bodied men, capable of bearing arms, was eight

hundred thousand in Israel and five hundred thousand in Judah.

¹⁰After he had taken the census, David was overcome with remorse, and said to the LORD, I have acted very wickedly: I pray you, LORD, remove your servant's guilt, for I have been very foolish.

¹¹When he rose next morning, the command of the LORD had come to the prophet Gad, David's seer,

¹²to go and tell David: This is the word of the LORD: I offer you three things; choose one and I shall bring it upon you.

¹³Gad came to David and reported this to him and said, Is it to be three years of famine in your land, or three months of flight with the enemy in close pursuit, or three days of pestilence in your land? Consider carefully now what answer I am to take back to him who sent me.

¹⁴David said to Gad, This is a desperate plight I am in; let us fall into the hands of the LORD, for his mercy is great; and let me not fall into the hands of men.

¹⁵The LORD sent a pestilence throughout Israel from the morning till the end of the appointed time; from Dan

to Beersheba seventy thousand of the people died.

¹⁶The angel stretched out his arm towards Jerusalem to destroy it; but the LORD repented of the evil and said to the angel who was destroying the people, Enough! Stay your hand. At that moment the angel of the LORD was at the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

¹⁷When David saw the angel who was striking down the people, he said to the LORD, It is I who have sinned, I who committed the wrong; but these poor sheep, what have they done? Let your hand fall on me and on my family.

¹⁸Gad came to David that day and said, Go and set up an altar to the LORD on the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

¹⁹David obeyed Gad's instructions, and went up as the LORD had commanded.

²⁰When Araunah looked down and saw the king and his servants coming towards him, he went out and, prostrating himself before the king,

²¹said, Why has your majesty come to visit his servant? David answered, To

buy the threshing-floor from you so that I may build an altar to the LORD, and the plague which has attacked the people may be stopped.

²²Araunah answered, I beg your majesty to take it and sacrifice what you think fit. See, here are the oxen for the whole-offering, and the threshing-sledges and the ox-yokes for fuel.

²³Araunah gave it all to the king for his own use and said to him, May the LORD your God accept you.

²⁴But the king said to Araunah, No, I shall buy it from you; I am not going to offer up to the LORD my God whole-offerings that have cost me nothing. So David bought the threshing-floor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.

²⁵He built an altar to the LORD there and offered whole-offerings and shared-offerings. Then the LORD yielded to his prayer for the land, and the plague in Israel stopped.

1 Kings

1 ¹KING David was now a very old man, and, though they wrapped clothes round him, he could not keep warm.

²His attendants said to him, Let us find a young virgin for your majesty, to attend you and take care of you; and let her lie in your arms, sir, and make you warm.

³After searching throughout Israel for a beautiful maiden, they found Abishag, a Shunammite, and brought her to the king.

⁴She was a very beautiful girl. She took care of the king and waited on him, but he did not have intercourse with her.

⁵Adonijah, whose mother was Haggith, was boasting that he was to be king. He provided himself with chariots and horses and fifty outrunners.

⁶His father never corrected him or asked why he behaved as he did. He was next in age to Absalom, and was a very handsome man too.

⁷ He took counsel with Joab son of Zeruah and with Abiathar the priest, and they assured him of their support;

⁸ but Zadok the priest, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, Nathan the prophet, Shimei, Rei, and David's bodyguard of heroes did not take his side.

⁹ Adonijah then held a sacrifice of sheep, oxen, and buffaloes at the stone Zoheleth beside En-rogel; he invited all his royal brothers and all those officers of the household who were of the tribe of Judah,

¹⁰ but he did not invite Nathan the prophet, Benaiah and the bodyguard, or Solomon his brother.

¹¹ Nathan said to Bathsheba, Solomon's mother, Have you not heard that Adonijah son of Haggith has become king, without the knowledge of our lord David?

¹² Now come, let me advise you what to do for your own safety and for the safety of your son Solomon.

¹³ Go in at once to the king and say to him, Did not your majesty swear to me, your servant, that my son Solomon should succeed you as king, and that it

was he who should sit on your throne?
Why then has Adonijah become king?

¹⁴While you are still there speaking to the king, I shall come in after you and confirm your words.

¹⁵Bathsheba went to the king in his private chamber; he was now very old, and Abishag the Shunammite was waiting on him.

¹⁶Bathsheba bowed before the king and did obeisance. What is your request? asked the king.

¹⁷She answered, My lord, you yourself swore to me your servant, by the LORD your God, that my son Solomon should succeed you as king and sit on your throne.

¹⁸But now, here is Adonijah become king, all unknown to your majesty.

¹⁹He has sacrificed great numbers of oxen, buffaloes, and sheep, and has invited to the feast all the king's sons, with Abiathar the priest and Joab the commander-in-chief, but he has not invited your servant Solomon.

²⁰Your majesty, all Israel is now looking to you to announce your successor on the throne.

²¹ Otherwise, when you, sir, rest with your forefathers, my son Solomon and I will be treated as criminals.

²² Bathsheba was still addressing the king when Nathan the prophet arrived.

²³ The king was informed that Nathan was there; he came into the king's presence and prostrated himself.

²⁴ My lord, he said, has your majesty declared that Adonijah should succeed you and sit on your throne?

²⁵ He has today gone down and sacrificed great numbers of oxen, buffaloes, and sheep, and has invited to the feast all the king's sons, the commanders of the army, and Abiathar the priest; and at this very moment they are eating and drinking in his presence and shouting, Long live King Adonijah!

²⁶ But he has not invited me your servant, Zadok the priest, Benaiah son of Jehoiada, or your servant Solomon.

²⁷ Has this been done by your majesty's authority? You have not told us your servants who should succeed you on the throne.

²⁸ King David said, Call Bathsheba, and when she came into his presence and stood before him,

²⁹ the king swore an oath to her: As the LORD lives, who has delivered me from all my troubles,

³⁰ I swore by the LORD the God of Israel that Solomon your son should succeed me and that he should sit on my throne; this day I give effect to my oath.

³¹ Bathsheba bowed low to the king, did obeisance, and said, May my lord King David live for ever!

³² King David said, Summon Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada, and, when they came into the king's presence,

³³ he gave them this order: Take the officers of the household with you; mount my son Solomon on the king's mule and escort him down to Gihon.

³⁴ There let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him king over Israel. Then sound the trumpet and shout, Long live King Solomon!

³⁵ When you escort him home again let him come and sit on my throne and reign in my place; for he is the man that I

have designated to be prince over Israel and Judah.

³⁶Benaiah son of Jehoiada answered the king, It will be done. And may the LORD, the God of my lord the king, confirm it!

³⁷As the LORD has been with your majesty, so may he be with Solomon; may he make his throne even greater than the throne of my lord King David.

³⁸Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada, together with the Kerethite and Pelethite guards, went down and, mounting Solomon on King David's mule, they escorted him to Gihon.

³⁹Zadok the priest took the horn of oil from the Tent of the LORD and anointed Solomon; they sounded the trumpet and all the people shouted, Long live King Solomon!

⁴⁰Then all the people escorted him home in procession, with great rejoicing and playing of pipes, so that the very earth split with the noise.

⁴¹Adonijah and his guests had just finished their banquet when the noise reached their ears. On hearing the sound

of the trumpet, Joab exclaimed, What is the meaning of this uproar in the city?

⁴²Even as he was speaking, Jonathan son of Abiathar the priest arrived. Come in, said Adonijah. You are an honourable man and must be a bringer of good news.

⁴³Far from it, Jonathan replied; our lord King David has made Solomon king.

⁴⁴He has sent with him Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah son of Jehoiada, together with the Kerethite and Pelethite guards, and they have mounted Solomon on the king's mule,

⁴⁵and Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet have anointed him king at Gihon. They have now escorted him home rejoicing, and the city is in an uproar. That was the noise you heard.

⁴⁶More than that, Solomon has taken his seat on the royal throne.

⁴⁷Yes, and the officers of the household have been to our lord, King David, and greeted him in this fashion: May your God make the name of Solomon your son more famous than your own and his

throne even greater than yours, and the king bowed upon his couch.

⁴⁸What is more, he said this: Blessed be the LORD the God of Israel who has set a successor on my throne this day while I am still alive to see it.

⁴⁹Adonijah's guests all rose in panic and dispersed.

⁵⁰Adonijah himself, in fear of Solomon, went at once to the altar and grasped hold of its horns.

⁵¹A message was sent to Solomon: Adonijah, in his fear of King Solomon, is clinging to the horns of the altar; he says, Let King Solomon swear to me here and now that he will not put his servant to the sword.

⁵²Solomon said, If he proves himself an honourable man, not a hair of his head will fall to the ground; but if he is found making trouble, he must die.

⁵³Then King Solomon sent and had him brought down from the altar. He came in and prostrated himself before the king, and Solomon said to him, Go to your house.

2¹ As the time of David's death drew near, he gave this charge to his son Solomon:

² I am about to go the way of all the earth. Be strong and show yourself a man.

³ Fulfil your duty to the LORD your God; conform to his ways, observe his statutes and his commandments, his judgements and his solemn precepts, as they are written in the law of Moses, so that you may prosper in whatever you do and whichever way you turn,

⁴ and that the LORD may fulfil this promise that he made about me: If your descendants are careful to walk faithfully in my sight with all their heart and with all their soul, you shall never lack a successor on the throne of Israel.

⁵ You know how Joab son of Zeruah treated me and what he did to two commanders-in-chief in Israel, Abner son of Ner and Amasa son of Jether. He killed them both, breaking the peace by bloody acts of war; and with that blood he stained the belt about his waist and the sandals on his feet.

⁶Act as your wisdom prompts you, and do not let his grey hairs go down to the grave in peace.

⁷Show constant friendship to the family of Barzillai of Gilead; let them have their place at your table; they rallied to me when I was a fugitive from your brother Absalom.

⁸Do not forget Shimei son of Gera, the Benjamite from Bahurim, who cursed me bitterly the day I went to Mahanaim. True, he came down to meet me at the Jordan, and I swore by the LORD that I would not put him to death.

⁹But you do not need to let him go unpunished now; you are a wise man and will know how to deal with him; bring down his grey hairs in blood to the grave.

¹⁰So David rested with his forefathers and was buried in the city of David,

¹¹having reigned over Israel for forty years, seven in Hebron and thirty-three in Jerusalem;

¹²and Solomon succeeded his father David as king and was firmly established on the throne.

¹³ THEN Adonijah son of Haggith came to Bathsheba, Solomon's mother. Do you come as a friend? she asked. As a friend, he answered;

¹⁴ I have something to discuss with you. Tell me, she said.

¹⁵ You know, he went on, that the throne was mine and that all Israel was looking to me to be king; but I was passed over and the throne has gone to my brother; it was his by the will of the LORD.

¹⁶ Now I have one request to make of you; do not refuse me. What is it? she said.

¹⁷ He answered, Will you ask King Solomon (he will never refuse you) to give me Abishag the Shunammite in marriage?

¹⁸ Very well, said Bathsheba, I shall speak to the king on your behalf.

¹⁹ When Bathsheba went in to King Solomon to speak for Adonijah, the king rose to meet her and do obeisance to her. Then he seated himself on his throne, and a throne was set for the king's mother at his right hand.

²⁰She said, I have one small request to make of you; do not refuse me. What is it, mother? he replied. I will not refuse you.

²¹It is this, she said, that Abishag the Shunammite be given in marriage to your brother Adonijah.

²²At that King Solomon answered, Why do you ask that Abishag the Shunammite be given to Adonijah? You might as well ask the kingdom for him; he is my elder brother and has both Abiathar the priest and Joab son of Zeruah on his side.

²³Then he swore by the LORD: So help me God, Adonijah must pay for this with his life.

²⁴As the LORD lives, who has established me and set me on the throne of David my father and has founded a house for me as he promised, this very day Adonijah must be put to death!

²⁵King Solomon sent Benaiah son of Jehoiada with orders to strike him down; so Adonijah died.

²⁶Abiathar the priest was told by the king to go to Anathoth to his estate. You deserve to die, he said, but in spite of this day's work I shall not put you to

death, for you carried the Ark of the Lord GOD before my father David, and you shared in all the hardships he endured.

²⁷ Solomon deposed Abiathar from his office as priest of the LORD, so fulfilling the sentence pronounced by the LORD against the house of Eli in Shiloh.

²⁸ When news of all this reached Joab, he fled to the Tent of the LORD and laid hold of the horns of the altar; for he had sided with Adonijah, though not with Absalom.

²⁹ When King Solomon was told that Joab had fled to the Tent of the LORD and was beside the altar, he sent Benaiah son of Jehoiada with orders to strike him down.

³⁰ Benaiah came to the Tent of the LORD and ordered Joab in the king's name to come away. But he said, No, I will die here. Benaiah reported Joab's answer to the king,

³¹ and the king said, Let him have his way; strike him down and bury him, and so rid me and my father's house of the guilt for the blood that he wantonly shed.

³² The LORD will hold him responsible for his own death, because he struck

down two innocent men who were better men than he, Abner son of Ner, commander of the army of Israel, and Amasa son of Jether, commander of the army of Judah, and ran them through with the sword, without my father David's knowledge.

³³Let the guilt of their blood recoil on Joab and his descendants for all time; but may David and his descendants, his house and his throne, enjoy perpetual prosperity from the LORD.

³⁴Benaiah son of Jehoiada went up to the altar and struck Joab down and killed him, and he was buried at his house out in the country.

³⁵The king appointed Benaiah to command the army in place of Joab, and installed Zadok the priest in the place of Abiathar.

³⁶Next the king sent for Shimei and said to him, Build yourself a house in Jerusalem and stay there; you are not to leave the city for any other place.

³⁷If ever you leave and cross the wadi Kidron, know for certain that you will die. Your blood will be on your own head.

³⁸Shimei replied, I accept your sentence; I shall do as your majesty commands. For a long time Shimei remained in Jerusalem.

³⁹But when three years later two of his slaves ran away to Achish son of Maacah, king of Gath, and this was reported to Shimei,

⁴⁰he at once saddled his donkey and went to Achish in search of his slaves; he reached Gath and brought them back.

⁴¹When King Solomon was informed that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem to Gath and back,

⁴²he sent for him and said, Did I not require you to swear by the LORD? Did I not give you this solemn warning: If ever you leave this city for any other place, know for certain that you will die? You said, I accept your sentence; I shall obey.

⁴³Why then have you not kept the oath which you swore by the LORD, and the order which I gave you?

⁴⁴Shimei, you know in your heart what mischief you did to my father David; the LORD is now making that mischief recoil on your own head.

⁴⁵ But King Solomon is blessed, and the throne of David will be secure before the LORD for all time.

⁴⁶ The king then gave orders to Benaiah son of Jehoiada, who went out and struck Shimei down, and he died. Thus Solomon's royal power was securely established.

3¹ Solomon allied himself to Pharaoh king of Egypt by marrying his daughter. He brought her to the City of David, until he had finished building his palace and the house of the LORD and the wall round Jerusalem.

² The people however continued to sacrifice at the shrines, for up to that time no house had been built for the name of the LORD.

³ Solomon himself loved the LORD, conforming to the precepts laid down by his father David; but he too slaughtered and burnt sacrifices at the shrines.

⁴ The king went to Gibeon to offer a sacrifice, for that was the chief shrine, where he used to offer a thousand whole-offerings on the altar.

⁵That night the LORD appeared to Solomon there in a dream. God said, What shall I give you? Tell me.

⁶He answered, You have shown great and constant love to your servant David my father, because he walked before you in loyalty, righteousness, and integrity of heart; and you have maintained this great and constant love towards him and now you have given him a son to succeed him on the throne.

⁷Now, LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, though I am a mere child, unskilled in leadership.

⁸Here I am in the midst of your people, the people of your choice, too many to be numbered or counted.

⁹Grant your servant, therefore, a heart with skill to listen, so that he may govern your people justly and distinguish good from evil. Otherwise who is equal to the task of governing this great people of yours?

¹⁰The Lord was well pleased that this was what Solomon had asked for,

¹¹and God said, Because you have asked for this, and not for long life,

or for wealth, or for the lives of your enemies, but have asked for discernment in administering justice,

¹²I grant your request; I give you a heart so wise and so understanding that there has been none like you before your time, nor will there be after you.

¹³What is more, I give you those things for which you did not ask, such wealth and glory as no king of your time can match.

¹⁴If you conform to my ways and observe my ordinances and commandments, as your father David did, I will also give you long life.

¹⁵Then Solomon awoke, and realized it was a dream. Solomon came to Jerusalem and stood before the Ark of the Covenant of the Lord, where he sacrificed whole-offerings and brought shared-offerings, and gave a banquet for all his household.

¹⁶Two women who were prostitutes approached the king at that time, and as they stood before him

¹⁷one said, My lord, this woman and I share a house, and I gave birth to a child when she was there with me.

¹⁸On the third day after my baby was born she too gave birth to a child. We were alone; no one else was with us in the house; only the two of us were there.

¹⁹During the night this woman's child died because she lay on it,

²⁰and she got up in the middle of the night, took my baby from my side while I, your servant, was asleep, and laid it on her bosom, putting her dead child on mine.

²¹When I got up in the morning to feed my baby, I found him dead; but when I looked at him closely, I found that it was not the child that I had borne.

²²The other woman broke in, No, the living child is mine; yours is the dead one, while the first insisted, No, the dead child is yours; mine is the living one. So they went on arguing before the king.

²³The king thought to himself, One of them says, This is my child, the living one; yours is the dead one. The other says, No, it is your child that is dead and mine that is alive.

²⁴Then he said, Fetch me a sword. When a sword was brought,

²⁵ the king gave the order: Cut the living child in two and give half to one woman and half to the other.

²⁶ At this the woman who was the mother of the living child, moved with love for her child, said to the king, Oh, sir, let her have the baby! Whatever you do, do not kill it. The other said, Let neither of us have it; cut it in two.

²⁷ The king then spoke up: Give the living baby to the first woman, he said; do not kill it. She is its mother.

²⁸ When Israel heard the judgement which the king had given, they all stood in awe of him; for they saw that he possessed wisdom from God for administering justice.

4 ¹ KING Solomon reigned over Israel.
² His officers were as follows: In charge of the calendar: Azariah son of Zadok the priest.

³ Adjutant-general: Ahijah son of Shisha. Secretary of state: Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud.

⁴ Commander of the army: Benaiah son of Jehoiada. Priests: Zadok and Abiathar.

⁵Superintendent of the regional governors: Azariah son of Nathan. King's Friend: Zabud son of Nathan.

⁶Comptroller of the household: Ahishar. Superintendent of the forced levy: Adoniram son of Abda.

⁷Solomon had twelve regional governors over Israel and they supplied the food for the king and the royal household, each being responsible for one month's provision in the year.

⁸These were their names: Ben-hur in the hill-country of Ephraim.

⁹Ben-dekar in Makaz, Shaalbim, Beth-shemesh, Elon, and Beth-hanan.

¹⁰Ben-hesed in Aruboth; he had charge also of Socoh and all the land of Hopher.

¹¹Ben-abinadab, who had married Solomon's daughter Taphath, in all the district of Dor.

¹²Baana son of Ahilud in Taanach and Megiddo, all Beth-shean as far as Abel-meholah beside Zartanah, and from Beth-shean below Jezreel as far as Jokmeam.

¹³Ben-geber in Ramoth-gilead, including the tent-villages of Jair son of Manasseh in Gilead and the region

of Argob in Bashan, sixty large walled towns with bronze gate-bars.

¹⁴Ahinadab son of Iddo in Mahanaim.

¹⁵Ahimaaz in Naphtali; he also had married a daughter of Solomon, Basmath.

¹⁶Baanah son of Hushai in Asher and Aloth.

¹⁷Jehoshaphat son of Paruah in Issachar.

¹⁸Shimei son of Elah in Benjamin.

¹⁹Geber son of Uri in Gilead, the country of Sihon king of the Amorites and of Og king of Bashan. In addition, one governor over all the governors in the land.

²⁰THE people of Judah and Israel were countless as the sands of the sea; they ate and drank and enjoyed life.

²¹Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the river Euphrates to Philistia and as far as the frontier of Egypt; they paid tribute and were subject to him all his life.

²²Solomon's provisions for one day were thirty kor of flour and sixty kor of meal,

²³ ten fat oxen and twenty oxen from the pastures and a hundred sheep, as well as stags, gazelles, roebucks, and fattened fowl.

²⁴ For he was paramount over all the region west of the Euphrates from Tiphseh to Gaza, ruling all the kings west of the river; and he enjoyed peace on all sides.

²⁵ All through his reign the people of Judah and Israel lived in peace, everyone from Dan to Beersheba under his own vine and his own fig tree.

²⁶ Solomon had forty thousand chariot-horses in his stables and twelve thousand cavalry horses.

²⁷ The regional governors, each for a month in turn, supplied provisions for King Solomon and all who came to his table; they never fell short in their deliveries.

²⁸ They provided also barley and straw, each according to his duty, for the horses and chariot-horses where it was required.

²⁹ God gave Solomon deep wisdom and insight, and understanding as wide as the sand on the seashore,

³⁰so that Solomon's wisdom surpassed that of all the men of the east and of all Egypt.

³¹For he was wiser than any man, wiser than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, Calcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol; his fame spread among all the surrounding nations.

³²He propounded three thousand proverbs, and his songs numbered a thousand and five.

³³He discoursed of trees, from the cedar of Lebanon down to the marjoram that grows out of the wall, of beasts and birds, of reptiles and fish.

³⁴People of all races came to listen to the wisdom of Solomon, and he received gifts from all the kings in the world who had heard of his wisdom.

5¹WHEN Hiram king of Tyre heard that Solomon had been anointed king in his father's place, he sent envoys to him, because he had always been friendly with David.

²Solomon sent this message to Hiram:

³You know that my father David could not build a house for the name of the LORD his God, because of the armed

nations surrounding him, until the LORD made them subject to him.

⁴But now on every side the LORD my God has given me peace; there is no one to oppose me, I fear no attack.

⁵So I propose to build a house for the name of the LORD my God, following the promise given by the LORD to my father David: Your son whom I shall set on the throne in your place will build the house for my name.

⁶If therefore you will now give orders that cedars be felled and brought from Lebanon, my men will work with yours, and I shall pay you for your men whatever sum you fix; for, as you know, we have none so skilled at felling trees as your Sidonians.

⁷Hiram was greatly pleased to receive Solomon's message, and said, Blessed be the LORD today who has given David a wise son to rule over this great people.

⁸He sent Solomon this reply: I have received your message. In this matter of timber, both cedar and pine, I shall do all you wish.

⁹My men will bring down the logs from Lebanon to the sea and I shall make

them up into rafts to be floated to the place you appoint; I shall have them broken up there and you can remove them. You, for your part, will meet my wishes if you provide the food for my household.

¹⁰So Hiram kept Solomon supplied with all the cedar and pine that he wanted,

¹¹and Solomon supplied Hiram with twenty thousand kor of wheat as food for his household and twenty kor of oil of pounded olives; Solomon gave this yearly to Hiram.

¹²The LORD bestowed wisdom on Solomon as he had promised him; there was peace between Hiram and Solomon and they concluded a treaty.

¹³King Solomon raised a forced levy from the whole of Israel amounting to thirty thousand men.

¹⁴He sent them to Lebanon in monthly relays of ten thousand, so that the men spent one month in Lebanon and two at home; Adoniram was superintendent of the levy.

¹⁵Solomon had also seventy thousand hauliers and eighty thousand quarrymen,

¹⁶apart from the three thousand three hundred foremen in charge of the work who superintended the labourers.

¹⁷By the king's orders they quarried huge, costly blocks for laying the foundation of the LORD's house in hewn stone.

¹⁸The builders supplied by Solomon and Hiram, together with the Gebalites, shaped the blocks and prepared both timber and stone for the building of the house.

6¹It was in the four hundred and eightieth year after the Israelites had come out of Egypt, in the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the second month of that year, the month of Ziv, that he began to build the house of the LORD.

²The house which King Solomon built for the LORD was sixty cubits long by twenty cubits broad, and its height was thirty cubits.

³The vestibule in front of the sanctuary was twenty cubits long, spanning the whole breadth of the house, while it projected ten cubits in front of the house;

⁴and he fitted the house with embrasures.

⁵Then he built a terrace against its wall round both the sanctuary and the inner shrine. He made arcades all round:

⁶the lowest arcade was five cubits in depth, the middle six, and the highest seven; for he made rebatements all round the outside of the main wall so that the bearer beams might not be fixed into the walls.

⁷In the building of the house, only blocks of stone dressed at the quarry were used; no hammer or axe or any iron tool whatever was heard in the house while it was being built.

⁸The entrance to the lowest arcade was in the right-hand corner of the house; there was access by a spiral stairway from that to the middle arcade, and from the middle arcade to the highest.

⁹So Solomon built the house and finished it, having constructed the terrace five cubits high against the whole building, braced the house with struts of cedar, and roofed it with beams and coffering of cedar.

¹⁰(6: 9)

¹¹ Then the word of the LORD came to Solomon, saying,

¹² As for this house which you are building, if you are obedient to my ordinances and conform to my precepts and loyally observe all my commands, then I will fulfil my promise to you, the promise I gave to your father David,

¹³ and I will dwell among the Israelites and never forsake my people Israel.

¹⁴ So Solomon built the LORD's house and finished it.

¹⁵ He panelled the inner walls of the house with cedar boards, covering the interior from floor to rafters with wood; the floor he laid with boards of pine.

¹⁶ In the innermost part of the house he partitioned off a space of twenty cubits with cedar boards from floor to rafters and made of it an inner shrine, to be the Most Holy Place.

¹⁷ The sanctuary in front of this was forty cubits long.

¹⁸ The cedar inside the house was carved with open flowers and gourds; all was cedar, no stone was left visible.

¹⁹He prepared an inner shrine in the farthest recesses of the house to receive the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD.

²⁰This inner shrine was twenty cubits square and it stood twenty cubits high; he overlaid it with red gold and made an altar of cedar.

²¹Solomon overlaid the inside of the house with red gold and drew a veil with golden chains across in front of the inner shrine.

²²The whole house he overlaid with gold until it was all covered; and the whole of the altar by the inner shrine he overlaid with gold.

²³In the inner shrine he carved two cherubim of wild olive wood, each ten cubits high.

²⁴Each wing of the cherubim was five cubits long, and from wingtip to wingtip was ten cubits.

²⁵Similarly, the second cherub measured ten cubits; the two cherubim were alike in size and shape,

²⁶and each ten cubits high.

²⁷He put the cherubim within the inner shrine and their wings were spread, so that a wing of one cherub touched the

wall on one side and a wing of the other touched the wall on the other side, and their other wings met in the middle;

²⁸he overlaid the cherubim with gold.

²⁹Round all the walls of the house he carved figures of cherubim, palm trees, and open flowers, both in the inner chamber and in the outer.

³⁰The floor of the house he overlaid with gold, both in the inner chamber and in the outer.

³¹At the entrance to the inner shrine he made a double door of wild olive wood; the pilasters and the doorposts were pentagonal.

³²The doors were of wild olive, and he carved cherubim, palms, and open flowers on them, overlaying them with gold and hammering the gold upon the cherubim and the palms.

³³Similarly for the doorway of the sanctuary he made a square frame of wild olive

³⁴and a double door of pine, each leaf having two swivel-pins.

³⁵On them he carved cherubim, palms, and open flowers, overlaying them evenly with gold over the carving.

³⁶He built the inner court with three courses of dressed stone and one course of lengths of cedar.

³⁷In the fourth year of Solomon's reign, in the month of Ziv, the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid;

³⁸and in the eleventh year, in the month of Bul, which is the eighth month, the house was finished in all its details according to the specification. It had taken seven years to build.

7 ¹By the time he had finished, Solomon had been engaged on building for thirteen years.

²He built the House of the Forest of Lebanon, a hundred cubits long, fifty broad, and thirty high, constructed of four rows of cedar columns, on top of which were laid lengths of cedar.

³It had a cedar roof, extending over the beams, which rested on the columns, fifteen in each row; and the number of the beams was forty-five.

⁴There were three rows of window-frames, and the windows corresponded to each other at three levels.

⁵All the doorways and the windows had square frames, and window corresponded to window at three levels.

⁶Solomon made also the portico, fifty cubits long and thirty broad, with a cornice above.

⁷He built the Portico of Judgement, the portico containing the throne where he was to give judgement; this was panelled in cedar from floor to rafters.

⁸His own house where he was to reside, in another courtyard set back from the portico, and the house he made for Pharaoh's daughter whom he had married, were constructed like this portico.

⁹All these were made of costly blocks of stone, hewn to measure and trimmed with the saw on the inner and outer sides, from foundation to coping and from the court of the house as far as the great court.

¹⁰At the base were costly stones, huge blocks, some ten and some eight cubits in size,

¹¹and above were costly stones dressed to measure, and cedar.

¹²The great court had three courses of dressed stone all around and a course of lengths of cedar; so had the inner court of the house of the LORD, and so had the vestibule of the house.

¹³King Solomon fetched from Tyre Hiram,

¹⁴the son of a widow of the tribe of Naphtali. His father, a native of Tyre, had been a worker in bronze, and he himself was a man of great skill and ingenuity, versed in every kind of craftsmanship in bronze. After he came to King Solomon, Hiram carried out all his works.

¹⁵He cast in a mould the two bronze pillars. One stood eighteen cubits high and it took a cord of twelve cubits long to go round it; it was hollow, and the metal was four fingers thick. The second pillar was the same.

¹⁶He made two capitals of solid bronze to set on the tops of the pillars, each capital five cubits high.

¹⁷He made two bands of ornamental network, in festoons of chain-work, for the capitals on the tops of the pillars, a band of network for each capital.

¹⁸He made pomegranates in two rows all round on top of the ornamental network of the one pillar; he did the same with the other capital.

¹⁹The capitals at the tops of the pillars in the vestibule were shaped like lilies and were four cubits high.

²⁰On the capitals at the tops of the two pillars, immediately above the cushion, extending beyond the network upwards, were two hundred pomegranates in rows all round on the two capitals.

²¹Then he erected the pillars at the vestibule of the sanctuary. When he had erected the pillar on the right side, he named it Jachin; and when he had erected the one on the left side, he named it Boaz.

²²On the tops of the pillars was lily-work. Thus the work of the pillars was finished.

²³He made the Sea of cast metal; it was round in shape, the diameter from rim to rim being ten cubits; it stood five cubits high, and it took a line thirty cubits long to go round it.

²⁴All round the Sea on the outside under its rim, completely surrounding

the thirty cubits of its circumference, were two rows of gourds, cast in one piece with the Sea itself.

²⁵It was mounted on twelve oxen, three facing north, three west, three south, and three east, their hindquarters turned inwards; the Sea rested on top of them.

²⁶Its thickness was a hand's breadth; its rim was made like that of a cup, shaped like the calyx of a lily; it held two thousand bath.

²⁷Hiram also made the ten trolleys of bronze; each trolley was four cubits long, four wide, and three high.

²⁸This was the construction of the trolleys: they had panels set in frames;

²⁹on these panels were portrayed lions, oxen, and cherubim, and the same on the frames; above and below the lions, oxen, and cherubim were fillets of hammered work of spiral design.

³⁰Each trolley had four bronze wheels with bronze axles; it also had four flanges and handles beneath the laver, and these handles were of cast metal with a spiral design on their sides.

³¹The opening for the basin was set within a crown which projected one

cubit; the opening was round with a level edge, and it had decorations in relief. The panels of the trolleys were square, not round.

³²The four wheels were beneath the panels, and the wheel-forks were made in one piece with the trolleys; the height of each wheel was one and a half cubits.

³³The wheels were constructed like those of a chariot, their axles, hubs, spokes, and felloes being all of cast metal.

³⁴The four handles were at the four corners of each trolley, of one piece with the trolley.

³⁵At the top of the trolley there was a circular band half a cubit high; the struts and panels on the trolley were of one piece with it.

³⁶On the plates, that is on the panels, he carved cherubim, lions, and palm trees, wherever there was a blank space, with spiral work all round it.

³⁷This is how the ten trolleys were made; all of them were cast alike, having the same size and the same shape.

³⁸Hiram then made ten bronze basins, each holding forty bath and measuring

four cubits; there was a basin for each of the ten trolleys.

³⁹He put five trolleys on the right side of the house and five on the left side; and he placed the Sea in the south-east corner of it.

⁴⁰Hiram made the pots, the shovels, and the tossing-bowls. With them he finished all the work which he had undertaken for King Solomon in the house of the LORD:

⁴¹the two pillars; the two bowl-shaped capitals on the tops of the pillars; the two ornamental networks to cover the two bowl-shaped capitals on the tops of the pillars;

⁴²the four hundred pomegranates for the two networks, two rows of pomegranates for each network, to cover the bowl-shaped capitals on the two pillars;

⁴³the ten trolleys and the ten basins on the trolleys;

⁴⁴the one Sea and the twelve oxen which supported it;

⁴⁵the pots, the shovels, and the tossing-bowls -- all these objects in the house of the LORD which Hiram made

for King Solomon being of burnished bronze.

⁴⁶The king cast them in the foundry between Succoth and Zarethan in the plain of the Jordan.

⁴⁷Solomon put all these objects in their places; so great was the quantity of bronze used in their making that the weight of it was beyond all reckoning.

⁴⁸He made also all the furnishings for the house of the LORD: the golden altar and the golden table upon which was set the Bread of the Presence;

⁴⁹the lampstands of red gold, five on the right side and five on the left side of the inner shrine; the flowers, lamps, and tongs of gold;

⁵⁰the cups, snuffers, tossing-bowls, saucers, and firepans of red gold; and the panels for the doors of the inner sanctuary, the Most Holy Place, and for the doors of the house, of gold.

⁵¹When all the work which King Solomon did for the house of the LORD was completed, he brought in the sacred treasures of his father David, the silver, the gold, and the vessels, and deposited

them in the treasuries of the house of the LORD.

8¹ THEN Solomon summoned to him at Jerusalem the elders of Israel, all the heads of the tribes who were chiefs of families in Israel, in order to bring up the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD from the City of David, which is called Zion.

² All the men of Israel assembled in King Solomon's presence at the pilgrim-feast in the month Ethanim, the seventh month.

³ When the elders of Israel had all arrived, the priests lifted the Ark of the LORD

⁴ and carried it up; the Tent of Meeting and all the sacred furnishings of the Tent were carried by the priests and the Levites.

⁵ King Solomon and the whole congregation of Israel assembled with him before the Ark sacrificed sheep and oxen in numbers past counting or reckoning.

⁶ The priests brought in the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD to its place in the inner shrine of the house, the Most

Holy Place, beneath the wings of the cherubim.

⁷The cherubim, whose wings were spread over the place of the Ark, formed a canopy above the Ark and its poles.

⁸The poles projected, and their ends were visible from the Holy Place immediately in front of the inner shrine, but from nowhere else outside; they are there to this day.

⁹There was nothing inside the Ark but the two stone tablets which Moses had deposited there at Horeb, when the LORD made the covenant with the Israelites after they left Egypt.

¹⁰The priests came out of the Holy Place, since the cloud was filling the house of the LORD,

¹¹and they could not continue to minister because of it, for the glory of the LORD filled his house.

¹²Then Solomon said: The LORD has caused his sun to shine in the heavens, but he has said he would dwell in thick darkness.

¹³I have built you a lofty house, a dwelling-place for you to occupy for ever.

¹⁴While the whole assembly of Israelites stood, the king turned and blessed them:

¹⁵Blessed be the LORD the God of Israel who spoke directly to my father David and has himself fulfilled his promise. For he said,

¹⁶From the day when I brought my people Israel out of Egypt, I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel where I should build a house for my name to be, but I chose Jerusalem where my name should be, and David to be over my people Israel.

¹⁷My father David had it in mind to build a house for the name of the LORD the God of Israel,

¹⁸but the LORD said to him, You purposed to build a house for my name, and your purpose was good.

¹⁹Nevertheless, you are not to build it; but the son who is to be born to you, he is to build the house for my name.

²⁰The LORD has now fulfilled his promise: I have succeeded my father David and taken his place on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised; and I

have built the house for the name of the LORD the God of Israel.

²¹ I have assigned a place in it for the Ark containing the covenant of the LORD, which he made with our forefathers when he brought them out of Egypt.

²² Standing in front of the altar of the LORD in the presence of the whole assembly of Israel, Solomon spread out his hands towards heaven

²³ and said, LORD God of Israel, there is no God like you in heaven above or on earth beneath, keeping covenant with your servants and showing them constant love while they continue faithful to you with all their hearts.

²⁴ You have kept your promise to your servant David my father; by your deeds this day you have fulfilled what you said to him in words.

²⁵ Now, therefore, LORD God of Israel, keep this promise of yours to your servant David my father, when you said: You will never want for a man appointed by me to sit on the throne of Israel, if only your sons look to their ways and walk before me as you have done.

²⁶ God of Israel, let the promise which you made to your servant David my father be confirmed.

²⁷ But can God indeed dwell on earth? Heaven itself, the highest heaven, cannot contain you; how much less this house that I have built!

²⁸ Yet attend, LORD my God, to the prayer and the supplication of your servant; listen to the cry and the prayer which your servant makes before you this day,

²⁹ that your eyes may ever be on this house night and day, this place of which you said, My name will be there. Hear your servant when he prays towards this place.

³⁰ Hear the supplication of your servant and your people Israel when they pray towards this place. Hear in heaven your dwelling and, when you hear, forgive.

³¹ Should anyone wrong a neighbour and be adjured to take an oath, and come to take the oath before your altar in this house,

³² then hear in heaven and take action: be your servants judge, condemning the guilty person and bringing his deeds on

his own head, acquitting the innocent and rewarding him as his innocence may deserve.

³³ Should your people Israel be defeated by an enemy because they have sinned against you, and then turn back to you, confessing your name and making their prayer and supplication to you in this house,

³⁴ hear in heaven; forgive the sin of your people Israel and restore them to the land which you gave to their forefathers.

³⁵ Should the heavens be shut up and there be no rain, because your servant and your people Israel have sinned against you, and they then pray towards this place, confessing your name and forsaking their sin when they feel your punishment,

³⁶ hear in heaven and forgive their sin; so teach them the good way which they are to follow, and grant rain on your land which you have given to your people as their own possession.

³⁷ Should there be famine in the land, or pestilence, or blight either black or red, or locusts developing or fully grown,

or should their enemies besiege them in any of their cities, or plague or sickness befall them,

³⁸ then hear the prayer or supplication of everyone among your people Israel, as each, prompted by the remorse of his own heart, spreads out his hands towards this house:

³⁹ hear it in heaven your dwelling-place, forgive, and take action. As you know a person's heart, reward him according to his deeds, for you alone know the hearts of all;

⁴⁰ and so they will fear you throughout their lives in the land you gave to our forefathers.

⁴¹ The foreigner too, anyone who does not belong to your people Israel, but has come from a distant land because of your fame

⁴² (for your great fame and your strong hand and outstretched arm will be widely known), when such a one comes and prays towards this house,

⁴³ hear in heaven your dwelling-place and respond to the call which the foreigner makes to you, so that like your people Israel all the peoples of the earth

may know your fame and fear you, and learn that this house which I have built bears your name.

⁴⁴When your people go to war against an enemy, wherever you send them, and when they pray to the LORD, turning towards this city which you have chosen and towards this house which I have built for your name,

⁴⁵then hear in heaven their prayer and supplication, and maintain their cause.

⁴⁶Should they sin against you (and who is free from sin?) and should you in your anger give them over to an enemy who carries them captive to his own land, far or near,

⁴⁷and should they then in the land of their captivity have a change of heart and make supplication to you there and say, We have sinned and acted perversely and wickedly,

⁴⁸and turn back to you wholeheartedly in the land of their enemies who took them captive, and pray to you, turning towards their land which you gave to their forefathers and towards this city which you chose and this house which I have built for your name,

⁴⁹ then in heaven your dwelling-place hear their prayer and supplication, and maintain their cause.

⁵⁰ Forgive your people their sins and transgressions against you; put pity for them in their captors hearts.

⁵¹ For they are your possession, your people whom you brought out of Egypt, from the smelting furnace.

⁵² Let your eyes be ever open to the entreaty of your servant and of your people Israel, and hear whenever they call to you.

⁵³ You yourself have singled them out from all the peoples of the earth to be your possession; so, Lord GOD, you promised through your servant Moses when you brought our forefathers from Egypt.'

⁵⁴ As Solomon finished all this prayer and supplication to the LORD, he rose from before the altar of the LORD, where he had been kneeling with his hands spread out to heaven;

⁵⁵ he stood up and in a loud voice blessed the whole assembly of Israel:

⁵⁶ Blessed be the LORD who has given his people Israel rest, as he promised:

not one of the promises he made through his servant Moses has failed.

⁵⁷ May the LORD our God be with us as he was with our forefathers; may he never leave us or forsake us.

⁵⁸ May he turn our hearts towards him, so that we may conform to all his ways, observing his commandments, statutes, and judgements, as he commanded our forefathers.

⁵⁹ And may the words of my supplication to the LORD be with the LORD our God day and night, that, as the need arises day by day, he may maintain the cause of his servant and of his people Israel.

⁶⁰ So all the peoples of the earth will know that the LORD is God, he and no other,

⁶¹ and you will be perfect in loyalty to the LORD our God as you are this day, conforming to his statutes and observing his commandments.

⁶² The king and all Israel with him offered sacrifices before the LORD;

⁶³ Solomon offered as shared-offerings to the LORD twenty-two thousand oxen and a hundred and twenty thousand

sheep. Thus the king and the Israelites dedicated the house of the LORD.

⁶⁴On that day also the king consecrated the centre of the court which lay in front of the house of the LORD; there he offered the whole-offering, the grain-offering, and the fat portions of the shared-offerings, because the bronze altar which stood before the LORD was too small to accommodate the whole-offering, the grain-offering, and the fat portions of the shared-offerings.

⁶⁵So Solomon and with him all Israel, a great assembly from Lebo-hamath to the wadi of Egypt, celebrated the pilgrim-feast at that time before the LORD our God for seven days.

⁶⁶On the eighth day he dismissed the people; and they blessed the king, and went home happy and glad at heart for all the prosperity granted by the LORD to his servant David and to his people Israel.

9¹WHEN Solomon had completed the house of the LORD and the palace and all the plans for building on which he had set his heart,

² the LORD again appeared to him, as he had appeared to him at Gibeon,

³ and said, I have heard the prayer and supplication which you have offered me. I have consecrated this house which you have built to receive my name for all time, and my eyes and my heart will be fixed on it for ever.

⁴ If you, for your part, live in my sight as your father David lived, in integrity and uprightness, doing all I command you and observing my statutes and my judgements,

⁵ then I shall establish the throne of your kingdom over Israel for ever, as I promised your father David when I said, You shall never want for a man on the throne of Israel.

⁶ But if you or your sons turn away from following me and do not observe my commandments and my statutes which I have set before you, and if you go and serve other gods and bow down before them,

⁷ then I shall cut off Israel from the land which I gave them; I shall renounce this house which I have consecrated to my

name, and Israel will become a byword and an object-lesson among all peoples.

⁸This house will become a ruin; every passer-by will be appalled and gasp at the sight of it; and they will ask, Why has the LORD so treated this land and this house?

⁹The answer will be, Because they forsook the LORD their God, who brought their forefathers out of Egypt, and they clung to other gods, bowing down before them and serving them; that is why the LORD has brought all this misfortune on them.

¹⁰At the end of the twenty years it had taken Solomon to build the two houses, the house of the LORD and the palace,

¹¹he made over to Hiram king of Tyre twenty towns in Galilee, for Hiram had supplied him with the timber, both cedar and pine, and the gold, all he requested.

¹²But when Hiram went from Tyre to inspect the towns, they did not satisfy him,

¹³and he said, My brother, what kind of towns are these you have given me? And so he called them the Land of Cabul, the name they still bear.

¹⁴Hiram had sent a hundred and twenty talents of gold to the king.

¹⁵This is the record of the forced labour which King Solomon conscripted to build the house of the LORD, his own palace, the Millo, the wall of Jerusalem, and Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer.

¹⁶Gezer had been attacked and captured by Pharaoh king of Egypt, who had burnt it to the ground, put its Canaanite inhabitants to death, and given it as a marriage gift to his daughter, Solomon's wife.

¹⁷Solomon rebuilt it. He also built Lower Beth-horon,

¹⁸Baalath, and Tamar in the wilderness,

¹⁹as well as all his store-cities, and the towns where he quartered his chariots and horses; and he carried out all his cherished plans for building in Jerusalem, in the Lebanon, and throughout his whole dominion.

²⁰All the survivors of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites who did not belong to Israel --

²¹that is those of their descendants who survived in the land, wherever the Israelites had been unable to

exterminate them -- all were employed by Solomon on perpetual forced labour, as they still are.

²²None of the Israelites were put to forced labour; they were his fighting men, his captains and lieutenants, and the commanders of his chariots and of his cavalry.

²³The number of officers in charge of the foremen over Solomon's work was five hundred and fifty; these superintended the people engaged on the work.

²⁴Solomon brought Pharaoh's daughter up from the City of David to her own house which he had built for her; later he built the Millo.

²⁵Three times a year Solomon used to offer whole-offerings and shared-offerings on the altar which he had built to the LORD, burning the offerings before the LORD. So he completed the house.

²⁶King Solomon built a fleet of ships at Ezion-geber, near Eloth on the shore of the Red Sea, in Edom.

²⁷Hiram sent men of his own to serve with the fleet, experienced seamen, to work with Solomon's men.

²⁸They went to Ophir and brought back four hundred and twenty talents of gold, which they delivered to King Solomon.

10¹THE queen of Sheba heard of Solomon's fame and came to test him with enigmatic questions.

²She arrived in Jerusalem with a very large retinue, camels laden with spices, gold in vast quantity, and precious stones. When she came to Solomon, she talked to him about everything she had on her mind.

³Solomon answered all her questions; not one of them was too hard for the king to answer.

⁴When the queen of Sheba observed all the wisdom of Solomon, the palace he had built,

⁵the food on his table, the courtiers sitting around him, and his attendants standing behind in their livery, his cupbearers, and the whole-offerings which he used to offer in the house of the LORD, she was overcome with amazement.

⁶She said to the king, The account which I heard in my own country about

your achievements and your wisdom was true,

⁷but I did not believe what they told me until I came and saw for myself. Indeed I was not told half of it; your wisdom and your prosperity far surpass all I had heard of them.

⁸Happy are your wives, happy these courtiers of yours who are in attendance on you every day and hear your wisdom!

⁹Blessed be the LORD your God who has delighted in you and has set you on the throne of Israel; because he loves Israel unendingly, he has made you king to maintain law and justice.

¹⁰She presented the king with a hundred and twenty talents of gold, spices in great abundance, and precious stones. Never again did such a quantity of spices come as the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

¹¹Besides all this, Hiram's fleet of ships, which had brought gold from Ophir, brought also from Ophir huge cargoes of almug wood and precious stones.

¹²The king used the wood to make stools for the house of the LORD and for the palace, as well as lyres and lutes for

the singers. No such quantities of almug wood have ever been imported or even seen since that time.

¹³King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba whatever she desired and asked for, in addition to all that he gave her of his royal bounty. Then she departed with her retinue and went back to her own land.

¹⁴The weight of gold which Solomon received in any one year was six hundred and sixty-six talents,

¹⁵in addition to the tolls levied by the customs officers, the profits on foreign trade, and the tribute of the kings of Arabia and the regional governors.

¹⁶King Solomon made two hundred shields of beaten gold, and six hundred shekels of gold went to the making of each one;

¹⁷he also made three hundred bucklers of beaten gold, and three minas of gold went to the making of each buckler. The king put these into the House of the Forest of Lebanon.

¹⁸The king also made a great throne inlaid with ivory and overlaid with fine gold.

¹⁹Six steps led up to the throne; at the back of the throne there was the head of a calf. There were armrests on each side of the seat, with a lion standing beside each of them,

²⁰while twelve lions stood on the six steps, one at either end of each step. Nothing like it had ever been made for any monarch.

²¹All Solomon's drinking vessels were of gold, and all the plate in the House of the Forest of Lebanon was of red gold; no silver was used, for it was reckoned of no value in the days of Solomon.

²²The king had a fleet of merchantmen at sea with Hiram's fleet; once every three years this fleet of merchantmen came home, bringing gold and silver, ivory, apes, and monkeys.

²³Thus King Solomon outdid all the kings of the earth in wealth and wisdom,

²⁴and the whole world courted him to hear the wisdom with which God had endowed his mind.

²⁵Each one brought his gift with him, vessels of silver and gold, garments, perfumes and spices, horses and mules in annual tribute.

²⁶Solomon amassed chariots and horses; he had fourteen hundred chariots and twelve thousand horses; he stationed some in the chariot-towns, while others he kept at hand in Jerusalem.

²⁷He made silver as common in Jerusalem as stone, and cedar as plentiful as the sycomore-fig is in the Shephelah.

²⁸Horses were imported from Egypt and Kue for Solomon; the merchants of the king obtained them from Kue by purchase.

²⁹Chariots were imported from Egypt for six hundred silver shekels each, and horses for a hundred and fifty; in the same way the merchants obtained them for export from all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Aram.

11 ¹King Solomon loved many foreign women; in addition to Pharaoh's daughter there were Moabite, Ammonite, Edomite, Sidonian, and Hittite women,

²from the nations with whom the LORD had forbidden the Israelites to intermarry, because, he said, they will

entice you to serve their gods. But Solomon was devoted to them and loved them dearly.

³He had seven hundred wives, all princesses, and three hundred concubines, and they influenced him,

⁴for as he grew old, his wives turned his heart to follow other gods, and he did not remain wholly loyal to the LORD his God as his father David had been.

⁵He followed Ashtoreth, goddess of the Sidonians, and Milcom, the loathsome god of the Ammonites.

⁶Thus Solomon did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD, and was not wholehearted in his loyalty to the LORD as his father David had been.

⁷He built a shrine for Kemosh, the loathsome god of Moab, on the heights to the east of Jerusalem, and one for Milcom, the loathsome god of the Ammonites.

⁸These things he did for the gods to whom all his foreign wives burnt offerings and made sacrifices.

⁹The LORD was angry with Solomon because his heart had turned away from

the LORD the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice

¹⁰and had strictly commanded him not to follow other gods; but he disobeyed the LORD's command.

¹¹The LORD therefore said to Solomon, Because you have done this and have not kept my covenant and my statutes as I commanded you, I will tear the kingdom from you and give it to your servant.

¹²Nevertheless, for the sake of your father David I will not do this in your day; I will tear it out of your son's hand.

¹³Even so not the whole kingdom; I will leave him one tribe for the sake of my servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, my chosen city.

¹⁴The LORD raised up an adversary for Solomon, Hadad the Edomite, of the royal house of Edom.

¹⁵At the time when David reduced Edom, his commander-in-chief Joab had destroyed every male in the country when he went into it to bury the slain.

¹⁶He and the Israelite armies remained there for six months, until he had slain every male in Edom.

¹⁷ But Hadad, who was still a boy, fled the country with some of his father's Edomite servants; their goal was Egypt.

¹⁸ They set out from Midian, made their way to Paran, and, taking some men from there, came to Pharaoh king of Egypt, who assigned Hadad a house and maintenance and made him a grant of land.

¹⁹ Hadad found great favour with Pharaoh, who gave him in marriage a sister of his wife, Queen Tahpenes.

²⁰ She bore him his son Genubath; Tahpenes weaned the child in Pharaoh's palace, and he lived there with Pharaoh's sons.

²¹ When Hadad heard in Egypt that David rested with his forefathers and that his commander-in-chief Joab was also dead, he said to Pharaoh, Give me leave to go, so that I may return to my own country.

²² What is it that you find wanting in my country, said Pharaoh, that you want to go back to your own? Nothing, replied Hadad, but do let me go.

²³ Another adversary God raised up against Solomon was Rezon son of

Eliada, who had fled from his master Hadadezer king of Zobah.

²⁴He gathered men about him and became a captain of freebooters; he went to Damascus, occupied it, and became king there.

²⁵He remained an adversary for Israel all through Solomon's reign. This is the harm that Hadad caused: he maintained a stranglehold on Israel and became king of Edom.

²⁶Jeroboam son of Nebat, one of Solomon's courtiers, an Ephrathite from Zeredah, whose widowed mother was named Zeruah, rebelled against the king.

²⁷This is the story of his rebellion. When Solomon built the Millo and closed the breach in the wall of the city of his father David,

²⁸he saw how the young man worked, for Jeroboam was a man of great ability, and the king put him in charge of all the labour-gangs in the tribal district of Joseph.

²⁹On one occasion when Jeroboam left Jerusalem, the prophet Ahijah from Shiloh met him on the road. The prophet

was wearing a new cloak and, when the two of them were alone out in the open country,

³⁰ Ahijah, taking hold of the new cloak he was wearing, tore it into twelve pieces,

³¹ and said to Jeroboam, Take for yourself ten pieces, for the LORD the God of Israel has declared that he is about to tear the kingdom from the hand of Solomon and give you ten tribes.

³² But, says the LORD, one tribe will remain Solomon's, for the sake of my servant David and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city I have chosen out of all the tribes of Israel.

³³ I shall do this because Solomon has forsaken me; he has bowed down before Ashtoreth goddess of the Sidonians, Kemosh god of Moab, and Milcom god of the Ammonites, and has not conformed to my ways. He has not done what is right in my eyes or observed my statutes and judgements as David his father did.

³⁴ Nevertheless I shall not take the whole kingdom from him, but shall maintain his rule as long as he lives, for the sake of my chosen servant David,

who did observe my commandments and statutes.

³⁵But I shall take the kingdom, that is the ten tribes, from his son and give it to you.

³⁶To his son I shall give one tribe, that my servant David may always have a lamp burning before me in Jerusalem, the city which I chose to receive my name.

³⁷I shall appoint you to rule over all that you can desire, and to be king over Israel.

³⁸If you pay heed to all my commands, if you conform to my ways and do what is right in my eyes, observing my statutes and commandments as my servant David did, then I shall be with you. I shall establish your family for ever as I did for David; I shall give Israel to you,

³⁹and punish David's descendants as they have deserved, but not for ever.

⁴⁰After this Solomon sought to kill Jeroboam, but he fled to King Shishak in Egypt and remained there till Solomon's death.

⁴¹ The other acts and events of Solomon's reign, and all his wisdom, are recorded in the annals of Solomon.

⁴² The reign of King Solomon in Jerusalem over the whole of Israel lasted forty years.

⁴³ Then he rested with his forefathers and was buried in the city of David his father; he was succeeded by his son Rehoboam.

12¹ REHOBAM went to Shechem, for all Israel had gone there to make him king.

² When Jeroboam son of Nebat, who was still in Egypt, heard of it, he remained there, having taken refuge in Egypt to escape King Solomon.

³ The people now recalled him, and he and all the assembly of Israel came to Rehoboam and said,

⁴ Your father laid a harsh yoke upon us; but if you will now lighten the harsh labour he imposed and the heavy yoke he laid on us, we shall serve you.

⁵ Give me three days, he said, and then come back. When the people had gone,

⁶ King Rehoboam consulted the elders who had been in attendance during the

lifetime of his father Solomon: What answer do you advise me to give to this people?

⁷They said, If today you are willing to serve this people, show yourself their servant now and speak kindly to them, and they will be your servants ever after.

⁸But he rejected the advice given him by the elders, and consulted the young men who had grown up with him, and were now in attendance;

⁹he asked them, What answer do you advise me to give to this people's request that I should lighten the yoke which my father laid on them?

¹⁰The young men replied, Give this answer to the people who say that your father made their yoke heavy and ask you to lighten it; tell them: My little finger is thicker than my father's loins.

¹¹My father laid a heavy yoke on you, but I shall make it heavier. My father whipped you, but I shall flay you.

¹²Jeroboam and the people all came to Rehoboam on the third day, as the king had ordered.

¹³The king gave them a harsh answer; he rejected the advice which the elders had given him

¹⁴and spoke to the people as the young men had advised: My father made your yoke heavy, but I shall make it heavier. My father whipped you, but I shall flay you.

¹⁵The king would not listen to the people; for the LORD had given this turn to the affair in order that the word he had spoken by Ahijah of Shiloh to Jeroboam son of Nebat might be fulfilled.

¹⁶When all Israel saw that the king would not listen to them, they answered: What share have we in David? We have no lot in the son of Jesse. Away to your tents, Israel! Now see to your own house, David! With that Israel went off to their homes.

¹⁷Rehoboam ruled only over those Israelites who lived in the cities and towns of Judah.

¹⁸King Rehoboam sent out Adoram, the commander of the forced levies, but when the Israelites stoned him to death, the king hastily mounted his chariot and fled to Jerusalem.

¹⁹From that day to this Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David.

²⁰When the men of Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned, they sent and called him to the assembly and made him king over the whole of Israel. The tribe of Judah alone stayed loyal to the house of David.

²¹When Rehoboam reached Jerusalem, he mustered the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, a hundred and eighty thousand chosen warriors, to fight against Israel and recover his kingdom.

²²But this word of God came to Shemaiah the man of God:

²³Say to Rehoboam son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to all Judah and Benjamin and the rest of the people,

²⁴This is the word of the LORD: You are not to go up to make war on your kinsmen the Israelites. Return to your homes, for this is my doing. They listened to the word of the LORD and went back, as the LORD had told them.

²⁵JEROBOAM rebuilt Shechem in the hill-country of Ephraim and took up residence there; from there he went out and built Penuel.

²⁶As things now stand, he said to himself, the kingdom will revert to the house of David.

²⁷If these people go up to sacrifice in the house of the LORD in Jerusalem, it will revive their allegiance to their lord King Rehoboam of Judah, and they will kill me and return to King Rehoboam.

²⁸After taking counsel about the matter he made two calves of gold and said to the people, You have gone up to Jerusalem long enough; here are your gods, Israel, that brought you up from Egypt.

²⁹One he set up at Bethel and the other he put at Dan,

³⁰and this thing became a sin in Israel; the people went to Bethel to worship the one, and all the way to Dan to worship the other.

³¹He also erected temple buildings at shrines and appointed priests who did not belong to the Levites, from every class of the people.

³²He instituted a pilgrim-feast on the fifteenth day of the eighth month like that in Judah, and he offered sacrifices on the altar. This he did at Bethel,

sacrificing to the calves that he had made and compelling the priests of the shrines, which he had set up, to serve at Bethel.

³³He went up on the fifteenth day of the eighth month to the altar that he had made at Bethel; there, in a month of his own choosing, he instituted for the Israelites a pilgrim-feast and himself went up to the altar to burn the sacrifice.

13¹As Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn the sacrifice, a man of God from Judah, moved by the word of the LORD, appeared at Bethel.

²He inveighed against the altar in the LORD's name, crying out, O altar, altar! This is the word of the LORD: Listen! To the house of David a child shall be born named Josiah. On you he will sacrifice the priests of the shrines who make offerings on you, and he will burn human bones on you.

³He gave a sign the same day: This is the sign which the LORD has ordained: This altar will be split asunder and the ashes on it will be scattered.

⁴When King Jeroboam heard the sentence which the man of God

pronounced against the altar at Bethel, he pointed to him from the altar and cried, Seize him! Immediately the hand which he had pointed at him became paralysed, so that he could not draw it back.

⁵The altar too was split asunder and the ashes were scattered, in fulfilment of the sign that the man of God had given at the LORD's command.

⁶The king appealed to the man of God to placate the LORD his God and pray for him that his hand might be restored. The man of God did as he asked; the king's hand was restored and became as it had been before.

⁷He said to the man of God, Come home with me and have some refreshment, and let me give you a reward.

⁸But he answered, If you were to give me half your house, I would not enter it with you: I will eat and drink nothing in this place,

⁹for the LORD's command to me was to eat and drink nothing, and not to go back by the way I came.

¹⁰So he went back another way, not returning by the road he had taken to Bethel.

¹¹At that time there was an aged prophet living in Bethel. His sons came and told him all that the man of God had done there that day, and what he had said to the king.

¹²Their father asked, Which road did he take? They pointed out the direction taken by the man of God who had come from Judah.

¹³He said to his sons, Saddle the donkey for me. They saddled the donkey, and, mounted on it,

¹⁴he went after the man of God. He came on him seated under a terebinth and asked, Are you the man of God who came from Judah? I am, he replied.

¹⁵Come home and eat with me, said the prophet.

¹⁶I may not go back with you or enter your house, said the other; I may neither eat nor drink with you in this place,

¹⁷for it was told me by the word of the LORD: You are to eat and drink nothing there, nor are you to go back the way you came.

¹⁸The old man urged him, I also am a prophet, as you are; and an angel commanded me by the word of the LORD to bring you to my home to eat and drink with me. He was lying;

¹⁹but the man of Judah went back with him and ate and drank in his house.

²⁰While they were still seated at table the word of the LORD came to the prophet who had brought him back,

²¹and he cried out to the man of God from Judah, This is the word of the LORD: You have defied the word of the LORD your God and have not obeyed his command;

²²you have gone back to eat and drink in the place where he forbade it; therefore your body will not be laid in the grave of your forefathers.

²³After the man of God had eaten and drunk, the prophet who had brought him back saddled the donkey for him.

²⁴As he rode on his way a lion met him and killed him, and his body was left lying in the road, with the donkey and the lion both standing beside it.

²⁵Some passers-by saw the body lying in the road and the lion standing beside

it, and they brought the news to the town where the old prophet lived.

²⁶When the prophet who had caused him to break his journey heard it, he said, It is the man of God who defied the word of the LORD. The LORD has given him to the lion, and it has broken his neck and killed him in fulfilment of the word of the LORD.

²⁷He told his sons to saddle the donkey and, when they did so,

²⁸he set out and found the body lying in the road with the donkey and the lion standing beside it; the lion had neither devoured the body nor broken the back of the donkey.

²⁹The prophet lifted the body of the man of God, laid it on the donkey, and brought it back to his own town to mourn over it and bury it.

³⁰He laid the body in his own grave and they mourned for him, saying, Oh, my brother!

³¹After burying him, he said to his sons, When I die, bury me in the grave where the man of God lies buried; lay my bones beside his;

³² for the sentence which he pronounced at the LORD's command against the altar in Bethel and all the temples at shrines throughout Samaria will surely come true.

³³ After this Jeroboam still did not abandon his evil ways, but went on appointing priests for the shrines from all classes of the people; any man who offered himself he would consecrate to be priest of a shrine.

³⁴ By doing this he brought guilt on his own house and doomed it to utter destruction.

14 ¹ At that time Jeroboam's son Abijah fell ill,

² and Jeroboam said to his wife, Go at once to Shiloh, but disguise yourself so that people will not recognize you as my wife. Ahijah the prophet is there, he who said I was to be king over this people.

³ Take with you ten loaves, some raisins, and a jar of honey. Go to him and he will tell you what will happen to the boy.

⁴ Jeroboam's wife did so; she set off at once for Shiloh and came to Ahijah's house. Now as Ahijah could not see, for

his eyes were fixed in the blindness of old age,

⁵the LORD had said to him, Jeroboam's wife is on her way to consult you about her son, who is ill; you are to give her such and such an answer. When she came in, concealing who she was,

⁶and Ahijah heard her footsteps at the door, he said, Come in, wife of Jeroboam. Why conceal who you are? I have heavy news for you.

⁷Go, tell Jeroboam: This is the word of the LORD the God of Israel: I raised you out of the people and appointed you prince over my people Israel;

⁸I tore the kingdom from the house of David and gave it to you. But you have not been like my servant David, who kept my commands and followed me with his whole heart, doing only what was right in my eyes.

⁹You have outdone all your predecessors in wickedness; you have provoked me to anger by making for yourself other gods and images of cast metal; and you have turned your back on me.

¹⁰For this I am going to bring disaster on the house of Jeroboam; I shall destroy them all, every mother's son, whether still under the protection of the family or not, and I shall sweep away the house of Jeroboam in Israel, as one sweeps away dung until none is left.

¹¹Those of that house who die in the town shall be food for the dogs, and those who die in the country shall be food for the birds. It is the word of the LORD.

¹²Go home now; the moment you set foot in the town, the child will die.

¹³All Israel will mourn for him and bury him; he alone of all Jeroboam's family will have proper burial, because in him alone could the LORD the God of Israel find anything good.

¹⁴The LORD will set up a king over Israel who will put an end to the house of Jeroboam. This first; and what next?

¹⁵The LORD will strike Israel, till it trembles like a reed in the water; he will uproot its people from this good land which he gave to their forefathers and scatter them beyond the Euphrates,

because they have made their sacred poles, thus provoking the LORD's anger.

¹⁶He will abandon Israel because of the sins that Jeroboam has committed and has led Israel to commit.

¹⁷Jeroboam's wife went away back to Tirzah and, as she crossed the threshold of the house, the boy died.

¹⁸They buried him, and all Israel mourned over him; and thus the word of the LORD was fulfilled which he had spoken through his servant Ahijah the prophet.

¹⁹The other events of Jeroboam's reign, in war and peace, are recorded in the annals of the kings of Israel.

²⁰After reigning for twenty-two years, he rested with his forefathers and was succeeded by his son Nadab.

²¹IN Judah Rehoboam son of Solomon had become king. He was forty-one years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned for seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city where the LORD had chosen, out of all the tribes of Israel, to set his name. Rehoboam's mother was a woman of Ammon called Naamah.

²² Judah did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD, rousing his jealous indignation by the sins they committed, which were beyond anything that their forefathers had done.

²³ They erected shrines, sacred pillars, and sacred poles on every high hill and under every spreading tree.

²⁴ Worse still, all over the country there were male prostitutes attached to the shrines, and the people adopted all the abominable practices of the nations whom the LORD had dispossessed in favour of Israel.

²⁵ In the fifth year of Rehoboam's reign King Shishak of Egypt attacked Jerusalem,

²⁶ and carried away the treasures of the house of the LORD and of the king's palace; he seized everything, including all the gold shields made for Solomon.

²⁷ King Rehoboam replaced them with bronze shields and entrusted them to the officers of the escort who guarded the entrance of the palace.

²⁸ Whenever the king entered the house of the LORD, the escort carried them;

afterwards they returned them to the guardroom.

²⁹The other acts and events of Rehoboam's reign are recorded in the annals of the kings of Judah.

³⁰There was continual fighting between him and Jeroboam.

³¹He rested with his forefathers and was buried with them in the city of David. Rehoboam's mother was an Ammonite called Naamah. He was succeeded by his son Abijam.

15¹In the eighteenth year of the reign of Jeroboam son of Nebat, Abijam became king of Judah.

²He reigned in Jerusalem for three years; his mother was Maacah granddaughter of Abishalom.

³All the sins that his father before him had committed he also committed, nor was he faithful to the LORD his God as his ancestor David had been.

⁴But for David's sake the LORD his God gave him a lamp to burn in Jerusalem, by establishing his dynasty and making Jerusalem secure,

⁵because David had done what was right in the eyes of the LORD and had

not disobeyed any of his commandments all his life, except in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.

⁶[[EMPTY]]

⁷The other acts and events of Abijam's reign are recorded in the annals of the kings of Judah. There was war between Abijam and Jeroboam.

⁸Abijam rested with his forefathers and was buried in the city of David; his son Asa succeeded him.

⁹In the twentieth year of King Jeroboam of Israel, Asa became king of Judah.

¹⁰He reigned in Jerusalem for forty-one years; his grandmother was Maacah granddaughter of Abishalom.

¹¹Asa did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, as his ancestor David had done.

¹²He expelled from the land the male prostitutes attached to the shrines and removed all the idols which his predecessors had made.

¹³He even deprived Maacah his grandmother of her rank as queen mother because she had an obscene object made for the worship of Asherah;

Asa cut it down and burnt it in the wadi Kidron.

¹⁴Although the shrines were allowed to remain, Asa himself remained faithful to the LORD all his life.

¹⁵He brought into the house of the LORD all his father's votive offerings and his own, the silver and gold and the sacred vessels.

¹⁶There was war between Asa and King Baasha of Israel all through their reigns.

¹⁷King Baasha invaded Judah and fortified Ramah to prevent anyone leaving or entering the kingdom of Asa of Judah.

¹⁸Asa took all the silver and gold that remained in the treasuries of the house of the LORD and the palace, and sent his servants with them to Ben-hadad son of Tabrimmon, son of Hezion, king of Aram, whose capital was Damascus, with instructions to say,

¹⁹Let there be an alliance between us, as there was between our fathers. Herewith I send you a present of silver and gold; break off your alliance with King Baasha of Israel, so that he will abandon his campaign against me.

²⁰Ben-hadad listened with approval to King Asa; he ordered his army commanders to move against the towns of Israel, and they attacked Iyyon, Dan, Abel-beth-maacah, and that part of Kinnereth which marches with the land of Naphtali.

²¹When Baasha heard of it, he discontinued the fortifying of Ramah and fell back on Tirzah.

²²Then King Asa issued a proclamation requiring every man in Judah without exception to join in removing the stones of Ramah and the timbers with which Baasha had fortified it, and he used them to fortify Geba of Benjamin and Mizpah.

²³All the other events of Asa's reign, his exploits and achievements, and the towns he built, are recorded in the annals of the kings of Judah. But in his old age he was afflicted with disease in his feet.

²⁴He rested with his forefathers and was buried with them in the city of his ancestor David; he was succeeded by his son Jehoshaphat.

²⁵ Nadab son of Jeroboam became king of Israel in the second year of King Asa of Judah, and he reigned for two years.

²⁶ He did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD and followed in his father's footsteps, repeating the sin which Jeroboam had led Israel to commit.

²⁷ Baasha son of Ahijah, of the house of Issachar, conspired against him and attacked him at Gibbethon, a Philistine town which Nadab was besieging with all his forces.

²⁸ Baasha slew him and usurped the throne in the third year of King Asa of Judah.

²⁹ As soon as he became king, he struck down the whole family of Jeroboam, destroying every living soul and leaving not one survivor. Thus the word of the LORD was fulfilled which he spoke through his servant Ahijah the Shilonite.

³⁰ This happened because of the sins of Jeroboam and the sins which he led Israel to commit, and because he had provoked the anger of the LORD the God of Israel.

³¹ The other events of Nadab's reign and all his acts are recorded in the annals of the kings of Israel.

³² There was war between Asa and King Baasha of Israel throughout their reigns.

³³ In the third year of King Asa of Judah, Baasha son of Ahijah became king of all Israel in Tirzah and reigned for twenty-four years.

³⁴ He did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD and followed in Jeroboam's footsteps, repeating the sin which Jeroboam had led Israel to commit.

16 ¹ This word of the LORD against Baasha came to Jehu son of Hanani:

² I raised you from the dust and made you a prince over my people Israel, but you have followed in the footsteps of Jeroboam and have led my people Israel into sin, so provoking me to anger with their sins.

³ Therefore I am about to sweep away Baasha and his house and deal with it as I dealt with the house of Jeroboam son of Nebat.

⁴ Those of Baasha's family who die in a town will be food for the dogs, and those

who die in the country will be food for the birds.

⁵The other events of Baasha's reign, his achievements and his exploits, are recorded in the annals of the kings of Israel.

⁶Baasha rested with his forefathers and was buried in Tirzah; he was succeeded by his son Elah.

⁷The word of the LORD concerning Baasha and his family came also through the prophet Jehu son of Hanani, because of all the wrong that he had done in the eyes of the LORD, thereby provoking his anger: he had not only sinned like the house of Jeroboam, but had also brought destruction upon it.

⁸In the twenty-sixth year of King Asa of Judah, Elah son of Baasha became king of Israel and he reigned in Tirzah for two years.

⁹Zimri, who was in his service commanding half the chariotry, plotted against him. The king was in Tirzah drinking himself into insensibility in the house of Arza, comptroller of the household there,

¹⁰when Zimri broke in, attacked and assassinated him, and made himself king. This took place in the twenty-seventh year of King Asa of Judah.

¹¹As soon as Zimri had become king and was enthroned, he struck down all the household of Baasha; he left him not a single mother's son alive, neither kinsman nor friend.

¹²By destroying the whole household of Baasha he fulfilled the word of the LORD concerning Baasha, spoken through the prophet Jehu.

¹³This was what came of all the sins which Baasha and his son Elah had committed and the sins into which they had led Israel, provoking the anger of the LORD the God of Israel with their worthless idols.

¹⁴The other events and acts of Elah's reign are recorded in the annals of the kings of Israel.

¹⁵In the twenty-seventh year of King Asa of Judah, Zimri reigned in Tirzah for seven days. At the time the army was investing the Philistine city of Gibbethon.

¹⁶When the Israelite troops in the camp heard of Zimri's conspiracy and the murder of the king, there and then they made their commander Omri king of Israel by common consent.

¹⁷Omri and his whole force then withdrew from Gibbethon and laid siege to Tirzah.

¹⁸As soon as Zimri saw that the city had fallen, he retreated to the keep of the royal palace, set the whole of it on fire over his head, and so perished.

¹⁹This was what came of the sin he had committed by doing what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD and following in the footsteps of Jeroboam, repeating the sin into which he had led Israel.

²⁰The other events of Zimri's reign, and his conspiracy, are recorded in the annals of the kings of Israel.

²¹Thereafter the people of Israel were split into two factions: one supported Tibni son of Ginath, determined to make him king; the other supported Omri.

²²Omri's party proved the stronger; Tibni lost his life, and Omri became king.

²³It was in the thirty-first year of King Asa of Judah that Omri became king of

Israel and he reigned for twelve years, six of them in Tirzah.

²⁴He bought the hill of Samaria from Shemer for two talents of silver, and built a city on it which he named Samaria after Shemer the owner of the hill.

²⁵Omri did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD; he outdid all his predecessors in wickedness.

²⁶He followed in the footsteps of Jeroboam son of Nebat, repeating the sins which he had led Israel to commit, so that they provoked the anger of the LORD their God with their worthless idols.

²⁷The other events of Omri's reign, and his exploits, are recorded in the annals of the kings of Israel.

²⁸So Omri rested with his forefathers and was buried in Samaria; he was succeeded by his son Ahab.

²⁹AHAB son of Omri became king of Israel in the thirty-eighth year of King Asa of Judah, and he reigned over Israel in Samaria for twenty-two years.

³⁰More than any of his predecessors he did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD.

³¹ As if it were not enough for him to follow the sinful ways of Jeroboam son of Nebat, he took as his wife Jezebel daughter of King Ethbaal of Sidon, and went and served Baal; he prostrated himself before him

³² and erected an altar to him in the temple of Baal which he built in Samaria.

³³ He also set up a sacred pole; indeed he did more to provoke the anger of the LORD the God of Israel than all the kings of Israel before him.

³⁴ During Ahab's reign Hiel of Bethel rebuilt Jericho; laying its foundations cost him his eldest son Abiram, and the setting up of its gates cost him Segub his youngest son. Thus was fulfilled what the LORD had spoken through Joshua son of Nun.

17 ¹ Elijah the Tishbite from Tishbe in Gilead said to Ahab, I swear by the life of the LORD the God of Israel, whose servant I am, that there will be neither dew nor rain these coming years unless I give the word.

² Then the word of the LORD came to him:

³ Leave this place, turn eastwards, and go into hiding in the wadi of Kerith east of the Jordan.

⁴ You are to drink from the stream, and I have commanded the ravens to feed you there.

⁵ Elijah did as the LORD had told him: he went and stayed in the wadi of Kerith east of the Jordan,

⁶ and the ravens brought him bread and meat morning and evening, and he drank from the stream.

⁷ After a while the stream dried up, for there had been no rain in the land.

⁸ Then the word of the LORD came to him:

⁹ Go now to Zarephath, a village of Sidon, and stay there; I have commanded a widow there to feed you.

¹⁰ He went off to Zarephath, and when he reached the entrance to the village, he saw a widow gathering sticks. He called to her, Please bring me a little water in a pitcher to drink.

¹¹ As she went to fetch it, he called after her, Bring me, please, a piece of bread as well.

¹²But she answered, As the LORD your God lives, I have no food baked, only a handful of flour in a jar and a little oil in a flask. I am just gathering two or three sticks to go and cook it for my son and myself before we die.

¹³Have no fear, said Elijah; go and do as you have said. But first make me a small cake from what you have and bring it out to me, and after that make something for your son and yourself.

¹⁴For this is the word of the LORD the God of Israel: The jar of flour will not give out, nor the flask of oil fail, until the LORD sends rain on the land.

¹⁵She went and did as Elijah had said, and there was food for him and for her and her family for a long time.

¹⁶The jar of flour did not give out, nor did the flask of oil fail, as the word of the LORD foretold through Elijah.

¹⁷Afterwards the son of the woman, the owner of the house, fell ill and was in a very bad way, until at last his breathing stopped.

¹⁸The woman said to Elijah, What made you interfere, you man of God? You

came here to bring my sins to light and cause my son's death!

¹⁹Give me your son, he said. He took the boy from her arms and carried him up to the roof-chamber where his lodging was, and laid him on his bed.

²⁰He called out to the LORD, LORD my God, is this your care for the widow with whom I lodge, that you have been so cruel to her son?

²¹Then he breathed deeply on the child three times and called to the LORD, I pray, LORD my God, let the breath of life return to the body of this child.

²²The LORD listened to Elijah's cry, and the breath of life returned to the child's body, and he revived.

²³Elijah lifted him and took him down from the roof-chamber into the house, and giving him to his mother he said, Look, your son is alive.

²⁴She said to Elijah, Now I know for certain that you are a man of God and that the word of the LORD on your lips is truth.

18¹Time went by, and in the third year the word of the LORD came

to Elijah: Go, appear before Ahab, and I shall send rain on the land.

²So Elijah went to show himself to Ahab. At this time the famine in Samaria was at its height,

³and Ahab summoned Obadiah, the comptroller of his household, a devout worshipper of the LORD.

⁴When Jezebel massacred the prophets of the LORD, he had taken a hundred of them, hidden them in caves, fifty by fifty, and sustained them with food and drink.

⁵Ahab said to Obadiah, Let us go throughout the land to every spring and wadi; if we can find enough grass we may keep the horses and mules alive and not lose any of our animals.

⁶They divided the land between them for their survey, Ahab himself going one way and Obadiah another.

⁷As Obadiah was on his journey, Elijah suddenly confronted him. Obadiah recognized Elijah and prostrated himself before him. Can it really be you, my lord Elijah? he said.

⁸Yes, he replied, it is I. Go and tell your master that Elijah is here.

⁹What wrong have I done? protested Obadiah. Why should you give me into Ahab's hands? He will put me to death.

¹⁰As the LORD your God lives, there is no region or kingdom to which my master has not sent in search of you. If they said, He is not here, he made that kingdom or region swear on oath that you could not be found.

¹¹Yet now you say, Go and tell your master that Elijah is here.

¹²What will happen? As soon as I leave you, the spirit of the LORD will carry you away, who knows where? I shall go and tell Ahab, and when he fails to find you, he will kill me. Yet I, your servant, have been a worshipper of the LORD from boyhood.

¹³Have you not been told, my lord, what I did when Jezebel put the LORD's prophets to death, how I hid a hundred of them in caves, fifty by fifty, and kept them alive with food and drink?

¹⁴And now you say, Go and tell your master that Elijah is here! He will kill me.

¹⁵Elijah answered, As the LORD of Hosts lives, whose servant I am, I swear that I shall show myself to him this day.

¹⁶So Obadiah went to find Ahab and gave him the message, and Ahab went to confront Elijah.

¹⁷As soon as Ahab saw Elijah, he said to him, Is it you, you troubler of Israel?

¹⁸It is not I who have brought trouble on Israel, Elijah replied, but you and your father's family, by forsaking the commandments of the LORD and following Baal.

¹⁹Now summon all Israel to meet me on Mount Carmel, including the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and the four hundred prophets of the goddess Asherah, who are attached to Jezebel's household.

²⁰So Ahab sent throughout the length and breadth of Israel and assembled the prophets on Mount Carmel.

²¹Elijah stepped forward towards all the people there and said, How long will you sit on the fence? If the LORD is God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him. Not a word did they answer.

²²Then Elijah said, I am the only prophet of the LORD still left, but there are four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal.

²³Bring two bulls for us. Let them choose one for themselves, cut it up, and lay it on the wood without setting fire to it, and I shall prepare the other and lay it on the wood without setting fire to it.

²⁴Then invoke your god by name and I shall invoke the LORD by name; the god who answers by fire, he is God. The people all shouted their approval.

²⁵Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, Choose one of the bulls and offer it first, for there are more of you; invoke your god by name, but do not set fire to the wood.

²⁶They took the bull provided for them and offered it, and they invoked Baal by name from morning until noon, crying, Baal, answer us; but there was no sound, no answer. They danced wildly by the altar they had set up.

²⁷At midday Elijah mocked them: Call louder, for he is a god. It may be he is deep in thought, or engaged, or on a journey; or he may have gone to sleep and must be woken up.

²⁸They cried still louder and, as was their custom, gashed themselves with swords and spears until the blood flowed.

²⁹All afternoon they raved and ranted till the hour of the regular offering, but still there was no sound, no answer, no sign of attention.

³⁰Elijah said to the people, Come here to me, and they all came to him. He repaired the altar of the LORD which had been torn down.

³¹He took twelve stones, one for each tribe of the sons of Jacob, him who was named Israel by the word of the LORD.

³²With these stones he built an altar in the name of the LORD, and dug a trench round it big enough to hold two measures of seed;

³³he arranged the wood, cut up the bull, and laid it on the wood.

³⁴Then he said, Fill four jars with water and pour it on the whole-offering and on the wood. They did so; he said, Do it again. They did it again; he said, Do it a third time. They did it a third time,

³⁵and the water ran all round the altar and even filled the trench.

³⁶At the hour of the regular offering the prophet Elijah came forward and prayed, LORD God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known today that you are

God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command.

³⁷ Answer me, LORD, answer me and let this people know that you, LORD, are God and that it is you who have brought them back to their allegiance.

³⁸ The fire of the LORD fell, consuming the whole-offering, the wood, the stones, and the earth, and licking up the water in the trench.

³⁹ At the sight the people all bowed with their faces to the ground and cried, The LORD is God, the LORD is God.

⁴⁰ Elijah said to them, Seize the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. They were seized, and Elijah took them down to the Kishon and slaughtered them there in the valley.

⁴¹ Elijah said to Ahab, Go back now, eat and drink, for I hear the sound of heavy rain.

⁴² He did so, while Elijah himself climbed to the crest of Carmel, where he bowed down to the ground and put his face between his knees.

⁴³ He said to his servant, Go and look toward the west. He went and looked;

There is nothing to see, he said. Seven times Elijah ordered him back, and seven times he went.

⁴⁴The seventh time he said, I see a cloud no bigger than a man's hand, coming up from the west. Now go, said Elijah, and tell Ahab to harness his chariot and be off, or the rain will stop him.

⁴⁵Meanwhile the sky grew black with clouds, the wind rose, and heavy rain began to fall. Ahab mounted his chariot and set off for Jezreel;

⁴⁶and the power of the LORD was on Elijah: he tucked up his robe and ran before Ahab all the way to Jezreel.

19¹When Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done and how he had put all the prophets to the sword,

²she sent this message to Elijah, The gods do the same to me and more, unless by this time tomorrow I have taken your life as you took theirs.

³In fear he fled for his life, and when he reached Beersheba in Judah he left his servant there,

⁴while he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness. He came to a broom

bush, and sitting down under it he prayed for death: It is enough, he said; now, LORD, take away my life, for I am no better than my fathers before me.

⁵He lay down under the bush and, while he slept, an angel touched him and said,

⁶Rise and eat. He looked, and there at his head was a cake baked on hot stones, and a pitcher of water. He ate and drank and lay down again.

⁷The angel of the LORD came again and touched him a second time, saying, Rise and eat; the journey is too much for you.

⁸He rose and ate and drank and, sustained by this food, he went on for forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mount of God.

⁹There he entered a cave where he spent the night. The word of the LORD came to him: Why are you here, Elijah?

¹⁰Because of my great zeal for the LORD the God of Hosts, he replied. The people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, torn down your altars, and put your prophets to the sword. I alone am left, and they seek to take my life.

¹¹To this the answer came: Go and stand on the mount before the LORD. The LORD was passing by: a great and strong wind came, rending mountains and shattering rocks before him, but the LORD was not in the wind; and after the wind there was an earthquake, but the LORD was not in the earthquake;

¹²and after the earthquake fire, but the LORD was not in the fire; and after the fire a faint murmuring sound.

¹³When Elijah heard it, he wrapped his face in his cloak and went out and stood at the entrance to the cave. There came a voice: Why are you here, Elijah?

¹⁴Because of my great zeal for the LORD the God of Hosts, he replied. The people of Israel have forsaken your covenant, torn down your altars, and put your prophets to the sword. I alone am left, and they seek to take my life.

¹⁵The LORD said to him, Go back by way of the wilderness of Damascus, enter the city, and anoint Hazael to be king of Aram;

¹⁶anoint also Jehu son of Nimshi to be king of Israel, and Elisha son of Shaphat

of Abel-meholah to be prophet in your place.

¹⁷Whoever escapes the sword of Hazael Jehu will slay, and whoever escapes the sword of Jehu Elisha will slay.

¹⁸But I shall leave seven thousand in Israel, all who have not bowed the knee to Baal, all whose lips have not kissed him.

¹⁹Elijah departed and found Elisha son of Shaphat ploughing; there were twelve pair of oxen ahead of him, and he himself was with the last of them. As Elijah passed, he threw his cloak over him.

²⁰Elisha, leaving his oxen, ran after Elijah and said, Let me kiss my father and mother goodbye, and then I shall follow you. Go back, he replied; what have I done to prevent you?

²¹He followed him no farther but went home, took his pair of oxen, slaughtered them, and burnt the wooden yokes to cook the flesh, which he gave to the people to eat. He then followed Elijah and became his disciple.

20¹KING Ben-hadad of Aram, having mustered all his forces,

and taking with him thirty-two kings with their horses and chariots, marched up against Samaria to take it by siege and assault.

²He sent envoys into the city to King Ahab of Israel to say, Hear what Ben-hadad says:

³Your silver and gold are mine, your wives and fine children are mine.

⁴The king of Israel answered, As you say, my lord king, I and all that I have are yours.

⁵The envoys came again and said, Hear what Ben-hadad says: I demand that you hand over your silver and gold, your wives and your children.

⁶This time tomorrow I shall send my servants to ransack your palace and your subjects houses to take possession of everything you prize, and carry it off.'

⁷The king of Israel summoned all the elders of the land and said, You can see the man is bent on picking a quarrel; for I did not demur when he sent to claim my wives and my children, my silver and gold.

⁸The elders and people all answered, Do not listen to him; you must not consent.

⁹So he gave this reply to Ben-hadad's envoys: Say to my lord the king: I accepted your majesty's demands on the first occasion; but what you now ask I cannot do. The envoys went away and reported to their master,

¹⁰and Ben-hadad sent back word: The gods do the same to me and more, if enough dust is left in Samaria to provide a handful for each of my men.

¹¹The king of Israel made reply, Tell him of the saying: The time for boasting is after the battle.

¹²This message reached Ben-hadad while he and the kings were feasting in their quarters, and he at once ordered his men to position themselves for an attack on the city, and they did so.

¹³Meanwhile a prophet had come to King Ahab of Israel and announced, This is the word of the LORD: You see this great host? Today I shall give it into your hands and you will know that I am the LORD.

¹⁴Whom will you use for that? asked Ahab. The LORD says: The young men who serve the district officers, was the answer. Who will launch the attack? asked the king. You, said the prophet.

¹⁵Then Ahab mustered these young men, two hundred and thirty-two all told, and behind them the people of Israel, seven thousand in all.

¹⁶They marched out at midday, while Ben-hadad and his allies, those thirty-two kings, were drinking themselves into insensibility in their quarters.

¹⁷The young men sallied out first, and word was sent to Ben-hadad that men had come out of Samaria.

¹⁸If they have come out for peace, he said, take them alive; if for battle, take them alive.

¹⁹With the army following behind them, the young men went out from the city;

²⁰each struck down his man, and the Aramaeans fled, with the Israelites in pursuit. Ben-hadad the king of Aram escaped on horseback with some of the cavalry.

²¹The king of Israel advanced and captured the horses and chariots,

inflicting a heavy defeat on the Aramaeans.

²²The prophet came to the king of Israel and advised him, Build up your forces; you know what you must do. At the turn of the year the king of Aram will renew the attack.

²³The ministers of the king of Aram gave him this advice: Their gods are gods of the hills; that is why they are too strong for us. Let us fight them in the plain, and then we shall have the upper hand.

²⁴What you must do is to relieve the kings of their command and appoint other officers in their place.

²⁵Raise another army like the one you have lost. Bring your cavalry and chariots up to their former strength, and then let us fight Israel in the plain; then assuredly we shall have the upper hand. He listened to their advice and acted on it.

²⁶At the turn of the year Ben-hadad mustered the Aramaeans and advanced to Aphek to launch their attack on Israel.

²⁷The Israelites too were mustered and formed into companies, and then

went to meet the enemy. When the Israelites encamped opposite them, they seemed no better than a pair of new-born goats, while the Aramaeans covered the countryside.

²⁸The man of God came to the king of Israel and said, This is the word of the LORD: The Aramaeans may think that the LORD is a god of the hills and not a god of the valleys; but I shall give all this great host into your hands and you will know that I am the LORD.

²⁹They lay in camp opposite one another for seven days; on the seventh day battle was joined and the Israelites destroyed a hundred thousand of the Aramaean infantry in one day.

³⁰The survivors fled to Aphek, into the citadel, and the city wall fell upon the twenty-seven thousand men who were left. Ben-hadad took refuge in the citadel, retreating into an inner room.

³¹His attendants said to him, We have heard that the Israelite kings are men to be trusted. Let us therefore put sackcloth round our waists and wind rough cord round our heads and go out to the king

of Israel. It may be that he will spare your life.

³² So they fastened on the sackcloth and the cord, and went to the king of Israel and said, Your servant Ben-hadad pleads for his life. My royal cousin, he said, is he still alive?

³³ The men, taking the word for a favourable omen, caught it up at once and said, Your cousin Ben-hadad, yes. Go and fetch him, he said. When Ben-hadad came out Ahab invited him into his chariot.

³⁴ Ben-hadad said to him, I shall give back the towns which my father took from your father, and you may establish for yourself a trading quarter in Damascus, as my father did in Samaria. On these terms, said Ahab, I shall let you go. So he granted him a treaty and let him go.

³⁵ One of a company of prophets, at the command of the LORD, ordered a certain man to strike him, but the man refused.

³⁶ Because you have not obeyed the LORD, said the prophet, when you leave me a lion will attack you. When the man

left, a lion did come upon him and attack him.

³⁷The prophet met another man and ordered him to strike him. This man struck and wounded him.

³⁸The prophet went off, with a bandage over his eyes, and thus disguised waited by the wayside for the king.

³⁹As the king was passing, he called out to him, Sir, I went into the thick of the battle, and a soldier came over to me with a prisoner and said, Take charge of this fellow. If by any chance he gets away, your life will be forfeit, or you must pay a talent of silver.

⁴⁰While I was busy with one thing and another, sir, he disappeared. The king of Israel said to him, You have passed sentence on yourself.

⁴¹At that the prophet tore the bandage from his eyes, and the king saw that he was one of the prophets.

⁴²He said to the king, This is the word of the LORD: Because you let that man go when I had put him under a ban, your life shall be forfeit for his life, your people for his people.

⁴³The king of Israel went off home and entered Samaria sullen and angry.

21 ¹SOME time later there occurred an incident involving Naboth of Jezreel, who had a vineyard in Jezreel adjoining the palace of King Ahab of Samaria.

²Ahab made a proposal to Naboth: Your vineyard is close to my palace; let me have it for a garden, and I shall give you a better vineyard in exchange for it or, if you prefer, I shall give you its value in silver.

³But Naboth answered, The LORD forbid that I should surrender to you land which has always been in my family.

⁴Ahab went home sullen and angry because Naboth had refused to let him have his ancestral holding. He took to his bed, covered his face, and refused to eat.

⁵When his wife Jezebel came in to him and asked, Why this sullenness, and why do you refuse to eat?

⁶he replied, I proposed that Naboth of Jezreel should let me have his vineyard at its value or, if he liked, in exchange

for another; but he refused to let me have it.

⁷Are you or are you not king in Israel? retorted Jezebel. Come, eat and take heart; I shall make you a gift of the vineyard of Naboth of Jezreel.

⁸She wrote letters in Ahab's name, sealed them with his seal, and sent them to the elders and notables of Naboth's city, who sat in council with him.

⁹She wrote: Proclaim a fast and give Naboth the seat of honour among the people.

¹⁰Opposite him sat two unprincipled rogues to charge him with cursing God and the king; then take him out and stone him to death.

¹¹The elders and notables of Naboth's city carried out the instructions Jezebel had sent them in her letter:

¹²they proclaimed a fast and gave Naboth the seat of honour.

¹³The two unprincipled rogues came in, sat opposite him, and charged him publicly with cursing God and the king. He was then taken outside the city and stoned,

¹⁴ and word was sent to Jezebel that Naboth had been stoned to death.

¹⁵ As soon as Jezebel heard of the death of Naboth, she said to Ahab, Get up and take possession of the vineyard which Naboth refused to sell you, for he is no longer alive; Naboth of Jezreel is dead.

¹⁶ On hearing that Naboth was dead, Ahab got up and went to the vineyard to take possession.

¹⁷ The word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite:

¹⁸ Go down at once to King Ahab of Israel, who is in Samaria; you will find him in Naboth's vineyard, where he has gone to take possession.

¹⁹ Say to him, This is the word of the LORD: Have you murdered and seized property? Say to him, This is the word of the LORD: Where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, there dogs will lick your blood.

²⁰ Ahab said to Elijah, So you have found me, my enemy. Yes, he said, because you have sold yourself to do what is wrong in the eyes of the LORD.

²¹ I shall bring disaster on you; I shall sweep you away and destroy every

mother's son of the house of Ahab in Israel, whether under protection of the family or not.

²²I shall deal with your house as I dealt with the house of Jeroboam son of Nebat and that of Baasha son of Ahijah, because you have provoked my anger and led Israel into sin.

²³The LORD went on to say of Jezebel, Jezebel will be eaten by dogs near the rampart of Jezreel.

²⁴Of the house of Ahab, those who die in the city will be food for the dogs, and those who die in the country food for the birds.

²⁵(Never was there a man who sold himself to do what is wrong in the LORD's eyes as Ahab did, and all at the prompting of Jezebel his wife.

²⁶He committed gross abominations in going after false gods, doing everything that had been done by the Amorites, whom the LORD dispossessed in favour of Israel.)

²⁷When Ahab heard Elijah's words, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth, and fasted; he lay down in his sackcloth and went about moaning.

²⁸The word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite:

²⁹Have you seen how Ahab has humbled himself before me? Because he has thus humbled himself, I shall not bring disaster on his house in his own lifetime, but in that of his son.

22 ¹FOR three years there was no war between the Aramaeans and the Israelites.

²In the third year King Jehoshaphat of Judah went down to visit the king of Israel,

³who had said to his ministers, You know that Ramoth-gilead belongs to us, and yet we do nothing to recover it from the king of Aram;

⁴and to Jehoshaphat he said, Will you join me in attacking Ramoth-gilead? Jehoshaphat replied, What is mine is yours: myself, my people, and my horses,

⁵but he said to the king of Israel, First let us seek counsel from the LORD.

⁶The king of Israel assembled the prophets, some four hundred of them, and asked, Shall I attack Ramoth-gilead

or not? Attack, was the answer; the Lord will deliver it into your majesty's hands.

⁷ Jehoshaphat asked, Is there no other prophet of the LORD here through whom we may seek guidance?

⁸ There is one more, the king of Israel answered, through whom we may seek guidance of the LORD, but I hate the man, because he never prophesies good for me, never anything but evil.

His name is Micaiah son of Imlah.

Jehoshaphat exclaimed, My lord king, let no such word pass your lips!

⁹ So the king of Israel called one of his eunuchs and told him to fetch Micaiah son of Imlah with all speed.

¹⁰ The king of Israel and King Jehoshaphat of Judah in their royal robes were seated on their thrones at the entrance to the gate of Samaria, and all the prophets were prophesying before them.

¹¹ One of them, Zedekiah son of Kenaanah, made himself iron horns and declared, This is the word of the LORD: With horns like these you will gore the Aramaeans and make an end of them.

¹²In the same vein all the prophets prophesied, Attack Ramoth-gilead and win the day; the LORD will deliver it into your hands.

¹³The messenger sent to fetch Micaiah told him that the prophets had unanimously given the king a favourable answer. And mind you agree with them, he added.

¹⁴As the LORD lives, said Micaiah, I shall say only what the LORD tells me to say.

¹⁵When he came into the king's presence, the king asked, Micaiah, shall I attack Ramoth-gilead, or shall I refrain? Attack and win the day, he replied; the LORD will deliver it into your hands.

¹⁶How often must I adjure you, said the king, to tell me nothing but the truth in the name of the LORD?

¹⁷Then Micaiah said, I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, like sheep without a shepherd; and I heard the LORD say, They have no master; let them go home in peace.

¹⁸The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell you that he never prophesies good for me, never anything but evil?

¹⁹Micaiah went on, Listen now to the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD seated on his throne, with all the host of heaven in attendance on his right and on his left.

²⁰The LORD said, Who will entice Ahab to go up and attack Ramoth-gilead? One said one thing and one said another,

²¹until a spirit came forward and, standing before the LORD, said, I shall entice him.

²²How? said the LORD. I shall go out, he answered, and be a lying spirit in the mouths of all his prophets. Entice him; you will succeed, said the LORD. Go and do it.

²³You see, then, how the LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouths of all these prophets of yours, because he has decreed disaster for you.

²⁴At that, Zedekiah son of Kenaanah came up to Micaiah and struck him in the face: And how did the spirit of the LORD pass from me to speak to you? he demanded.

²⁵Micaiah retorted, That you will find out on the day when you run into an inner room to hide.

²⁶The king of Israel ordered Micaiah to be arrested and committed to the custody of Amon the governor of the city and Joash the king's son.

²⁷Throw this fellow into prison, he said, and put him on a prison diet of bread and water until I come home in safety.

²⁸Micaiah declared, If you do return in safety, the LORD has not spoken by me.

²⁹The king of Israel and King Jehoshaphat of Judah marched on Ramoth-gilead.

³⁰The king of Israel went into battle in disguise, for he had said to Jehoshaphat, I shall disguise myself to go into battle, but you must wear your royal robes.

³¹The king of Aram had ordered the thirty-two captains of his chariots not to engage all and sundry, but the king of Israel alone.

³²When the captains saw Jehoshaphat, they thought he was the king of Israel and turned to attack him, but Jehoshaphat cried out,

³³and when the captains saw that he was not the king of Israel, they broke off the attack on him.

³⁴ One man, however, drew his bow at random and hit the king of Israel where the breastplate joins the plates of the armour. The king said to his driver, Turn about and take me out of the line; I am wounded.

³⁵ When the day's fighting reached its height, the king was facing the Aramaeans, propped up in his chariot, and the blood from his wound flowed down to the floor of the chariot; and in the evening he died.

³⁶ At sunset the herald went through the ranks, crying, Every man to his city, every man to his country.

³⁷ Thus the king died. He was brought to Samaria and buried there.

³⁸ The chariot was swilled out at the pool of Samaria where the prostitutes washed themselves, and dogs licked up the blood, in fulfilment of the word the LORD had spoken.

³⁹ The other acts and events of Ahab's reign, the palace he decorated with ivory and all the towns he built, are recorded in the annals of the kings of Israel.

⁴⁰ Ahab rested with his forefathers and was succeeded by his son Ahaziah.

⁴¹ Jehoshaphat son of Asa had become king of Judah in the fourth year of King Ahab of Israel.

⁴² He was thirty-five years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for twenty-five years; his mother was Azubah daughter of Shilhi.

⁴³ He followed in the footsteps of Asa his father and did not deviate from them; he did what was right in the eyes of the LORD. But the shrines were allowed to remain; the people continued to sacrifice and burn offerings there.

⁴⁴ Jehoshaphat remained at peace with the king of Israel.

⁴⁵ The other events of Jehoshaphat's reign, his exploits and his wars, are recorded in the annals of the kings of Judah.

⁴⁶ He expelled from the land such of the male prostitutes attached to the shrines as were still left from the days of Asa his father.

⁴⁷ There was no king in Edom, only a viceroy of Jehoshaphat;

⁴⁸ he built merchantmen to sail to Ophir for gold, but they never made the

voyage because they were wrecked at Ezion-geber.

⁴⁹ Ahaziah son of Ahab proposed to Jehoshaphat that his men should go to sea with Jehoshaphat's; but Jehoshaphat would not agree.

⁵⁰ Jehoshaphat rested with his forefathers and was buried with them in the city of David his father; he was succeeded by his son Joram.

⁵¹ Ahaziah son of Ahab became king of Israel in Samaria in the seventeenth year of King Jehoshaphat of Judah, and reigned over Israel for two years.

⁵² He did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD, following in the footsteps of his father and mother and in those of Jeroboam son of Nebat, who had led Israel into sin.

⁵³ He served Baal and worshipped him, and provoked the anger of the LORD the God of Israel, as his father had done.

2 Kings

1 ¹ AFTER Ahab's death Moab rebelled against Israel.

² When Ahaziah fell through a latticed window in his roof-chamber in Samaria and injured himself, he sent messengers to enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron whether he would recover from this injury.

³ The angel of the LORD ordered Elijah the Tishbite to go and meet the messengers of the king of Samaria and say to them, Is there no God in Israel, that you go to consult Baal-zebub the god of Ekron?

⁴ For what you have done the word of the LORD to your master is this: You will not rise from the bed where you are lying; you will die. With that Elijah departed.

⁵ When the messengers returned to the king, he asked them why they had come back.

⁶ They answered that a man had come to meet them and had ordered them to

return to the king who had sent them and say, This is the word of the LORD: Is there no God in Israel, that you send to enquire of Baal-zebub the god of Ekron? In consequence, you will not rise from the bed where you are lying; you will die.

⁷The king asked them what kind of man it was who had come to meet them and given them this message.

⁸A hairy man, they answered, with a leather belt round his waist. It is Elijah the Tishbite, said the king.

⁹The king sent a captain with his company of fifty men to Elijah. He went up to the prophet, who was sitting on a hilltop, and said, Man of God, the king orders you to come down.

¹⁰Elijah answered, If I am a man of God, may fire fall from heaven and consume you and your company! Fire fell from heaven and consumed the officer and his fifty men.

¹¹The king sent another captain of fifty with his company, and he went up and said to the prophet, Man of God, this is the king's command: Come down at once.

¹²Elijah answered, If I am a man of God, may fire fall from heaven and consume you and your company! Fire from God fell from heaven and consumed the man and his company.

¹³The king sent the captain of a third company with his fifty men, and this third captain went up the hill to Elijah and knelt down before him. Man of God, he pleaded, consider me and these fifty servants of yours, and have some regard for our lives.

¹⁴Fire fell from heaven and consumed the other two captains of fifty and their companies; but now have regard for my life.

¹⁵The angel of the LORD said to Elijah, Go down with him; do not be afraid. At that he rose and went down with him to the king,

¹⁶to whom he said, This is the word of the LORD: You have sent to consult Baal-zebub the god of Ekron. Is that because there is no God in Israel you could consult? For what you have done you will not rise from the bed where you are lying; you will die.

¹⁷ Ahaziah's death fulfilled the word of the LORD which Elijah had spoken. Because Ahaziah had no son, his brother Jehoram succeeded him; that was in the second year of Joram son of King Jehoshaphat of Judah.

¹⁸ The other events of Ahaziah's reign are recorded in the annals of the kings of Israel.

2¹ When the LORD was about to take Elijah up to heaven in a whirlwind, Elijah and Elisha had set out from Gilgal.

² Elijah said to Elisha, Stay here; for the LORD has sent me to Bethel. Elisha replied, As the LORD lives, your life upon it, I shall not leave you. They went down country to Bethel,

³ and there a company of prophets came out to Elisha and said to him, Do you know that the LORD is going to take your lord and master from you today? I do know, he replied; say nothing.

⁴ Elijah said to him, Stay here, Elisha; for the LORD has sent me to Jericho. He replied, As the LORD lives, your life upon it, I shall not leave you. So they went to Jericho,

⁵and there a company of prophets came up to Elisha and said to him, Do you know that the LORD is going to take your lord and master from you today? I do know, he replied; say nothing.

⁶Then Elijah said to him, Stay here; for the LORD has sent me to the Jordan. The other replied, As the LORD lives, your life upon it, I shall not leave you. So the two of them went on.

⁷Fifty of the prophets followed, and stood watching from a distance as the two of them stopped by the Jordan.

⁸Elijah took his cloak, rolled it up, and struck the water with it. The water divided to right and left, and both crossed over on dry ground.

⁹While they were crossing, Elijah said to Elisha, Tell me what I can do for you before I am taken from you. Elisha said, Let me inherit a double share of your spirit.

¹⁰You have asked a hard thing, said Elijah. If you see me taken from you, your wish will be granted; if you do not, it will not be granted.

¹¹They went on, talking as they went, and suddenly there appeared a chariot of

fire and horses of fire, which separated them from one another, and Elijah was carried up to heaven in a whirlwind.

¹²At the sight Elisha cried out, My father, my father, the chariot and the horsemen of Israel! and he saw him no more. He clutched hold of his mantle and tore it in two.

¹³He picked up the cloak which had fallen from Elijah, and went back and stood on the bank of the Jordan.

¹⁴There he struck the water with Elijah's cloak, saying as he did so, Where is the LORD, the God of Elijah? As he too struck the water, it divided to right and left, and he crossed over.

¹⁵The prophets from Jericho, who were watching, said, The spirit of Elijah has settled on Elisha. They came to meet him, bowed to the ground before him,

¹⁶and said, Your servants have fifty stalwart men. Let them go and search for your master; perhaps the spirit of the LORD has lifted him up and cast him on some mountain or into some valley. But he said, No, you must not send them.

¹⁷They pressed him, however, until he had not the heart to refuse. So they

sent out the fifty men but, though they searched for three days, they did not find him.

¹⁸When they came back to Elisha, who had remained at Jericho, he said to them, Did I not tell you not to go?

¹⁹The people of the city said to Elisha, Lord, you can see how pleasantly situated our city is, but the water is polluted and the country is sterile.

²⁰He said, Fetch me a new, unused bowl and put salt in it. When they had brought it,

²¹he went out to the spring and, throwing the salt into it, he said, This is the word of the LORD: I purify this water. It shall no longer cause death or sterility.

²²The water has remained pure till this day, in fulfilment of Elisha's word.

²³From there he went up to Bethel and, as he was on his way, some small boys came out of the town and jeered at him, saying, Get along with you, bald head, get along.

²⁴He turned round, looked at them, and cursed them in the name of the LORD; and two she-bears came out of a wood and mauled forty-two of them.

²⁵From there he went on to Mount Carmel, and thence back to Samaria.

3¹In the eighteenth year of King Jehoshaphat of Judah, Jehoram son of Ahab became king of Israel in Samaria, and he reigned for twelve years.

²He did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD, though not as his father and his mother had done; he did remove the sacred pillar of the Baal which his father had made.

³Yet he persisted in the sins into which Jeroboam son of Nebat had led Israel, and did not give them up.

⁴KING Mesha of Moab was a sheep-breeder, and he had to supply the king of Israel regularly with the wool of a hundred thousand lambs and a hundred thousand rams.

⁵When Ahab died, the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel,

⁶and King Jehoram marched out from Samaria and mustered all Israel.

⁷He also sent this message to King Jehoshaphat of Judah: The king of Moab has rebelled against me. Will you join me in a campaign against Moab? I will join

you, he replied; what is mine is yours: myself, my people, and my horses.

⁸From which direction shall we attack? he asked. Through the wilderness of Edom, replied the other.

⁹The king of Israel set out with the king of Judah and the king of Edom, and when they had been seven days on the indirect route they were following, they had no water left for the army or their pack-animals.

¹⁰The king of Israel cried, Alas, the LORD has brought together three kings, only to put us at the mercy of the Moabites.

¹¹Jehoshaphat said, Is there not a prophet of the LORD here through whom we may seek the LORD's guidance? One of the officers of the king of Israel answered, Elisha son of Shaphat is here, the man who poured water on Elijah's hands.

¹²The word of the LORD is with him, said Jehoshaphat. When the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom went down to Elisha,

¹³he said to the king of Israel, Why do you come to me? Go to your father's

prophets or your mother's. No, answered the king of Israel; it is the LORD who has called us three kings out to put us at the mercy of the Moabites.

¹⁴As the LORD of Hosts lives, whom I serve, said Elisha, I would not spare a look or a glance for you, if it were not for my regard for King Jehoshaphat of Judah.

¹⁵But now fetch me a minstrel; and while the minstrel played, the power of the LORD came on Elisha,

¹⁶and he said, This is the word of the LORD: Pools will form all over this wadi.

¹⁷The LORD has decreed that you will see neither wind nor rain, yet this wadi will be filled with water for you and your army and your pack-animals to drink.

¹⁸That is a mere trifle in the sight of the LORD; what he will also do is to put Moab at your mercy.

¹⁹You will raze to the ground every fortified town and every noble city; you will cut down all their fine trees; you will stop up all the springs of water; and you will spoil every good piece of land by littering it with stones.

²⁰In the morning at the hour of the regular offering they saw water flowing in from the direction of Edom, and the land was flooded.

²¹Meanwhile all Moab had heard that the kings had come up to wage war against them, and every man, young and old, who could bear arms was called out and stationed on the frontier.

²²When they got up next morning and the sun was shining over the water, the Moabites saw the water in front of them red like blood

²³and cried out, It is blood! The kings must have quarrelled and attacked one another. Now to the plunder, Moab!

²⁴But when they came to the Israelite camp, the Israelites sallied out and attacked them, driving the Moabites in headlong flight. The Israelites pushed forward into Moab, destroying as they went.

²⁵They razed the towns to the ground; they littered every good piece of land with stones, each man casting a stone on it; they stopped up every spring of water; they cut down all the fine trees; and they harried Moab until only

in Kir-hareseth were any buildings left standing, and even this city the slingers surrounded and attacked.

²⁶When the Moabite king saw that the war had gone against him, he took with him seven hundred men armed with swords to cut a way through to the king of Aram, but the attempt failed.

²⁷Then he took his eldest son, who would have succeeded him, and offered him as a whole-offering on the city wall. There was such great consternation among the Israelites that they struck camp and returned to their own land.

4¹The wife of one of the prophets appealed to Elisha. My husband, your servant, has died, she said, and you know that he was a man who feared the LORD. Now a creditor has come to take away my two boys as slaves.

²Elisha asked her, How can I help you? Tell me what you have in the house. Nothing at all, she answered, except a flask of oil.

³Go out, he said, and borrow vessels from everyone in the neighbourhood; get as many empty ones as you can.

⁴When you come home, shut yourself in with your sons; then pour from the flask into all the vessels and, as they are filled, set them aside.

⁵She left him and shut herself indoors with her sons. As they brought her the vessels she filled them.

⁶When they were all full, she said to one of her sons, Bring me another. There are none left, he replied. Then the flow of oil ceased.

⁷She came out and told the man of God, and he said, Go, sell the oil and pay off your debt, and you and your sons can live on what is left.

⁸IT happened once that Elisha went over to Shunem. There was a well-to-do woman there who pressed him to accept hospitality, and afterwards whenever he came that way, he stopped there for a meal.

⁹One day she said to her husband, I know that this man who comes here regularly is a holy man of God.

¹⁰Why not build up the wall to make him a small roof-chamber, and put in it a bed, a table, a seat, and a lamp, and

let him stay there whenever he comes to us?

¹¹ One time when he arrived there and went to this roof-chamber to lie down,

¹² he said to Gehazi, his servant, Call this Shunammite woman. When he called her and she appeared before the prophet,

¹³ Elisha said to his servant, Say to her, You have taken all this trouble for us. What can I do for you? Shall I speak for you to the king or to the commander-in-chief? But she replied, I am content where I am, among my own people.

¹⁴ He said, Then what can be done for her? Gehazi said, There is only this: she has no child and her husband is old.

¹⁵ Call her back, Elisha said. When she was called and appeared in the doorway,

¹⁶ he said, In due season, this time next year, you will have a son in your arms. But she said, No, no, my lord, you are a man of God and would not lie to your servant.

¹⁷ Next year in due season the woman conceived and bore a son, as Elisha had foretold.

¹⁸When the child was old enough, he went out one day to his father among the reapers.

¹⁹All of a sudden he cried out to his father, Oh, my head, my head! His father told a servant to carry the child to his mother,

²⁰and when he was brought to her, he sat on her lap till midday, and then he died.

²¹She went up, laid him on the bed of the man of God, shut the door, and went out.

²²She called her husband and said, Send me one of the servants and a she-donkey; I must go to the man of God as fast as I can, and come straight back.

²³Why go to him today? he asked. It is neither new moon nor sabbath. Never mind that, she answered.

²⁴When the donkey was saddled, she said to her servant, Lead on and do not slacken pace unless I tell you.

²⁵So she set out and came to the man of God on Mount Carmel. The man of God spied her in the distance and

said to Gehazi, his servant, That is the Shunammite woman coming.

²⁶Run and meet her, and ask, Is all well with you? Is all well with your husband? Is all well with the boy? She answered, All is well.

²⁷When she reached the man of God on the hill, she clutched his feet. Gehazi came forward to push her away, but the man of God said, Let her alone; she is in great distress, and the LORD has concealed it from me and not told me.

²⁸My lord, she said, did I ask for a son? Did I not beg you not to raise my hopes and then dash them?

²⁹Elisha turned to Gehazi: Hitch up your cloak; take my staff with you and run. If you meet anyone on the way, do not stop to greet him; if anyone greets you, do not answer. Lay my staff on the boy's face.

³⁰But the mother cried, As the LORD lives, your life upon it, I shall not leave you. So he got up and followed her.

³¹Gehazi went on ahead and laid the staff on the boy's face, but there was no sound or sign of life, so he went back to

meet Elisha and told him that the boy had not stirred.

³²When Elisha entered the house, there was the dead boy, where he had been laid on the bed.

³³He went into the room, shut the door on the two of them, and prayed to the LORD.

³⁴Then, getting on to the bed, he lay upon the child, put his mouth to the child's mouth, his eyes to his eyes, and his hands to his hands; as he crouched upon him, the child's body grew warm.

³⁵Elisha got up and walked once up and down the room; getting on to the bed again, he crouched upon him and breathed into him seven times, and the boy opened his eyes.

³⁶The prophet summoned Gehazi and said, Call the Shunammite woman. She answered his call and the prophet said, Take up your child.

³⁷She came in and prostrated herself before him. Then she took up her son and went out.

³⁸ELISHA returned to Gilgal at a time when there was a famine in the land. One day, when a group of prophets was

sitting at his feet, he said to his servant, Set the big pot on the fire and prepare broth for the company.

³⁹One of them went out into the fields to gather herbs and found a wild vine, and filled the skirt of his garment with wild gourds. He came back and sliced them into the pot, not knowing what they were.

⁴⁰The broth was poured out for the men to eat but, on tasting it, they cried out, Man of God, there is death in the pot, and they could not eat it.

⁴¹The prophet said, Fetch some meal. He threw it into the pot and said, Now pour out for the people to eat. This time there was no harm in the pot.

⁴²A MAN came from Baal-shalisha, bringing the man of God some of the new season's bread, twenty barley loaves, and fresh ripe ears of grain. Elisha said, Give this to the people to eat.

⁴³His attendant protested, I cannot set this before a hundred people. Still he insisted, Give it to the people to eat; for this is the word of the LORD: They will eat and there will be some left over.

⁴⁴ So he set it before them, and they ate and had some left over, as the LORD had said.

5¹ NAAMAN, commander of the king of Aram's army, was a great man and highly esteemed by his master, because through him the LORD had given victory to Aram; he was a mighty warrior, but he was a leper.

² On one of their raids the Aramaeans brought back as a captive from the land of Israel a young girl, who became a servant to Naaman's wife.

³ She said to her mistress, If only my master could meet the prophet who lives in Samaria, he would cure him of the leprosy.

⁴ Naaman went and reported to his master what the Israelite girl had said.

⁵ Certainly you may go, said the king of Aram, and I shall send a letter to the king of Israel. Naaman set off, taking with him ten talents of silver, six thousand shekels of gold, and ten changes of clothing.

⁶ He delivered the letter to the king of Israel; it read: This letter is to inform you that I am sending to you my servant

Naaman, and I beg you to cure him of his leprosy.

⁷When the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes and said, Am I God to kill and to make alive, that this fellow sends to me to cure a man of his disease? See how he picks a quarrel with me.

⁸When Elisha, the man of God, heard how the king of Israel had torn his clothes, he sent him this message: Why did you tear your clothes? Let the man come to me, and he will know that there is a prophet in Israel.

⁹When Naaman came with his horses and chariots and halted at the entrance to Elisha's house,

¹⁰Elisha sent out a messenger to say to him, If you go and wash seven times in the Jordan, your flesh will be restored and you will be clean.

¹¹At this Naaman was furious and went away, saying, I thought he would at least have come out and stood and invoked the LORD his God by name, waved his hand over the place, and cured me of the leprosy.

¹²Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Can I not wash in them and be clean? So he turned and went off in a rage.

¹³But his servants came to him and said, If the prophet had told you to do something difficult, would you not do it? How much more should you, then, if he says to you, Wash and be clean!

¹⁴So he went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times as the man of God had told him, and his flesh was restored so that it was like a little child's, and he was clean.

¹⁵Accompanied by his retinue he went back to the man of God and standing before him said, Now I know that there is no god anywhere in the world except in Israel. Will you accept a token of gratitude from your servant?

¹⁶As the LORD lives, whom I serve, said the prophet, I shall accept nothing. Though pressed to accept, he refused.

¹⁷Then if you will not, said Naaman, let me, sir, have two mules load of earth, for I shall no longer offer whole-offering or sacrifice to any god but the LORD.

¹⁸In one matter only may the LORD pardon me: when my master goes to the temple of Rimmon to worship, leaning on my arm, and I worship in the temple of Rimmon when he worships there, for this let the LORD pardon me.'

¹⁹Elisha bade him go in peace. Naaman had gone only a short distance on his way,

²⁰when Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said to himself, Has my master let this Aramaean, Naaman, go without accepting what he brought? As the LORD lives, I shall run after him and get something from him.

²¹So Gehazi hurried after Naaman. When Naaman saw him running after him, he alighted from his chariot to meet him saying, Is anything wrong?

²²Nothing, replied Gehazi, but my master sent me to say that two young men of the company of prophets from the hill-country of Ephraim have just arrived. Could you provide them with a talent of silver and two changes of clothing?

²³Naaman said, By all means; take two talents. He pressed him to take

them; then he tied up the two talents of silver in two bags, and the two changes of clothing, and gave them to two of his servants, and they walked ahead carrying them.

²⁴When Gehazi came to the citadel he took them from the two servants, deposited them in the house, and dismissed the men; and they went away.

²⁵When he went in and stood before his master, Elisha said, Where have you been, Gehazi? Nowhere, said Gehazi.

²⁶But he said to him, Was I not present in spirit when the man turned and got down from his chariot to meet you? Was it a time to get money and garments, olive trees and vineyards, sheep and oxen, slaves and slave-girls?

²⁷Naaman's leprosy will fasten on you and on your descendants for ever. Gehazi left Elisha's presence, his skin diseased, white as snow.

6¹THE company of prophets who were with Elisha said to him, As you see, this place where we live with you is too cramped for us.

² Let us go to the Jordan and each fetch a log, and make ourselves a place to live in. The prophet said, Yes, go.

³ One of them said, Please, sir, come with us. I shall come, he said,

⁴ and he went with them. When they reached the Jordan and began cutting down trees

⁵ it chanced that, as one of them was felling a trunk, the head of his axe flew off into the water. Oh, master! he exclaimed. It was borrowed.

⁶ Where did it fall? asked the man of God. When shown the place, he cut off a piece of wood and threw it into the water and made the iron float.

⁷ Elisha said, Lift it out. So he reached down and picked it up.

⁸ ONCE, when the king of Aram was at war with Israel, he held a conference with his staff at which he said, I mean to attack in such and such a direction.

⁹ The man of God warned the king of Israel: Take care to avoid this place, for the Aramaeans are going down there.

¹⁰ The king of Israel sent word to the place about which the man of God had given him this warning; and the king

took special precautions every time he found himself near that place.

¹¹The king of Aram was greatly incensed at this and, summoning his staff, he said to them, Tell me, which of us is for the king of Israel?

¹²There is no one, my lord king, said one of his staff; but Elisha, the prophet in Israel, tells the king of Israel the very words you speak in your bedchamber.

¹³Go, find out where he is, said the king, and I shall send and seize him. It was reported to him that the prophet was at Dothan,

¹⁴and he sent a strong force there with horses and chariots. They came by night and surrounded the town.

¹⁵When the attendant of the man of God rose and went out early next morning, he saw a force with horses and chariots surrounding the town. Oh, master, he said, which way are we to turn?

¹⁶Elisha answered, Do not be afraid, for those on our side are more than those on theirs.

¹⁷He offered this prayer: LORD, open his eyes and let him see. The LORD

opened the young man's eyes, and he saw the hills covered with horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

¹⁸As the Aramaeans came down towards him, Elisha prayed to the LORD: Strike this host, I pray, with blindness; and they were struck blind as Elisha had asked.

¹⁹Elisha said to them, You are on the wrong road; this is not the town. Follow me and I will lead you to the man you are looking for. And he led them to Samaria.

²⁰As soon as they had entered Samaria, Elisha prayed, LORD, open the eyes of these men and let them see again. He opened their eyes, and they saw that they were inside Samaria.

²¹When the king of Israel saw them, he said to Elisha, My father, am I to destroy them?

²²No, you must not do that, he answered. Would you destroy those whom you have not taken prisoner with your own sword and bow? As for these men, provide them with food and water, and let them eat and drink and go back to their master.

²³ So he prepared a great feast for them; they ate and drank and then were sent back to their master. From that time Aramaean raids on Israel ceased.

²⁴ BUT later, Ben-hadad king of Aram mustered his whole army and marched to the siege of Samaria.

²⁵ The city was near starvation, and they were besieging it so closely that a donkey's head was sold for eighty shekels of silver, and a quarter of a kab of locust-beans for five shekels.

²⁶ One day, as the king of Israel was walking along the city wall, a woman called to him, Help, my lord king!

²⁷ He said, If the LORD does not bring you help, where can I find help for you? From threshing-floor or from winepress?

²⁸ What is your trouble? She replied, This woman said to me, Give up your child for us to eat today, and we will eat mine tomorrow.

²⁹ So we cooked my son and ate him; but when I said to her the next day, Now give up your child for us to eat, she had hidden him.

³⁰ When he heard the woman's story, the king tore his clothes. He was walking

along the wall at the time, and, when the people looked, they saw that he had sackcloth underneath, next to his skin.

³¹ He said, The LORD do the same to me and more, if the head of Elisha son of Shaphat stays on his shoulders today.

³² Elisha was sitting at home, the elders with him. The king had dispatched one of those at court, but, before the messenger arrived, Elisha said to the elders, See how this son of a murderer has sent to behead me! When the messenger comes, be sure to close the door and hold it fast against him. Can you not hear his master following on his heels?

³³ While he was still speaking, the king arrived and said, Look at our plight! This is the LORD's doing. Why should I wait any longer for him to help us?

7¹ Elisha answered, Hear this word from the LORD: By this time tomorrow a shekel will buy a measure of flour or two measures of barley at the gate of Samaria.

² The officer on whose arm the king leaned said to the man of God, Even if the LORD were to open windows in the

sky, such a thing could not happen! He answered, You will see it with your own eyes, but you will not eat any of it.

³At the city gate were four lepers. They said to one another, Why should we stay here and wait for death?

⁴If we say we will go into the city, the famine is there, and we shall die; if we stay here, we shall die. Well then, let us go to the camp of the Aramaeans and give ourselves up: if they spare us, we shall live; if they put us to death, we can but die.

⁵At dusk they set out for the Aramaean camp, and when they reached the outskirts, they found no one there.

⁶The LORD had caused the Aramaean army to hear a sound like that of chariots and horses and a great host, so that the word went round: The king of Israel has hired the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Egypt to attack us.

⁷They had taken to flight in the dusk, abandoning their tents, horses, and donkeys. Leaving the camp as it stood, they had fled for their lives.

⁸Those lepers came to the outskirts of the camp, where they went into a tent.

They ate and drank, looted silver and gold and clothing, and made off and hid them. Then they came back, went into another tent and rifled it, and made off and hid the loot.

⁹But they said to one another, What we are doing is not right. This is a day of good news and we are keeping it to ourselves. If we wait till morning, we shall be held to blame. We must go now and give the news to the king's household.

¹⁰So they went and called to the watch at the city gate and described how they had gone to the Aramaean camp and found not one man in it and had heard no human voice: nothing but horses and donkeys tethered, and the tents left as they were.

¹¹The watch called out and announced the news to the king's household in the palace.

¹²The king rose in the night and said to his staff, I shall tell you what the Aramaeans have done. They know we are starving, so they have left their camp to go and hide in the open country,

expecting us to come out, and then they can take us alive and enter the city.

¹³One of his staff said, Send out a party of men with some of the horses that are left; if they live, they will be as well off as all the other Israelites who are still left; if they die, they will be no worse off than all those who have already perished. Let them go and see what has happened.

¹⁴They picked two mounted men, and the king dispatched them in the track of the Aramaean army with the order to go and find out what had happened.

¹⁵Having followed as far as the Jordan and found the whole road littered with clothing and equipment which the Aramaeans had discarded in their haste, the messengers returned and made their report to the king.

¹⁶The people went out and plundered the Aramaean camp, and a measure of flour was sold for a shekel and two measures of barley for a shekel, so that the word of the LORD came true.

¹⁷The king had appointed the officer on whose arm he leaned to take charge of the gate, and the crowd trampled him to

death there, just as the man of God had foretold when the king visited him.

¹⁸For when the man of God said to the king, By this time tomorrow a shekel will buy two measures of barley or one measure of flour at the gate of Samaria,

¹⁹the officer had answered, Even if the LORD were to open windows in the sky, such a thing could not happen! And the man of God had said, You will see it with your own eyes, but you will not eat any of it.

²⁰This is what happened to him: he was trampled to death at the gate by the crowd.

8¹Elisha said to the woman whose son he had restored to life, Go away at once with your household and find lodging where you can, for the LORD has decreed a seven years famine and it has already come on the land.'

²The woman acted at once on the word of the man of God and went away with her household to Philistine territory, where she stayed for seven years.

³On her return at the end of that time she sought an audience of the king to beg for her house and land.

⁴The king was questioning Gehazi, the servant of the man of God, about all the great things Elisha had done;

⁵and, as he was describing to the king how he had brought the dead to life, the selfsame woman began her appeal to the king for her house and land. My lord king, said Gehazi, this is the woman, and this is her son whom Elisha restored to life.

⁶The king questioned the woman, and she told him about it. Then he entrusted her case to an official, ordering him to restore all her property to her, together with all the revenues from her land from the time she left till that day.

⁷Elisha came to Damascus, at a time when King Ben-hadad of Aram was ill; and when the king was told that the man of God had arrived,

⁸he ordered Hazael to take a gift with him and go to the man of God and through him enquire of the LORD whether he would recover from his illness.

⁹Hazael went, taking with him as a gift forty camel-loads of all kinds of Damascus wares. When he came into

the prophet's presence, he said, Your son King Ben-hadad of Aram has sent me to you to ask whether he will recover from his illness.

¹⁰Go and tell him that he will recover, he answered; but the LORD has revealed to me that in fact he will die.

¹¹The man of God stood staring with set face until Hazael became disconcerted; then the man of God wept.

¹²Why do you weep, sir? said Hazael. He answered, Because I know the harm you will do to the Israelites: you will set their fortresses on fire and put their young men to the sword; you will dash their children to the ground and rip open their pregnant women.

¹³Hazael said, But I am a dog, a mere nobody; how can I do this great thing? Elisha answered, The LORD has revealed to me that you will become king of Aram.

¹⁴Hazael left Elisha and returned to his master, who asked what Elisha had said. He told me that you would recover, he replied.

¹⁵But the next day he took a blanket and, after dipping it in water, laid it over

the king's face, so that he died; and Hazael succeeded him.

¹⁶In the fifth year of Jehoram son of King Ahab of Israel, Joram son of King Jehoshaphat of Judah became king.

¹⁷He was thirty-two years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for eight years.

¹⁸He followed the practices of the kings of Israel as the house of Ahab had done, for he had married Ahab's daughter; he did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD.

¹⁹Yet for his servant David's sake the LORD was unwilling to destroy Judah, as he had promised to give him and his descendants a lamp for all time.

²⁰During Joram's reign Edom revolted against Judah and set up its own king.

²¹Joram with all his chariots pushed on to Zair. When the Edomites encircled him and his chariot-commanders he made a sortie by night, and broke out; his main force, however, fled to their homes.

²²To this day Edom has remained independent of Judah. Libnah also revolted at the same time.

²³The other acts and events of Joram's reign are recorded in the annals of the kings of Judah.

²⁴Joram rested with his forefathers and was buried with them in the city of David. His son Ahaziah succeeded him.

²⁵In the twelfth year of Jehoram son of Ahab king of Israel, Ahaziah son of King Joram of Judah became king.

²⁶Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for one year; his mother was Athaliah granddaughter of King Omri of Israel.

²⁷He followed the practices of the house of Ahab and did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD like the house of Ahab, for he was connected with that house by marriage.

²⁸He allied himself with Jehoram son of Ahab to fight against King Hazael of Aram at Ramoth-gilead. But King Jehoram was wounded by the Aramaeans,

²⁹and retired to Jezreel to recover from the wounds inflicted on him at Ramoth in battle with King Hazael. Because of Jehoram's injury Ahaziah son of Joram

king of Judah went down to Jezreel to visit him.

9¹ ELISHA the prophet summoned one of the company of prophets and said to him, Get ready for the road; take this flask of oil with you and go to Ramoth-gilead.

² When you arrive, look there for Jehu son of Jehoshaphat, son of Nimshi; go in and call him aside from his fellow-officers, and lead him through to an inner room.

³ Take the flask and pour the oil on his head and say, This is the word of the LORD: I anoint you king over Israel. After that open the door and flee for your life.

⁴ The young prophet went to Ramoth-gilead,

⁵ and when he arrived, he found the officers sitting together. He said, Sir, I have a word for you. For which of us? asked Jehu. For you, sir, he said.

⁶ Jehu rose and went into the house, where the prophet poured the oil on his head, saying, This is the word of the LORD the God of Israel: I anoint you king over Israel, the people of the LORD.

⁷You are to strike down the house of Ahab your master, and I shall take vengeance on Jezebel for the blood of my servants the prophets and for the blood of all the LORD's servants.

⁸The entire house of Ahab will perish; I shall destroy every mother's son of his house in Israel, whether under the protection of the family or not.

⁹I shall make Ahab's house like the house of Jeroboam son of Nebat and the house of Baasha son of Ahijah.

¹⁰Jezebel will be devoured by dogs in the plot of ground at Jezreel and no one will bury her. With that he opened the door and fled.

¹¹When Jehu rejoined the king's officers, they said to him, Is all well? What did this crazy fellow want with you? You know him and his ideas, he said.

¹²That is no answer! they replied. Tell us what happened. I shall tell you exactly what he said: This is the word of the LORD: I anoint you king over Israel.

¹³They snatched up their cloaks and spread them under him at the top of the steps, and they sounded the trumpet and shouted, Jehu is king.

¹⁴ Jehu son of Jehoshaphat, son of Nimshi, organized a conspiracy against Jehoram, while Jehoram and all the Israelites were defending Ramoth-gilead against King Hazael of Aram.

¹⁵ King Jehoram had returned to Jezreel to recover from the wounds inflicted on him by the Aramaeans in his battle against Hazael. Jehu said to his colleagues, If you are on my side, see that no one escapes from the city to carry the news to Jezreel.

¹⁶ He mounted his chariot and drove to Jezreel, for Jehoram was laid up there and King Ahaziah of Judah had gone down to visit him.

¹⁷ The watchman standing on the watch-tower in Jezreel saw Jehu's troops approaching and called out, I see a troop of men. Jehoram said, Fetch a horseman and send to meet them and ask if they come peaceably.

¹⁸ The horseman went to meet him and said, The king asks, Is it peace? Jehu said, Peace? What is that to do with you? Fall in behind me. The watchman reported, The messenger has met them but is not coming back.

¹⁹A second horseman was sent; when he met them, he also said, The king asks, Is it peace? Peace? said Jehu. What is that to do with you? Fall in behind me.

²⁰The watchman reported, He has met them but is not coming back. The driving is like the driving of Jehu son of Nimshi, for he drives furiously.

²¹Harness my chariot, said Jehoram. When it was ready King Jehoram of Israel and King Ahaziah of Judah went out each in his own chariot to meet Jehu, and they met him by the plot of Naboth of Jezreel.

²²When Jehoram saw Jehu, he said, Is it peace, Jehu? He replied, Do you call it peace while your mother Jezebel keeps up her obscene idol-worship and monstrous sorceries?

²³Jehoram wheeled about and fled, crying out, Treachery, Ahaziah!

²⁴Jehu drew his bow and shot Jehoram between the shoulders; the arrow pierced his heart and he slumped down in his chariot.

²⁵Jehu said to Bidkar, his lieutenant, Pick him up and throw him into the plot of land belonging to Naboth of

Jezreel; remember how, when you and I were riding side by side behind Ahab his father, the LORD pronounced this sentence against him:

²⁶It is the word of the LORD: as surely as I saw yesterday the blood of Naboth and the blood of his sons, I will requite you on this plot of land. Pick him up, therefore, and throw him into the plot and so fulfil the word of the LORD.

²⁷When King Ahaziah of Judah saw this he fled by the road to Beth-haggan. Jehu pursued him and said, Get him too. They shot him down in his chariot on the road up the valley near Ibleam, but he escaped to Megiddo and died there.

²⁸His servants conveyed his body to Jerusalem by chariot and buried him in his tomb with his forefathers in the city of David.

²⁹It was in the eleventh year of Jehoram son of Ahab that Ahaziah became king over Judah.

³⁰Then Jehu came to Jezreel. When Jezebel heard what had happened she painted her eyes and adorned her hair, and she stood looking down from a window.

³¹ As Jehu entered the gate, she said, Is it peace, you Zimri, you murderer of your master?

³² He looked up at the window and said, Who is on my side? Who? Two or three eunuchs looked out to him,

³³ and he said, Throw her down. They threw her down, and some of her blood splashed on to the wall and the horses, which trampled her underfoot.

³⁴ Jehu went in and ate and drank. See to this accursed woman, he said, and bury her; for she is a king's daughter.

³⁵ But when they went to bury her they found nothing of her but the skull, the feet, and the palms of her hands.

³⁶ When they went back and told him, Jehu said, It is the word of the LORD which his servant Elijah the Tishbite spoke, when he said, In the plot of ground at Jezreel the dogs will devour the flesh of Jezebel,

³⁷ and Jezebel's corpse will lie like dung on the ground in the plot at Jezreel so that no one will be able to say: This is Jezebel.

10¹ There were seventy sons of Ahab left in Samaria. Jehu therefore

sent a letter to Samaria, addressed to the rulers of the city, the elders, and the guardians of Ahab's sons, in which he wrote:

²You have in your care your master's family as well as his chariots and horses, fortified cities, and weapons; therefore, whenever this letter reaches you,

³choose the best and the most suitable of your master's sons, set him on his father's throne, and fight for your master's house.

⁴They were panic-stricken and said, If two kings could not stand against him, what hope is there that we can?

⁵Therefore the comptroller of the household and the governor of the city, with the elders and the children's guardians, sent this message to Jehu: We are your servants. Whatever you tell us we shall do; but we shall not make anyone king. Do as you think fit.

⁶So in a second letter to them Jehu wrote: If you are on my side and will obey my orders, then bring the heads of your master's sons to me at Jezreel by this time tomorrow. The royal princes, seventy in all, were with the nobles

of the city who had charge of their upbringing.

⁷When the letter arrived, they took the royal princes and killed all seventy; they piled their heads in baskets and sent the heads to Jehu in Jezreel.

⁸When the messenger came to him and reported that they had brought the heads of the royal princes, he ordered them to be piled in two heaps and left till morning at the entrance to the city gate.

⁹In the morning Jehu went out, and standing there said to all the people, You are fair-minded judges. I conspired against my master and killed him, but who put all these to death?

¹⁰Be sure then that every word which the LORD has spoken against the house of Ahab will be fulfilled, and that the LORD has now done what he promised through his servant Elijah.

¹¹So Jehu put to death all who were left of the house of Ahab in Jezreel, as well as all Ahab's nobles, his close friends, and priests, until he had left not one survivor.

¹²Then he set out for Samaria, and on the way there, when he had reached a shepherds' shelter,

¹³he came upon the kinsmen of King Ahaziah of Judah and demanded to know who they were. We are kinsmen of Ahaziah, they replied, and we have come down to pay our respects to the families of the king and of the queen mother.

¹⁴Take them alive, he said. They were taken alive, all forty-two of them, then slain, and flung into a pit that was there; he did not leave a single survivor.

¹⁵When he had left that place, he found Jehonadab son of Rechab coming to meet him. Jehu greeted him and said, Are you with me wholeheartedly, as I am with you? I am, replied Jehonadab. Then if you are, said Jehu, give me your hand, and he did so. Jehu had him come up into his chariot.

¹⁶Come with me, he said, and you will see my zeal for the LORD. So he took him with him in his chariot.

¹⁷When he came to Samaria, he put to death all of Ahab's house who were left there and so blotted it out, in fulfilment

of the word which the LORD had spoken to Elijah.

¹⁸Jehu called all the people together and said to them, Ahab served the Baal a little; Jehu will serve him much.

¹⁹Now summon all the prophets of Baal, all his ministers and priests; not one must be missing. For I am holding a great sacrifice to Baal, and no one who is missing from it shall live. In this way Jehu outwitted the ministers of Baal in order to destroy them.

²⁰Jehu gave the order, Proclaim a sacred ceremony for Baal. This was done,

²¹and Jehu himself sent word throughout Israel. All the ministers of Baal came; there was not a man left who did not come, and when they went into the temple of Baal, it was filled from end to end.

²²Jehu said to the person who had charge of the wardrobe, Bring out robes for all the ministers of Baal; and he brought them out.

²³Then Jehu and Jehonadab son of Rechab went into the temple of Baal and said to the ministers, Look carefully and

make sure that there are no servants of the LORD here with you, but only the ministers of Baal.

²⁴ Then they went in to offer sacrifices and whole-offerings. Jehu had stationed eighty of his men outside and warned them, I shall hold you responsible for these men, and if anyone of you lets one of them escape he will pay for it with his own life.

²⁵ When he had finished offering the whole-offering, Jehu ordered the guards and officers to go in and cut them all down, and let not one of them escape. They were slain without quarter, and the guard and the officers threw them out. Then going into the keep of the temple of Baal,

²⁶ they brought out the sacred pole from the temple and burnt it;

²⁷ they overthrew the sacred pillar of the Baal and pulled down the temple itself and made a privy of it -- as it is today.

²⁸ Thus Jehu stamped out the worship of Baal in Israel.

²⁹ He did not however abandon the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat who led Israel

into sin: he maintained the worship of the golden calves of Bethel and Dan.

³⁰The LORD said to Jehu, You have done well in carrying out what is right in my eyes, and you have done to the house of Ahab all that it was in my mind to do. Therefore your sons to the fourth generation will occupy the throne of Israel.

³¹But Jehu was not careful to follow the law of the LORD the God of Israel with all his heart; he did not abandon the sins of Jeroboam who led Israel into sin.

³²IN those days the LORD began to cut down Israel. Hazael struck at them in every corner of their territory

³³eastwards from the Jordan: all the land of Gilead, Gad, Reuben, and Manasseh, from Aroer which is by the wadi of the Arnon, including Gilead and Bashan.

³⁴The other events of Jehu's reign, his achievements and his exploits, are recorded in the annals of the kings of Israel.

³⁵Jehu rested with his forefathers and was buried in Samaria. His son Jehoahaz succeeded him.

³⁶Jehu had reigned over Israel in Samaria for twenty-eight years.

11 ¹AS SOON as Athaliah mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she set out to destroy the whole royal line.

²But Jehosheba, the daughter of King Joram, the sister of Ahaziah, took Ahaziah's son Joash and stole him away from among the princes who were being murdered; she put him and his nurse in a bedchamber where he was hidden from Athaliah and escaped death.

³He remained concealed with her in the house of the LORD for six years, while Athaliah ruled the country.

⁴In the seventh year Jehoiada sent for the captains of units of a hundred, both of the Carites and of the guards, and he brought them to him in the house of the LORD, where he made a compact with them and put them on oath; he showed them the king's son,

⁵and gave them these orders: One third of you who are on duty on the sabbath are to be on guard in the palace;

⁶the rest of you are to be on special duty in the house of the LORD, one third

at the Sur Gate and the other third at the gate with the outrunners.

⁷Your two companies who are off duty on the sabbath are to be on duty for the king in the house of the LORD.

⁸Mount guard round the king, each man holding his weapons, and anyone who comes near the ranks is to be put to death. You are to stay with the king wherever he goes.

⁹The captains carried out the orders of Jehoiada the priest to the letter: each took his men, both those who came on duty on the sabbath and those who went off, and they reported to Jehoiada.

¹⁰The priest handed out to the captains King David's spears and shields, which were kept in the house of the LORD.

¹¹The guards took up their stations round the king, each man holding his weapons, from corner to corner of the house to north and south.

¹²Then Jehoiada brought out the king's son, put the crown on his head, handed him the testimony, and anointed him king. The people clapped their hands and shouted, Long live the king.

¹³When Athaliah heard the noise made by the guards and the people, she came into the house of the LORD where the people were;

¹⁴she found the king standing by the pillar, as was the custom, amidst outbursts of song and fanfares of trumpets in his honour; all the populace were rejoicing and blowing trumpets. Athaliah tore her clothes and cried, Treason! Treason!

¹⁵Jehoiada the priest gave orders to the captains in command of the troops: Bring her outside the precincts and put to the sword anyone in attendance on her; for the priest said, Let her not be put to death in the house of the LORD.

¹⁶They took her and brought her out by the entry for horses to the palace, and there she was put to death.

¹⁷Jehoiada made a covenant, between the LORD on one side and the king and people on the other, that they should be the LORD's people, and a covenant also between the king and the people.

¹⁸The people all went to the temple of Baal and pulled it down; they smashed to pieces its altars and images, and they

slew Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars. Jehoiada set a guard over the house of the LORD;

¹⁹he took the captains of units of a hundred, the Carites and the guards, and all the people, and they escorted the king from the house of the LORD through the Gate of the Guards to the palace, and seated him on the royal throne.

²⁰The whole people rejoiced and the city had quiet. That is how Athaliah was put to the sword in the palace.

²¹Joash was seven years old when he became king.

12¹It was in the seventh year of Jehu that Joash became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem for forty years; his mother was Zibiah from Beersheba.

²He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD all his days, as Jehoiada the priest had taught him.

³The shrines, however, were allowed to remain; the people continued to sacrifice and burn offerings there.

⁴Joash ordered that all the silver brought as holy-gifts into the house of the LORD, the silver for which each man was assessed, the silver for the persons

assessed under his name, and any silver brought voluntarily to the house of the LORD,

⁵ should be taken by the priests, each receiving it from a treasurer; he also ordered them to repair the house wherever it was found necessary.

⁶ But in the twenty-third year of Joash's reign the priests had still not carried out the repairs.

⁷ The king summoned Jehoiada the priest along with the other priests and asked, Why are you not repairing the house? Henceforth you need not receive the money from your treasurers, but hand it over for the repair of the house.

⁸ The priests agreed neither to receive money from the people nor to undertake the repairs of the house themselves.

⁹ Jehoiada the priest took a chest, bored a hole in the lid, and put it beside the sacrificial slaughtering-place on the right side going into the house of the LORD. The priests on duty at the entrance put in it all the money brought to the house of the LORD.

¹⁰ Whenever they saw that the chest was well filled, the king's secretary and

the high priest came and melted down the silver found in the house of the LORD and weighed it.

¹¹When it had been checked, they handed over the silver to those supervising the work in the house of the LORD, and they paid the carpenters and the builders working there

¹²and the masons and the stone-cutters; they used it also to purchase timber and hewn stone for the repairs and for all other expenses connected with them.

¹³They did not use the money brought into the house of the LORD to make silver cups, snuffers, tossing-bowls, trumpets, or any gold or silver vessels;

¹⁴but they used it for paying the workmen and for the repairs.

¹⁵No account was asked from the men to whom the money was given for the payment of the workers; they were acting on trust.

¹⁶Money from reparation-offerings and purification-offerings was not brought into the house of the LORD: it belonged to the priests.

¹⁷ King Hazael of Aram came up at that time and attacked Gath, and after its capture he moved on against Jerusalem.

¹⁸ Thereupon King Joash of Judah took all the holy-gifts that Jehoshaphat, Joram, and Ahaziah his forefathers, kings of Judah, had dedicated, and his own holy-gifts, and all the gold that was in the treasuries of the house of the LORD and in the royal palace, and sent them to Hazael; and he withdrew from Jerusalem.

¹⁹ The other acts and events of the reign of Joash are recorded in the annals of the kings of Judah.

²⁰ His servants rose against him in a conspiracy and assassinated him in the house of Millo on the descent to Silla;

²¹ it was his servants Jozachar son of Shimeath and Jehozabad son of Shomer who struck the fatal blow. He was buried with his forefathers in the city of David. His son Amaziah succeeded him.

13¹ In the twenty-third year of Joash son of Ahaziah king of Judah, Jehoahaz son of Jehu became king over Israel in Samaria and he reigned for seventeen years.

²He did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD and continued the sinful practices of Jeroboam son of Nebat who led Israel into sin, and did not give them up.

³This roused the anger of the LORD against Israel, and he made them subject for some years to King Hazael of Aram and Ben-hadad his son.

⁴When Jehoahaz sought to placate the LORD, the LORD heard his prayer, for he saw how the king of Aram oppressed Israel.

⁵The LORD appointed a deliverer for Israel, and they escaped from the power of Aram and settled down again in their own homes.

⁶But they did not give up the sinful practices of the house of Jeroboam who led Israel into sin, but continued in them; the goddess Asherah remained in Samaria.

⁷Hazael had left Jehoahaz no armed force except fifty horsemen, ten chariots, and ten thousand infantry; all the rest the king of Aram had destroyed and made like dust under foot.

⁸The other events of the reign of Jehoahaz, and all his achievements and exploits, are recorded in the annals of the kings of Israel.

⁹He rested with his forefathers and was buried in Samaria. His son Jehoash succeeded him.

¹⁰In the thirty-ninth year of King Joash of Judah, Jehoash son of Jehoahaz became king over Israel in Samaria and reigned for sixteen years.

¹¹He did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD; he did not give up any of the sinful practices of Jeroboam son of Nebat who led Israel into sin, but continued in them.

¹²The other events of the reign of Jehoash, all his achievements, his exploits, and his war with King Amaziah of Judah, are recorded in the annals of the kings of Israel.

¹³Jehoash rested with his forefathers and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel. Jeroboam ascended the throne.

¹⁴When Elisha fell ill and lay on his deathbed, King Jehoash of Israel went down to him and, weeping over him,

said, My father! My father! The chariots and horsemen of Israel!

¹⁵Elisha said, Take a bow and arrows, and he did so.

¹⁶Put your hand to the bow, said the prophet. He did so, and Elisha laid his hands on those of the king.

¹⁷Then he said, Open the window towards the east; he opened it and Elisha told him to shoot, and he did so. Then the prophet said, An arrow for the LORD's victory, an arrow for victory over Aram! You will utterly defeat Aram at Aphek.

¹⁸He went on, Now take up your arrows. When he did so, Elisha said, Strike the ground with them. He struck three times and stopped.

¹⁹The man of God was angry with him and said, You should have struck five or six times; then you would have defeated Aram utterly; as it is, you will strike Aram three times and no more.

²⁰Elisha died and was buried. Year after year Moabite raiders used to invade the land.

²¹Once some men were burying a dead man when they caught sight of the

raiders, and they threw the body into the grave of Elisha and made off. When the body touched the prophet's bones, the man came to life and rose to his feet.

²²All through the reign of Jehoahaz, King Hazael of Aram oppressed Israel.

²³But the LORD was gracious and took pity on them; because of his covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, he looked on them with favour and was unwilling to destroy them; nor has he even yet banished them from his sight.

²⁴When King Hazael of Aram died and was succeeded by his son Ben-hadad,

²⁵Jehoash son of Jehoahaz recaptured the towns which Ben-hadad had taken in war from Jehoahaz his father; three times Jehoash defeated him and so recovered the towns of Israel.

14¹In the second year of Jehoash son of Jehoahaz king of Israel, Amaziah son of King Joash of Judah succeeded his father.

²He was twenty-five years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for twenty-nine years; his mother was Jehoaddin from Jerusalem.

³ He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, yet not as his ancestor David had done; he followed his father Joash in everything.

⁴ The shrines were not abolished; the people continued to sacrifice and burn offerings there.

⁵ As soon as the royal power was firmly in his grasp, he put to death those of his servants who had murdered the king his father;

⁶ but he spared the murderers' children in obedience to the LORD's command written in the law of Moses: Parents are not to be put to death for their children, nor children for their parents; each one may be put to death only for his own sin.

⁷ He defeated ten thousand Edomites in the valley of Salt and captured Sela; he gave it the name Joktheel, which it still bears.

⁸ Amaziah sent envoys to Jehoash son of Jehoahaz, son of Jehu, king of Israel, to propose a confrontation.

⁹ King Jehoash of Israel sent back this answer to King Amaziah of Judah: A thistle in Lebanon sent to a cedar in Lebanon to say, Give your daughter in

marriage to my son. But a wild beast in Lebanon, passing by, trampled on the thistle.

¹⁰You have defeated Edom, it is true; but it has gone to your head. Stay at home and enjoy your triumph. Why should you involve yourself in disaster and bring yourself to the ground, and drag down Judah with you?

¹¹When, however, Amaziah would not listen, King Jehoash of Israel marched out, and he and King Amaziah of Judah clashed at Beth-shemesh in Judah.

¹²The men of Judah were routed by Israel and fled to their homes.

¹³King Jehoash of Israel captured Amaziah king of Judah, son of Joash, son of Ahaziah, at Beth-shemesh. He marched on Jerusalem, where he broke down the city wall from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate, a distance of four hundred cubits.

¹⁴He took all the gold and silver and all the vessels found in the house of the LORD and in the treasuries of the palace, as well as hostages, and then returned to Samaria.

¹⁵The other events of the reign of Jehoash, and all his achievements, his exploits, and his wars with King Amaziah of Judah, are recorded in the annals of the kings of Israel.

¹⁶He rested with his forefathers and was buried in Samaria with the kings of Israel. His son Jeroboam succeeded him.

¹⁷Amaziah son of Joash, king of Judah, outlived Jehoash son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel, by fifteen years.

¹⁸The other events of Amaziah's reign are recorded in the annals of the kings of Judah.

¹⁹A conspiracy was formed against him in Jerusalem and he fled to Lachish; but the conspirators sent after him to Lachish and put him to death there.

²⁰His body was conveyed on horseback to Jerusalem, and there he was buried with his forefathers in the city of David.

²¹The people of Judah, acting together, took Azariah, now sixteen years old, and made him king in succession to his father Amaziah.

²²It was he who built Elath and restored it to Judah after the king rested with his forefathers.

²³In the fifteenth year of Amaziah son of Joash, king of Judah, Jeroboam son of Jehoash, king of Israel, became king in Samaria and reigned for forty-one years.

²⁴He did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD; he did not give up the sinful practices of Jeroboam son of Nebat who led Israel into sin.

²⁵He re-established the frontiers of Israel from Lebo-hamath to the sea of the Arabah, in fulfilment of the word of the LORD the God of Israel spoken by his servant the prophet Jonah son of Amittai, from Gath-hepher.

²⁶For the LORD had seen how bitterly Israel had suffered; no one was safe, whether under the protection of his family or not, and Israel was left defenceless.

²⁷But the LORD had made no threat to blot out the name of Israel under heaven, and he saved them through Jeroboam son of Jehoash.

²⁸The other events of Jeroboam's reign, and all his achievements, his exploits, the wars he fought, and how he recovered Damascus and Hamath

in Jaudi for Israel, are recorded in the annals of the kings of Israel.

²⁹ Jeroboam rested with his forefathers the kings of Israel, and he was succeeded by his son Zechariah.

15¹ In the twenty-seventh year of King Jeroboam of Israel, Azariah son of King Amaziah of Judah became king.

² He was sixteen years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for fifty-two years; his mother was Jecoliah from Jerusalem.

³ He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, as Amaziah his father had done.

⁴ But the shrines were not abolished; the people still continued to sacrifice and burn offerings there.

⁵ The LORD struck the king with leprosy, which he had till the day of his death; he was relieved of all duties and lived in his palace, while his son Jotham was comptroller of the household and regent over the country.

⁶ The other acts and events of Azariah's reign are recorded in the annals of the kings of Judah.

⁷ He rested with his forefathers and was buried with them in the city of David. His son Jotham succeeded him.

⁸ In the thirty-eighth year of King Azariah of Judah, Zechariah son of Jeroboam became king over Israel in Samaria and reigned for six months.

⁹ He did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD, as his forefathers had done; he did not give up the sinful practices of Jeroboam son of Nebat who led Israel into sin.

¹⁰ Shallum son of Jabesh formed a conspiracy against him, attacked and killed him in Ibleam, and usurped the throne.

¹¹ The other events of Zechariah's reign are recorded in the annals of the kings of Israel.

¹² Thus the word of the LORD spoken to Jehu was fulfilled: Your sons to the fourth generation will occupy the throne of Israel.

¹³ Shallum son of Jabesh became king in the thirty-ninth year of King Uzziah of Judah, and he reigned for one full month in Samaria.

¹⁴Menahem son of Gadi came up from Tirzah to Samaria, attacked Shallum son of Jabesh there, killed him, and usurped the throne.

¹⁵The other events of Shallum's reign and the conspiracy that he formed are recorded in the annals of the kings of Israel.

¹⁶Then Menahem, starting out from Tirzah, destroyed Tappuah and everything in it and ravaged its territory; he ravaged it because it had not opened its gates to him, and he ripped open every pregnant woman there.

¹⁷In the thirty-ninth year of King Azariah of Judah, Menahem son of Gadi became king over Israel and he reigned in Samaria for ten years.

¹⁸He did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD; he did not give up the sinful practices of Jeroboam son of Nebat who led Israel into sin. In Menahem's time King Pul of Assyria invaded the country, and Menahem gave him a thousand talents of silver to obtain his help in strengthening his hold on the kingdom.

¹⁹(15: 18)

²⁰ Menahem laid a levy on all the men of wealth in Israel; each had to give the king of Assyria fifty silver shekels, and he withdrew without occupying the country.

²¹ The other acts and events of Menahem's reign are recorded in the annals of the kings of Israel.

²² He rested with his forefathers, and was succeeded by his son Pekahiah.

²³ In the fiftieth year of King Azariah of Judah, Pekahiah son of Menahem became king over Israel in Samaria and reigned for two years.

²⁴ He did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD; he did not give up the sinful practices of Jeroboam son of Nebat who led Israel into sin.

²⁵ Pekah son of Remaliah, his lieutenant, formed a conspiracy against him and, with the help of fifty Gileadites, attacked and killed him in the citadel of the royal palace in Samaria, and usurped the throne.

²⁶ The other acts and events of Pekahiah's reign are recorded in the annals of the kings of Israel.

²⁷In the fifty-second year of King Azariah of Judah, Pekah son of Remaliah became king over Israel in Samaria and reigned for twenty years.

²⁸He did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD; he did not give up the sinful practices of Jeroboam son of Nebat who led Israel into sin.

²⁹In the days of King Pekah of Israel, King Tiglath-pileser of Assyria came and seized Iyyon, Abel-beth-maacah, Janoah, Kedesh, Hazor, Gilead, and Galilee, with all the land of Naphtali, and deported the people to Assyria.

³⁰Then Hoshea son of Elah formed a conspiracy against Pekah son of Remaliah, attacked and killed him, and usurped the throne in the twentieth year of Jotham son of Uzziah.

³¹The other acts and events of Pekah's reign are recorded in the annals of the kings of Israel.

³²In the second year of Pekah son of Remaliah, king of Israel, Jotham son of King Uzziah of Judah became king.

³³He was twenty-five years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in

Jerusalem for sixteen years; his mother was Jerusha daughter of Zadok.

³⁴He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, as his father Uzziah had done;

³⁵but the shrines were not abolished and the people continued to sacrifice and burn offerings there. It was he who constructed the Upper Gate of the house of the LORD.

³⁶The other acts and events of Jotham's reign are recorded in the annals of the kings of Judah.

³⁷In those days the LORD began to send King Rezin of Aram and Pekah son of Remaliah to attack Judah.

³⁸Jotham rested with his forefathers and was buried with them in the city of David his forefather. His son Ahaz succeeded him.

16¹IN the seventeenth year of Pekah son of Remaliah, Ahaz son of King Jotham of Judah became king.

²Ahaz was twenty years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for sixteen years. He did not do what was right in the eyes of the LORD his God like his forefather David,

³but followed in the footsteps of the kings of Israel; he even passed his son through the fire according to the abominable practice of the nations whom the LORD had dispossessed in favour of the Israelites.

⁴He sacrificed and burned offerings at the shrines and on the hilltops and under every spreading tree.

⁵Then King Rezin of Aram and Pekah son of Remaliah, king of Israel, attacked Jerusalem and besieged Ahaz but could not bring him to battle.

⁶At that time the king of Edom recovered Elath by driving the Judaeans out of it; the Edomites entered the city and have occupied it to this day.

⁷Ahaz sent messengers to King Tiglath-pileser of Assyria to say, I am your servant and your son. Come and save me from the king of Aram and from the king of Israel, who are attacking me.

⁸Ahaz took the silver and gold found in the house of the LORD and in the treasuries of the royal palace and sent them as a gift to the king of Assyria,

⁹who listened to him; he advanced on Damascus, captured it, deported

its inhabitants to Kir, and put Rezin to death.

¹⁰When King Ahaz went to meet King Tiglath-pileser of Assyria at Damascus, he saw there an altar of which he sent a sketch and a detailed plan to Uriah the priest.

¹¹Accordingly, Uriah built an altar, following all the instructions that the king had sent him from Damascus, and had it ready against the king's return.

¹²When the king came back from Damascus, he saw the altar, approached it, and mounted the steps;

¹³there he burnt his whole-offering and his grain-offering and poured out his drink-offering, and he flung the blood of his shared-offerings against it.

¹⁴The bronze altar that was before the LORD he removed from the front of the house, from between this new altar and the house of the LORD, and put it on the north side of this altar.

¹⁵King Ahaz gave these instructions to Uriah the priest: Burn on the great altar the morning whole-offering and the evening grain-offering, and the king's whole-offering and his grain-offering,

and the whole-offering of all the people of the land, their grain-offering and their drink-offerings, and fling against it all the blood of the sacrifices. But the bronze altar shall be for me, to offer morning sacrifice.

¹⁶Uriah the priest carried out all the king's orders.

¹⁷King Ahaz stripped the trolleys and removed the panels, and he took down the basin and the Sea of bronze from the oxen which supported it and put it on a stone base.

¹⁸In the house of the LORD he removed the structure they had erected for use on the sabbath, and the outer gate for the king, to satisfy the king of Assyria.

¹⁹The other acts and events of the reign of Ahaz are recorded in the annals of the kings of Judah.

²⁰Ahaz rested with his forefathers and was buried with them in the city of David. His son Hezekiah succeeded him.

17 ¹In the twelfth year of King Ahaz of Judah, Hoshea son of Elah became king over Israel and he reigned in Samaria for nine years.

²He did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD, but not as previous kings of Israel had done.

³King Shalmaneser of Assyria marched up against Hoshea, who had been tributary to him,

⁴but when the king of Assyria discovered that Hoshea was being disloyal to him, sending envoys to the king of Egypt at So, and withholding the annual tribute which he had been paying, the king of Assyria seized and imprisoned him.

⁵He overran the whole country and, reaching Samaria, besieged it for three years.

⁶In the ninth year of Hoshea he captured Samaria and deported its people to Assyria, and settled them in Halah and on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the towns of Media.

⁷All this came about because the Israelites had sinned against the LORD their God who brought them up from Egypt, from the despotic rule of Pharaoh king of Egypt; they paid homage to other gods

⁸and observed the laws and customs of the nations whom the LORD had dispossessed before them,

⁹and uttered blasphemies against the LORD their God; they built shrines for themselves in all their settlements, from watch-tower to fortified city;

¹⁰they set up for themselves sacred pillars and sacred poles on every high hill and under every spreading tree,

¹¹and burnt offerings at all the shrines there, as the nations did whom the LORD had displaced before them. By this wickedness of theirs they provoked the LORD's anger.

¹²They worshipped idols, a thing which the LORD had forbidden them to do.

¹³Still the LORD solemnly charged Israel and Judah by every prophet and seer, saying, Give up your evil ways; keep my commandments and statutes given in all the law which I enjoined on your forefathers and delivered to you through my servants the prophets.

¹⁴They would not listen, however, but were as stubborn and rebellious as their forefathers had been, for they too

refused to put their trust in the LORD their God.

¹⁵They rejected his statutes and the covenant which he had made with their forefathers and the solemn warnings which he had given to them. Following worthless idols they became worthless themselves and imitated the nations round about them, which the LORD had forbidden them to do.

¹⁶Forsaking every commandment of the LORD their God, they made themselves images, two calves of cast metal, and also a sacred pole. They prostrated themselves to all the host of heaven and worshipped Baal;

¹⁷they made their sons and daughters pass through the fire. They practised augury and divination; they sold themselves to do what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD and so provoked his anger.

¹⁸Thus it was that the LORD was incensed against Israel and banished them from his presence; only the tribe of Judah was left.

¹⁹Even Judah did not keep the commandments of the LORD their God

but followed the practices adopted by Israel;

²⁰so the LORD rejected all the descendants of Israel and punished them and gave them over to plunderers and finally flung them out from his presence.

²¹When he tore Israel from the house of David, they made Jeroboam son of Nebat king, and he seduced Israel from their allegiance to the LORD and led them into grave sin.

²²The Israelites persisted in all the sins that Jeroboam had committed and did not give them up,

²³until finally the LORD banished the Israelites from his presence, as he had threatened through all his servants the prophets, and they were deported from their own land to exile in Assyria; and there they are to this day.

²⁴Then the king of Assyria brought people from Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath, and Sepharvaim, and settled them in the towns of Samaria in place of the Israelites; so they occupied Samaria and lived in its towns.

²⁵In the early years of their settlement they did not pay homage to the LORD,

so the LORD sent lions among them to prey on them.

²⁶The king of Assyria was told that the deported peoples whom he had settled in the towns of Samaria did not know the established usage of the God of the country, and that he had sent lions among them which were preying on them because they did not know this.

²⁷The king, therefore, gave orders that one of the priests taken captive from Samaria should be sent back to live there and teach the people the usage of the God of the country.

²⁸So one of the deported priests came and lived at Bethel, and taught them how to worship the LORD.

²⁹But each of the nations went on making its own god. They set them up in niches at the shrines which the Samaritans had made, each nation in its own settlements.

³⁰Succoth-benoth was worshipped by the men of Babylon, Nergal by the men of Cuth, Ashima by the men of Hamath,

³¹Nibhaz and Tartak by the Avvites; and the Sepharvites burnt their children

as offerings to Adrammelech and Anammelech, the gods of Sepharvaim.

³²While still paying homage to the LORD, they appointed all sorts of people to act as priests of the shrines and they resorted to them there.

³³They paid homage to the LORD, while at the same time they served their own gods, according to the custom of the nations from which they had been carried into exile.

³⁴They keep up these old practices to this day; they do not pay homage to the LORD, for they do not keep his statutes and his judgements, the law and commandment, which he enjoined on the descendants of Jacob whom he named Israel.

³⁵When the LORD made a covenant with them, he gave them this commandment: Do not pay homage to other gods or bow down to them or serve them or sacrifice to them,

³⁶but pay homage to the LORD who brought you up from Egypt with great power and with outstretched arm; to him alone you are to bow down, to him alone you are to offer sacrifice.

³⁷ You must faithfully keep the statutes, the judgements, the law, and the commandments which he wrote for you; you must not pay homage to other gods.

³⁸ Do not forget the covenant which I made with you; do not pay homage to other gods.

³⁹ But to the LORD your God you are to pay homage; it is he who will preserve you from all your enemies.

⁴⁰ However, they would not listen but continued their former practices.

⁴¹ While these nations paid homage to the LORD they continued to serve their images, and their children and their children's children have maintained the practice of their forefathers to this day.

18¹ IN the third year of Hoshea son of Elah, king of Israel, Hezekiah son of King Ahaz of Judah became king.

² He was twenty-five years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for twenty-nine years; his mother was Abi daughter of Zechariah.

³ He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, as his ancestor David had done.

⁴It was he who suppressed the shrines, smashed the sacred pillars, cut down every sacred pole, and broke up the bronze serpent that Moses had made, for up to that time the Israelites had been in the habit of burning sacrifices to it; they called it Nehushtan.

⁵He put his trust in the LORD the God of Israel; there was nobody like him among all the kings of Judah who succeeded him or among those who had gone before him.

⁶He remained loyal to the LORD and did not fail in his allegiance to him, and he kept the commandments which the LORD had given to Moses.

⁷The LORD was with him and he prospered in all that he undertook. He rebelled against the king of Assyria and was no longer subject to him;

⁸he conquered the Philistine country as far as Gaza and its boundaries, from watch-tower to fortified city.

⁹In the fourth year of Hezekiah's reign, which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah, king of Israel, King Shalmaneser of Assyria marched up against Samaria, laid siege to it,

¹⁰and captured it at the end of three years; it was in the sixth year of Hezekiah, that is the ninth year of King Hoshea of Israel, that Samaria was captured.

¹¹The king of Assyria deported the Israelites to Assyria and settled them in Halah and on the Habor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of Media,

¹²because they did not obey the LORD their God but violated his covenant and every commandment that Moses the servant of the LORD had given them; they would not listen and they would not obey.

¹³In the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah's reign, King Sennacherib of Assyria attacked and captured all the fortified towns of Judah.

¹⁴Hezekiah sent a message to the king of Assyria at Lachish: I have done wrong; withdraw from me, and I shall pay any penalty you impose upon me. The king of Assyria laid on Hezekiah king of Judah a penalty of three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold;

¹⁵and Hezekiah gave him all the silver found in the house of the LORD and in the treasuries of the palace.

¹⁶At that time Hezekiah stripped of their gold the doors of the temple of the LORD and the door-frames which he himself had plated, and gave it to the king of Assyria.

¹⁷From Lachish the king of Assyria sent the commander-in-chief, the chief eunuch, and the chief officer with a strong force to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem. They marched up and when they reached Jerusalem they halted by the conduit of the Upper Pool on the causeway leading to the Fuller's Field.

¹⁸When they called for the king, the comptroller of the household, Eliakim son of Hilkiah, came out to them with Shebna, the adjutant-general, and Joah son of Asaph, the secretary of state.

¹⁹The chief officer said to them, Tell Hezekiah that this is the message of the Great King, the king of Assyria: What ground have you for this confidence of yours?

²⁰Do you think words can take the place of skill and military strength? On

whom then do you rely for support in your rebellion against me?

²¹ On Egypt? Egypt is a splintered cane that will run into a man's hand and pierce it if he leans on it. That is what Pharaoh king of Egypt proves to all who rely on him.

²² And if you tell me that you are relying on the LORD your God, is he not the god whose shrines and altars Hezekiah has suppressed, telling Judah and Jerusalem they must worship at this altar in Jerusalem?

²³ Now, make a deal with my master the king of Assyria: I shall give you two thousand horses if you can find riders for them.

²⁴ How then can you reject the authority of even the least of my master's servants and rely on Egypt for chariots and horsemen?

²⁵ Do you think that I have come to attack this place and destroy it without the consent of the LORD? No; the LORD himself said to me, Go up and destroy this land.

²⁶ Eliakim son of Hilkiah, Shebna, and Joah said to the chief officer,

Please speak to us in Aramaic, for we understand it; do not speak Hebrew to us within earshot of the people on the city wall.

²⁷The chief officer answered, Is it to your master and to you that my master has sent me to say this? Is it not to the people sitting on the wall who, like you, will have to eat their own dung and drink their own urine?

²⁸Then he stood and shouted in Hebrew, Hear the message of the Great King, the king of Assyria!

²⁹These are the king's words: Do not be taken in by Hezekiah. He is powerless to save you from me.

³⁰Do not let him persuade you to rely on the LORD, and tell you that the LORD will surely save you and that this city will never be surrendered to the king of Assyria.

³¹Do not listen to Hezekiah, for this is what the king of Assyria says: Make your peace with me, and surrender. Then every one of you will eat the fruit of his own vine and of his own fig tree, and drink the water of his own cistern,

³²until I come and take you to a land like your own, a land of grain and new wine, of bread and vineyards, of olives, fine oil, and honey -- life for you all, instead of death. Do not listen to Hezekiah; he will only mislead you by telling you that the LORD will save you.

³³Did any god of the nations save his land from the king of Assyria's power?

³⁴Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah? Where are the gods of Samaria? Did they save Samaria from me?

³⁵Among all the gods of the nations is there one who saved his land from me? So how is the LORD to save Jerusalem?

³⁶The people remained silent and said not a word in reply, for the king had given orders that no one was to answer him.

³⁷Eliakim son of Hilkiah, comptroller of the household, Shebna the adjutant-general, and Joah son of Asaph, secretary of state, came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn and reported the words of the chief officer.

19¹ When King Hezekiah heard their report, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD.

² He sent Eliakim comptroller of the household, Shebna the adjutant-general, and the senior priests, all wearing sackcloth, to the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz,

³ to give him this message from the king: Today is a day of trouble for us, a day of reproof and contumely. We are like a woman who has no strength to bring to birth the child she is carrying.

⁴ It may be that the LORD your God will give heed to all the words of the chief officer whom his master the king of Assyria sent to taunt the living God, and will confute the words which the LORD your God heard. Offer a prayer for those who still survive.

⁵ When King Hezekiah's servants came to Isaiah,

⁶ they were given this answer for their master: Here is the word of the LORD: Do not be alarmed at what you heard when the Assyrian king's minions blasphemed me.

⁷ I shall sap his morale till at a mere rumour he will withdraw to his own country; and there I shall make him fall by the sword.

⁸ Meanwhile the chief officer went back, and having heard that the king of Assyria had moved camp from Lachish, he found him attacking Libnah.

⁹ But when the king learnt that King Tirhakah of Cush was on the way to engage him in battle, he sent messengers again to King Hezekiah of Judah

¹⁰ to say to him, How can you be deluded by your God on whom you rely when he promises that Jerusalem will not fall into the hands of the king of Assyria?

¹¹ You yourself must have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all countries: they utterly destroyed them. Can you then hope to escape?

¹² Did their gods save the nations which my predecessors wiped out: Gozan, Harran, Rezeph, and the people of Eden living in Telassar?

¹³Where are the kings of Hamath, of Arpad, and of Lahir, Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah?

¹⁴Hezekiah received the letter from the messengers and, having read it, he went up to the house of the LORD and spread it out before the LORD

¹⁵with this prayer: LORD God of Israel, enthroned on the cherubim, you alone are God of all the kingdoms of the world; you made heaven and earth.

¹⁶Incline your ear, LORD, and listen; open your eyes, LORD, and see; hear the words that Sennacherib has sent to taunt the living God.

¹⁷LORD, it is true that the kings of Assyria have laid waste the nations and their lands

¹⁸and have consigned their gods to the flames. They destroyed them, because they were no gods but the work of men's hands, mere wood and stone.

¹⁹Now, LORD our God, save us from his power, so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you alone, LORD, are God.

²⁰Isaiah son of Amoz sent Hezekiah the following message: This is the word

of the LORD the God of Israel: I have heard your prayer to me concerning King Sennacherib of Assyria,

²¹ and this is the word which the LORD has spoken against him: The virgin daughter of Zion disdains you, she laughs you to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem tosses her head as you retreat.

²² Whom have you taunted and blasphemed? Against whom did you raise an outcry, casting haughty glances at the Holy One of Israel?

²³ You sent your messengers to taunt the Lord, and said: I have mounted my chariot and performed mighty deeds; I have ascended the mountain heights, gone to the remote recesses of Lebanon. I have felled its tallest cedars, the finest of its pines; I have reached its farthest corners, the most luxuriant forest.

²⁴ I have dug wells and drunk the waters of a foreign land, and with the sole of my foot I have dried up all the streams of Egypt.

²⁵ Have you not heard? Long ago I did it all. In days gone by I planned it and now

I have brought it about, till your fortified cities have crashed into heaps of rubble.

²⁶Their inhabitants, shorn of strength, disheartened and put to shame, were but as plants in the field, frail as green herbs, as grass on the rooftops blasted by the east wind.

²⁷I know your rising up and your sitting down, your going out and your coming in.

²⁸The frenzy of your rage against me and your arrogance have come to my ears. I shall put a ring in your nose and a bridle in your mouth, and I shall take you back by the way on which you came.

²⁹This will be the sign for you: this year you will eat the leavings of the grain and in the second year what is self-sown; but in the third year you will sow and reap, plant vineyards and eat their fruit.

³⁰The survivors left in Judah will strike fresh root below ground and yield fruit above ground,

³¹for a remnant will come out of Jerusalem and survivors from Mount Zion. The zeal of the LORD will perform this.

³²Therefore, this is the word of the LORD about the king of Assyria: He will not enter this city or shoot an arrow there, he will not advance against it with shield or cast up a siege-ramp against it.

³³By the way he came he will go back; he will not enter this city. This is the word of the LORD.

³⁴I shall shield this city to deliver it for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David.

³⁵That night the angel of the LORD went out and struck down a hundred and eighty-five thousand in the Assyrian camp; when morning dawned, there they all lay dead.

³⁶King Sennacherib of Assyria broke camp and marched away; he went back to Nineveh and remained there.

³⁷One day, while he was worshipping in the temple of his god Nisroch, Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons assassinated him and made their escape to the land of Ararat. His son Esarhaddon succeeded him.

20¹At this time Hezekiah became mortally ill, and the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz came to him with

this message from the LORD: Give your last instructions to your household, for you are dying; you will not recover.

²Hezekiah turned his face to the wall and offered this prayer to the LORD:

³LORD, remember how I have lived before you, faithful and loyal in your service, doing always what was pleasing to you. And he wept bitterly.

⁴But before Isaiah had left the citadel, the word of the LORD came to him:

⁵Go back and say to Hezekiah, the prince of my people: This is the word of the LORD the God of your father David: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears; I shall heal you, and on the third day you will go up to the house of the LORD.

⁶I shall add fifteen years to your life and deliver you and this city from the king of Assyria. I shall protect this city for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David.

⁷Isaiah told them to prepare a fig-plaster; when it was made and applied to the inflammation, Hezekiah recovered.

⁸He asked Isaiah what proof there was that the LORD would cure him and that

he would go up to the house of the LORD on the third day.

⁹Isaiah replied, This will be your proof from the LORD that he will do what he has promised; will the shadow go forward ten steps or back ten steps?

¹⁰Hezekiah answered, It is an easy thing for the shadow to move forward ten steps; rather let it go back ten steps.

¹¹Isaiah the prophet called to the LORD, and he made the shadow go back ten steps where it had advanced down the stairway of Ahaz.

¹²At that time the king of Babylon, Merodach-baladan son of Baladan, sent envoys with a gift to Hezekiah, for he heard that he had been ill.

¹³Hezekiah welcomed them and showed them all his treasury, the silver and gold, the spices and fragrant oil, his armoury, and everything to be found among his treasures; there was nothing in his palace or in his whole realm that Hezekiah did not show them.

¹⁴The prophet Isaiah came to King Hezekiah and asked, What did these men say? Where did they come from? They

came from a distant country, Hezekiah answered, from Babylon.

¹⁵What did they see in your palace? Isaiah demanded. They saw everything, was the reply; there was nothing among my treasures that I did not show them.

¹⁶Isaiah said to Hezekiah, Hear the word of the LORD:

¹⁷The time is coming, says the LORD, when everything in your palace, and all that your forefathers have amassed till the present day, will be carried away to Babylon; not a thing will be left.

¹⁸And some of your sons, your own offspring, will be taken from you to serve as eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.

¹⁹Hezekiah answered, The word of the LORD which you have spoken is good, for he was thinking to himself that peace and security would last out his lifetime.

²⁰The other events of Hezekiah's reign, his exploits, and how he made the pool and the conduit and brought water into the city, are recorded in the annals of the kings of Judah.

²¹Hezekiah rested with his forefathers, and his son Manasseh succeeded him.

21 ¹MANASSEH was twelve years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for fifty-five years; his mother was Hephzibah.

²He did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD, in following the abominable practices of the nations which the LORD had dispossessed in favour of the Israelites.

³He rebuilt the shrines which his father Hezekiah had destroyed, he erected altars to the Baal, made a sacred pole as Ahab king of Israel had done, and prostrated himself before all the host of heaven and served them.

⁴He built altars in the house of the LORD, that house of which the LORD had said, I shall set my name in Jerusalem.

⁵He built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD;

⁶he made his son pass through the fire, he practised soothsaying and divination, and dealt with ghosts and spirits. He did much wrong in the eyes of the LORD and provoked his anger.

⁷He made an image of the goddess Asherah and set it up in the house of

which the LORD had said to David and Solomon his son, In this house and Jerusalem, which I chose out of all the tribes of Israel, I shall establish my name for all time.

⁸I shall not again make Israel outcasts from the land which I gave to their forefathers, if only they are careful to observe all my commands and all the law that my servant Moses gave them.

⁹But they did not obey, and Manasseh led them astray into wickedness far worse than that of the nations which the LORD had exterminated in favour of the Israelites.

¹⁰The LORD spoke through his servants the prophets:

¹¹Because King Manasseh of Judah has done these abominable things, outdoing the Amorites before him in wickedness, and because he has led Judah into sin with his idols,

¹²this is the word of the LORD the God of Israel: I am about to bring such disaster on Jerusalem and Judah that it will ring in the ears of all who hear of it.

¹³I shall use against Jerusalem the measuring line used against Samaria

and the plummet used against the house of Ahab. I shall wipe Jerusalem as one wipes a plate and turns it upside down.

¹⁴I shall cast off what is left of my people, my own possession, and hand them over to their enemies. They will be plundered, a prey to all their enemies,

¹⁵for they have done what is wrong in my eyes and have provoked my anger from the day their forefathers left Egypt up to the present day.

¹⁶This Manasseh shed so much innocent blood that he filled Jerusalem with it from end to end, not to mention the sin into which he led Judah by doing what is wrong in my eyes.

¹⁷The other events and acts of Manasseh's reign, and the sin that he committed, are recorded in the annals of the kings of Judah.

¹⁸Manasseh rested with his forefathers and was buried in the garden-tomb of his family, in the garden of Uzza. His son Amon succeeded him.

¹⁹Amon was twenty-two years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for two years; his mother was

Meshullemeth daughter of Haruz from Jotbah.

²⁰He did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD as his father Manasseh had done.

²¹Following in his father's footsteps he served the idols that his father had served and prostrated himself before them.

²²He forsook the LORD the God of his forefathers and did not conform to the LORD's ways.

²³Amon's courtiers conspired against him and assassinated him in the palace;

²⁴but the people of the land killed all the conspirators and made his son Josiah king in his place.

²⁵The other events of Amon's reign are recorded in the annals of the kings of Judah.

²⁶He was buried in his grave in the garden of Uzza. His son Josiah succeeded him.

22¹ JOSIAH was eight years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for thirty-one years; his mother was Jedidah daughter of Adaiah of Bozkath.

² He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, following in the footsteps of his forefather David and deviating neither to the right nor to the left.

³ In the eighteenth year of his reign, Josiah sent Shaphan son of Azaliah, son of Meshullam, the adjutant-general, to the house of the LORD.

⁴ Go to the high priest Hilkiah, he said, and tell him to melt down the silver that has been brought into the house of the LORD, which those on duty at the entrance have received from the people;

⁵ tell him to hand it over to those supervising in the house of the LORD, to pay the workmen who are carrying out repairs in it,

⁶ the carpenters, builders, and masons, and to purchase timber and hewn stones for its repair.

⁷ They are not to be asked to account for the money that has been given them; they are acting on trust.

⁸ The high priest Hilkiah told Shaphan the adjutant-general that he had discovered the scroll of the law in the house of the LORD, and he gave it to him to read.

⁹When Shaphan came to report to the king that his servants had melted down the silver in the house of the LORD and handed it over to those supervising there,

¹⁰he told the king of the scroll the high priest Hilkiah had given him, and he read it in the king's presence.

¹¹When the king heard what was written in the book of the law, he tore his clothes.

¹²He ordered the priest Hilkiah, Ahikam son of Shaphan, Akbor son of Micaiah, Shaphan the adjutant-general, and Asaiah the king's attendant

¹³to go and seek guidance of the LORD for himself, for the people, and for all Judah, about the contents of this book that had been discovered. Great must be the wrath of the LORD, he said, that has been kindled against us, because our forefathers did not obey the commands in this scroll and do all that is laid on us.

¹⁴Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam, Akbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess, wife of Shallum son of Tikvah, son of Harhas, the keeper of the

wardrobe, and consulted her at her home in the Second Quarter of Jerusalem.

¹⁵This is the word of the LORD the God of Israel, she answered: Tell the man who sent you to me,

¹⁶that this is what the LORD says: I am about to bring disaster on this place and its inhabitants as foretold in the scroll which the king of Judah has read,

¹⁷because they have forsaken me and burnt sacrifices to other gods, provoking my anger with all the idols they have made with their own hands; for this my wrath is kindled against this place and will not be quenched.

¹⁸Tell the king of Judah who sent you to seek guidance of the LORD that this is what the LORD the God of Israel says: You have listened to my words

¹⁹and shown a willing heart and humbled yourself before the LORD when you heard me say that this place and its inhabitants would become objects of loathing and scorn, and have torn your clothes and wept before me. Because of this, I for my part have listened to you. This is the word of the LORD.

²⁰Therefore I shall gather you to your forefathers, and you will be gathered to your grave in peace; you will not live to see all the disaster which I am bringing on this place. They brought back this answer to the king.

23¹At the king's summons all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem were assembled,

²and he went up to the house of the LORD, taking with him all the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the priests, and the prophets, the entire population, high and low. There he read out to them the whole scroll of the covenant which had been discovered in the house of the LORD.

³Then, standing by the pillar, the king entered into a covenant before the LORD to obey him and keep his commandments, his testimonies, and his statutes, with all his heart and soul, and so carry out the terms of the covenant written in the scroll. All the people pledged themselves to the covenant.

⁴The king ordered the high priest Hilkiah, the deputy high priest, and those on duty at the entrance to remove from

the house of the LORD all the objects made for Baal, for Asherah, and for all the host of heaven, and he burnt these outside Jerusalem on the slope by the Kidron, and carried the ashes to Bethel.

⁵He suppressed the heathen priests whom the kings of Judah had appointed to burn sacrifices at the shrines in the towns of Judah and in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, as well as those who burnt sacrifices to Baal, to the sun and moon, to the planets and all the host of heaven.

⁶He took the Asherah from the house of the LORD to the wadi of the Kidron outside Jerusalem, burnt it there, and pounded it to dust, which was then scattered over the common burial-ground.

⁷He also pulled down the quarters of the male prostitutes attached to the house of the LORD, where the women wove vestments in honour of Asherah.

⁸The king brought in all the priests from the towns of Judah and desecrated the shrines where they had burnt sacrifices, from Geba to Beersheba, and dismantled the shrines of the demons in front of the

gate of Joshua, the city governor, which is to the left of the city gate.

⁹These priests, however, never came up to the altar of the LORD in Jerusalem but used to eat unleavened bread with the priests of their clan.

¹⁰He desecrated Topheth in the valley of Ben-hinnom, so that no one might make his son or daughter pass through the fire for Molech.

¹¹He did away with the horses that the kings of Judah had set up in honour of the sun at the entrance to the house of the LORD, beside the room of the eunuch Nathan-melech in the colonnade, and he burnt the chariots of the sun.

¹²He demolished the altars made by the kings of Judah on the roof by the upper chamber of Ahaz and the altars made by Manasseh in the two courts of the house of the LORD; he pounded them to dust and threw it into the wadi of the Kidron.

¹³Also, on the east of Jerusalem, to the south of the mount of Olives, the king desecrated the shrines which Solomon the king of Israel had built for Ashtoreth the loathsome goddess of the Sidonians,

and for Kemosh the loathsome god of Moab, and for Milcom the abominable god of the Ammonites;

¹⁴he smashed the sacred pillars and cut down the sacred poles and filled the places where they had stood with human bones.

¹⁵At Bethel he dismantled the altar by the shrine made by Jeroboam son of Nebat who led Israel into sin, together with the shrine itself; he broke its stones in pieces, crushed them to dust, and burnt the sacred pole.

¹⁶When Josiah saw the graves which were there on the hill, he sent and had the bones taken from them, and he burnt them on the altar to desecrate it, thus fulfilling the word of the LORD announced by the man of God when Jeroboam stood by the altar at the feast. When Josiah saw the grave of the man of God who had foretold these things,

¹⁷he asked, What is that monument I see? The people of the town answered, It is the grave of the man of God who came from Judah and foretold all that you have done to the altar at Bethel.

¹⁸Leave it alone, he said; let no one disturb his bones. So they spared his bones along with those of the prophet who came from Samaria.

¹⁹Josiah also suppressed all the temples at the shrines in the towns of Samaria, which the kings of Israel had set up and thereby provoked the LORD's anger, and he did to them what he had done at Bethel.

²⁰He slaughtered on the altars all the priests of the shrines who were there, and he burnt human bones on them. Then he went back to Jerusalem.

²¹The king ordered all the people to keep the Passover to the LORD their God, as this scroll of the covenant prescribed;

²²no Passover like it had been kept either when the judges were ruling Israel or during the times of the kings of Israel and of Judah,

²³until in the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign this Passover was kept to the LORD in Jerusalem.

²⁴Further, Josiah got rid of all who called up ghosts and spirits, and of all household gods and idols and all the loathsome objects to be seen in the land

of Judah and in Jerusalem, so that he might fulfil the requirements of the law written in the scroll which the priest Hilkiah had discovered in the house of the LORD.

²⁵No king before him had turned to the LORD as he did, with all his heart and soul and strength, following the whole law of Moses; nor did any king like him appear again.

²⁶Yet the LORD did not abate his fierce anger; it still burned against Judah because of all the provocation which Manasseh had given him.

²⁷Judah also I shall banish from my presence, he declared, as I banished Israel; and I shall reject this city of Jerusalem which once I chose, and the house where I promised that my name should be.

²⁸The other events and acts of Josiah's reign are recorded in the annals of the kings of Judah.

²⁹It was in his reign that Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt set out for the river Euphrates to help the king of Assyria. King Josiah went to meet him; and when

they met at Megiddo, Pharaoh Necho slew him.

³⁰His attendants conveyed his body in a chariot from Megiddo to Jerusalem and buried him in his own burial-place. Then the people of the land took Josiah's son Jehoahaz and anointed him king in place of his father.

³¹JEHOAHAZ was twenty-three years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for three months; his mother was Hamital daughter of Jeremiah from Libnah.

³²He did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD, as his forefathers had done.

³³Pharaoh Necho removed him from the throne in Jerusalem, and imposed on the land an indemnity of a hundred talents of silver and one talent of gold.

³⁴He made Josiah's son Eliakim king in place of his father and changed his name to Jehoiakim. He carried Jehoahaz away to Egypt, where he died.

³⁵Jehoiakim handed over the silver and gold to Pharaoh, taxing the country to meet Pharaoh's demands; he exacted it from the people, from every man

according to his assessment, so that he could pay Pharaoh Necho.

³⁶ Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for eleven years; his mother was Zebidah daughter of Pedaiah of Rumah.

³⁷ He did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD as his forefathers had done.

24¹ During his reign an attack was launched by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, and Jehoiakim became his vassal; three years later, however, he broke with him and revolted.

² The LORD sent against him raiding parties of Chaldeans, Aramaeans, Moabites, and Ammonites, letting them range through Judah and ravage it, as the LORD had foretold through his servants the prophets.

³ All this happened to Judah in fulfilment of the LORD's purpose, to banish them from his presence because of all the sin Manasseh had committed

⁴ and because of the innocent blood he had shed; he had flooded Jerusalem with innocent blood, and the LORD would not forgive him.

⁵The other events and acts of Jehoiakim's reign are recorded in the annals of the kings of Judah.

⁶He rested with his forefathers, and his son Jehoiachin succeeded him.

⁷The Egyptian king did not leave his own land again, because the king of Babylon had stripped him of all he possessed from the wadi of Egypt to the river Euphrates.

⁸JEHOIACHIN was eighteen years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for three months; his mother was Nehushta daughter of Elnathan from Jerusalem.

⁹He did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD, as his father had done.

¹⁰At that time the troops of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon advanced on Jerusalem and the city came under siege.

¹¹Nebuchadnezzar arrived while his troops were besieging it,

¹²and King Jehoiachin of Judah, along with his mother, his courtiers, his officers, and his eunuchs surrendered to the king of Babylon. The king of Babylon,

now in the eighth year of his reign, made him a prisoner;

¹³and, as the LORD had foretold, he carried off all the treasures of the house of the LORD and of the palace and broke up all the vessels of gold which King Solomon of Israel had made for the temple of the LORD.

¹⁴He took into exile the people of Jerusalem, the officers and all the fighting men, ten thousand in number, together with all the craftsmen and smiths; only the poorest class of the people was left.

¹⁵He deported Jehoiachin to Babylon; he also took into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon the king's mother and his wives, his eunuchs, and the foremost men of the land.

¹⁶He took also all the people of substance, seven thousand in number, and a thousand craftsmen and smiths, all of them able-bodied men and skilled armourers.

¹⁷He made Mattaniah, uncle of Jehoiachin, king in his place and changed his name to Zedekiah.

¹⁸Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for eleven years; his mother was Hamital daughter of Jeremiah from Libnah.

¹⁹He did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD, as Jehoiakim had done.

²⁰Jerusalem and Judah so angered the LORD that in the end he banished them from his sight. Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

25 ¹In the ninth year of his reign, on the tenth day of the tenth month, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon advanced with his whole army against Jerusalem, invested it, and erected siege-towers against it on every side;

²the siege lasted till the eleventh year of King Zedekiah.

³In the fourth month of that year, on the ninth day of the month, when famine was severe in the city and there was no food for the people,

⁴the city capitulated. When King Zedekiah of Judah saw this, he and all his armed escort left the city and, fleeing by night through the gate called Between the Two Walls, near the king's

garden, they made their escape towards the Arabah, although the Chaldaeans were surrounding the city.

⁵The Chaldaean army pursued the king and overtook him in the lowlands of Jericho. His men all forsook him and scattered,

⁶and the king was captured and, having been brought before the king of Babylon at Riblah, he was put on trial and sentenced.

⁷Zedekiah's sons were slain before his eyes; then his eyes were put out, and he was brought to Babylon bound in bronze fetters.

⁸In the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, in the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, Nebuzaradan, captain of the king of Babylon's bodyguard, came to Jerusalem.

⁹He set fire to the house of the LORD and the royal palace, indeed all the houses in the city; every notable's house was burnt down.

¹⁰The whole Chaldaean force which was with the captain of the guard razed

to the ground the walls on every side of Jerusalem.

¹¹ Nebuzaradan captain of the guard deported the people who were left in the city, those who had deserted to the king of Babylon, and any remaining artisans.

¹² He left only the poorest class of the people, to be vine-dressers and labourers.

¹³ The Chaldeans broke up the bronze pillars in the house of the LORD, the trolleys, and the bronze Sea, and took the metal to Babylon.

¹⁴ They took also the pots, shovels, snuffers, saucers, and all the bronze vessels used in the service of the temple.

¹⁵ The captain of the guard took away the precious metal, whether gold or silver, of which the firepans and the tossing-bowls were made.

¹⁶ The bronze of the two pillars, the one Sea, and the trolleys, which Solomon had made for the house of the LORD, was beyond weighing.

¹⁷ One pillar was eighteen cubits high and its capital was bronze; the capital was three cubits high, and a decoration of network and pomegranates ran all

round it, wholly of bronze. The other pillar, with its network, was exactly like it.

¹⁸The captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, Zephaniah the deputy chief priest, and the three on duty at the entrance;

¹⁹he took also from the city a eunuch who was in charge of the fighting men, five of those with right of access to the king who were still in the city, the adjutant-general whose duty was to muster the people for war, and sixty men of the people who were still there.

²⁰These Nebuzaradan captain of the guard brought to the king of Babylon at Riblah.

²¹There, in the land of Hamath, the king had them flogged and put to death. So Judah went into exile from her own land.

²²King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon appointed Gedaliah son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan, governor over the people whom he had left in Judah.

²³When the captains of the armed bands and their men heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah

governor, they all gathered to him at Mizpah: Ishmael son of Nethaniah, Johanan son of Kareah, Seraiah son of Tanhumeth of Netophah, and Jaazaniah of Beth-maacah.

²⁴ Gedaliah gave them and their men this assurance: Have no fear of the Chaldaean officers. Settle down in the land and serve the king of Babylon; and all will be well with you.

²⁵ But in the seventh month Ishmael son of Nethaniah, son of Elishama, who was a member of the royal house, came with ten men and assassinated Gedaliah and the Jews and Chaldeans who were with him at Mizpah.

²⁶ Thereupon all the people, high and low, and the captains of the armed forces, fled to Egypt for fear of the Chaldeans.

²⁷ In the thirty-seventh year of the exile of King Jehoiachin of Judah, on the twenty-seventh day of the twelfth month, King Evil-merodach of Babylon in the year of his accession showed favour to King Jehoiachin. He released him from prison,

²⁸ treated him kindly, and gave him a seat at table above the kings with him in Babylon.

²⁹ Jehoiachin, discarding his prison clothes, lived as a pensioner of the king for the rest of his life.

³⁰ For his maintenance as long as he lived a regular daily allowance was given him by the king.

1 Chronicles

- 1** ¹ADAM, Seth, Enosh,
²Kenan, Mahalalel, Jared,
³Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech,
⁴Noah. The sons of Noah: Shem, Ham,
and Japheth.
⁵The sons of Japheth: Gomer, Magog,
Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras.
⁶The sons of Gomer: Ashkenaz,
Diphath, and Togarmah.
⁷The sons of Javan: Elishah, Tarshish,
Kittim, and Rodanim.
⁸The sons of Ham: Cush, Mizraim, Put,
and Canaan.
⁹The sons of Cush: Seba, Havilah,
Sabta, Raama, and Sabtecha. The sons
of Raama: Sheba and Dedan.
¹⁰Cush was the father of Nimrod, who
began to show himself a man of might
on earth.
¹¹From Mizraim sprang the Lydians,
Anamites, Lehabites, Naphtuhites,
¹²Pathrusites, Casluhites, and the
Caphtorites, from whom the Philistines
were descended.

¹³ Canaan was the father of Sidon, who was his eldest son, and Heth,

¹⁴ the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Girgashites,

¹⁵ the Hivites, the Arkites, the Sinites,

¹⁶ the Arvadites, the Zemarites, and the Hamathites.

¹⁷ The sons of Shem: Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram. The sons of Aram: Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash.

¹⁸ Arphaxad was the father of Shelah, and Shelah the father of Eber.

¹⁹ Eber had two sons: one was named Peleg, because in his time the earth was divided, and his brother's name was Joktan.

²⁰ Joktan was the father of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmoth, Jerah,

²¹ Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah,

²² Ebal, Abimael, Sheba,

²³ Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these were sons of Joktan.

²⁴ The line of Shem: Arphaxad, Shelah,

²⁵ Eber, Peleg, Reu,

²⁶ Serug, Nahor, Terah,

²⁷ Abram, also known as Abraham,

²⁸ whose sons were Isaac and Ishmael.

²⁹The sons of Ishmael in the order of their birth: Nebaioth the eldest, then Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam,

³⁰Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Teman,

³¹Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. These were Ishmael's sons.

³²The sons of Keturah, Abraham's concubine: she bore him Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. The sons of Jokshan: Sheba and Dedan.

³³The sons of Midian: Ephah, Epher, Enoch, Abida, and Eldaah. All these were descendants of Keturah.

³⁴Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac's sons were Esau and Israel.

³⁵The sons of Esau: Eliphaz, Reuel, Jeush, Jaalam, and Korah.

³⁶The sons of Eliphaz: Teman, Omar, Zephi, Gatam, Kenaz, Timna, and Amalek.

³⁷The sons of Reuel: Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah.

³⁸The sons of Seir: Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan.

³⁹The sons of Lotan: Hori and Homam; and Lotan had a sister named Timna.

⁴⁰The sons of Shobal: Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, Shephi, and Onam. The sons of Zibeon: Aiah and Anah.

⁴¹The son of Anah: Dishon. The sons of Dishon: Hamran, Eshban, Ithran, and Cheran.

⁴²The sons of Ezer: Bilhan, Zaavan, and Akan. The sons of Dishan: Uz and Aran.

⁴³These are the kings who ruled over Edom before there were kings in Israel: Bela son of Beor, whose city was named Dinhabah.

⁴⁴When he died, he was succeeded by Jobab son of Zerah from Bozrah.

⁴⁵When Jobab died, he was succeeded by Husham from Teman.

⁴⁶When Husham died, he was succeeded by Hadad son of Bedad, who defeated Midian in Moabite country. His city was named Avith.

⁴⁷When Hadad died, he was succeeded by Samlah from Masrekah.

⁴⁸When Samlah died, he was succeeded by Saul from Rehoboth on the River.

⁴⁹When Saul died, he was succeeded by Baal-hanan son of Akbor.

⁵⁰When Baal-hanan died, he was succeeded by Hadad. His city was named

Pai; his wife's name was Mehetabel daughter of Matred, a woman of Me-zahab.

⁵¹ After Hadad died the chiefs in Edom were: Timna, Aliah, Jetheth,

⁵² Oholibamah, Elah, Pinon,

⁵³ Kenaz, Teman, Mibzar,

⁵⁴ Magdiel, and Iram. These were the chiefs of Edom.

2¹ These were the sons of Israel: Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun,

² Dan, Joseph, Benjamin, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.

³ The sons of Judah: Er, Onan, and Shelah; the mother of these three was a Canaanite woman, Bathshua. Er, Judah's eldest son, displeased the LORD and the LORD slew him.

⁴ Then Tamar, Judah's daughter-in-law, bore him Perez and Zerah, making in all five sons of Judah.

⁵ The sons of Perez: Hezron and Hamul.

⁶ The sons of Zerah: Zimri, Ethan, Heman, Calcol, and Darda, five in all.

⁷ The son of Zimri: Carmi. The son of Carmi: Achar, who brought trouble on Israel by his violation of the sacred ban.

⁸The son of Ethan: Azariah.

⁹The sons of Hezron: Jerahmeel, Ram, and Caleb.

¹⁰Ram was the father of Amminadab, Amminadab father of Nahshon, prince of Judah.

¹¹Nahshon was the father of Salma, Salma father of Boaz,

¹²Boaz father of Obed, Obed father of Jesse.

¹³The eldest son of Jesse was Eliab, the second Abinadab, the third Shimea,

¹⁴the fourth Nethanel, the fifth Raddai,

¹⁵the sixth Ozem, the seventh David;

¹⁶their sisters were Zeruah and Abigail. The sons of Zeruah: Abishai, Joab, and Asahel, three in all.

¹⁷Abigail was the mother of Amasa; his father was Jether the Ishmaelite.

¹⁸Caleb son of Hezron had Jerioth by Azubah his wife; these were her sons: Jeshur, Shobab, and Ardon.

¹⁹When Azubah died, Caleb married Ephrath, who bore him Hur.

²⁰Hur was the father of Uri, and Uri father of Bezalel.

²¹Later, Hezron, then sixty years of age, married and had intercourse with

the daughter of Machir, father of Gilead, and she bore Segub.

²²Segub was the father of Jair, who had twenty-three towns in Gilead.

²³Geshur and Aram took from them Havvoth-jair, and Kenath and its dependent villages, a total of sixty places. All these were descendants of Machir father of Gilead.

²⁴After the death of Hezron, Caleb had intercourse with Ephrathah and she bore him Ashhur the founder of Tekoa.

²⁵The sons of Jerahmeel, eldest son of Hezron by Ahijah, were Ram the eldest, Bunah, Oren, and Ozem.

²⁶Jerahmeel had another wife, whose name was Atarah; she was the mother of Onam.

²⁷The sons of Ram, eldest son of Jerahmeel: Maaz, Jamin, and Eker.

²⁸The sons of Onam: Shammai and Jada. The sons of Shammai: Nadab and Abishur.

²⁹The name of Abishur's wife was Abihail; she bore him Ahban and Molid.

³⁰The sons of Nadab: Seled and Ephraim; Seled died without children.

³¹ Ephraim's son was Ishi, Ishi's son Sheshan, Sheshan's son Ahlai.

³² The sons of Jada brother of Shammai: Jether and Jonathan; Jether died without children.

³³ The sons of Jonathan: Peleth and Zaza. These were the descendants of Jerahmeel.

³⁴ Sheshan had daughters but no sons. He had an Egyptian servant named Jarha;

³⁵ he gave his daughter in marriage to this Jarha, and she bore him Attai.

³⁶ Attai was the father of Nathan, Nathan father of Zabad,

³⁷ Zabad father of Ephlal, Ephlal father of Obed,

³⁸ Obed father of Jehu, Jehu father of Azariah,

³⁹ Azariah father of Helez, Helez father of Elasah,

⁴⁰ Elasah father of Sisamai, Sisamai father of Shallum,

⁴¹ Shallum father of Jekamiah, and Jekamiah father of Elishama.

⁴² The sons of Caleb brother of Jerahmeel: Mesha the eldest, founder of Ziph, and Mareshah, founder of Hebron.

⁴³ The sons of Hebron: Korah, Tappuah, Rekem, and Shema.

⁴⁴ Shema was the father of Raham father of Jorkoam, and Rekem was the father of Shammai.

⁴⁵ The son of Shammai was Maon, and Maon was the founder of Beth-zur.

⁴⁶ Ephah, Caleb's concubine, was the mother of Haran, Moza, and Gazez; Haran was the father of Gazez.

⁴⁷ The sons of Jahdai: Regem, Jotham, Geshan, Pelet, Ephah, and Shaaph.

⁴⁸ Maacah, Caleb's concubine, was the mother of Sheber and Tirhanah;

⁴⁹ she bore also Shaaph, founder of Madmannah, and Sheva, founder of Machbenah and Gibeon. Caleb also had a daughter named Achsah.

⁵⁰ The descendants of Caleb: the sons of Hur, the eldest son of Ephrathah: Shobal the founder of Kiriath-jearim,

⁵¹ Salma the founder of Bethlehem, and Hareph the founder of Beth-gader.

⁵² Shobal the founder of Kiriath-jearim was the father of Reaiah and the ancestor of half the Manahethites.

⁵³ The clans of Kiriath-jearim: Ithrites, Puthites, Shumathites, and Mishraites,

from whom were descended the Zorathites and the Eshtaulites.

⁵⁴The descendants of Salma: Bethlehem, the Netophathites, Ataroth, Beth-joab, half the Manahethites, and the Zorites.

⁵⁵The clans of Sophrites living at Jabez: Tirathites, Shimeathites, and Suchathites. These were Kenites who were connected by marriage with the ancestor of the Rechabites.

3¹ These were the sons of David who were born at Hebron: the eldest Amnon, whose mother was Ahinoam from Jezreel; the second Daniel, whose mother was Abigail from Carmel;

² the third Absalom, whose mother was Maacah daughter of Talmai king of Geshur; the fourth Adonijah, whose mother was Haggith;

³ the fifth Shephatiah, whose mother was Abital; the sixth Ithream, whose mother was David's wife Eglah.

⁴ These six were born at Hebron, where David reigned for seven years and six months. In Jerusalem he reigned for thirty-three years,

⁵and there the following sons were born to him: Shimea, Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon; these four were sons of Bathsheba daughter of Ammiel.

⁶There were nine others: Ibhar, Elishama, Eliphelet, Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia, Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet.

⁷(3: 6)

⁸(3: 6)

⁹These were all the sons of David, with their sister Tamar, in addition to his sons by concubines.

¹⁰Solomon's son was Rehoboam, his son Abijah, his son Asa, his son Jehoshaphat,

¹¹his son Joram, his son Ahaziah, his son Joash,

¹²his son Amaziah, his son Azariah, his son Jotham,

¹³his son Ahaz, his son Hezekiah, his son Manasseh,

¹⁴his son Amon, and his son Josiah.

¹⁵The sons of Josiah: the eldest was Johanan, the second Jehoiakim, the third Zedekiah, the fourth Shallum.

¹⁶The sons of Jehoiakim: Jeconiah and Zedekiah.

¹⁷The sons of Jeconiah, a prisoner:
Shealtiel,

¹⁸Malchiram, Pedaiah, Shenazzar,
Jekamiah, Hoshama, and Nedabiah.

¹⁹The sons of Pedaiah: Zerubbabel
and Shimei. The sons of Zerubbabel:
Meshullam and Hananiah; they had a
sister, Shelomith.

²⁰There were five others: Hashubah,
Ohel, Berechiah, Hasadiah, and
Jushab-hesed.

²¹The sons of Hananiah: Pelatiah
and Isaiah; his son was Rephaiah, his
son Arnan, his son Obadiah, his son
Shecaniah.

²²The sons of Shecaniah: Shemaiah,
Hattush, Igal, Bariah, Neariah, and
Shaphat, six in all.

²³The sons of Neariah: Elioenai,
Hezekiah, and Azrikam, three in all.

²⁴The sons of Elioenai: Hodaiah,
Eliashib, Pelaiah, Akkub, Johanan,
Delaiah, and Anani, seven in all.

4¹The sons of Judah: Perez, Hezron,
Carmi, Hur, and Shobal.

²Reaiah son of Shobal was the father
of Jahath, Jahath father of Ahumai and

Lahad. These were the clans of the Zorathites.

³The sons of Etam: Jezreel, Ishma, Idbash, Penuel the founder of Gedor, and Ezer the founder of Hushah; they had a sister named Hazelelponi. These were the sons of Hur: Ephrathah the eldest, the founder of Bethlehem.

⁴(4: 3)

⁵Ashhur the founder of Tekoa had two wives, Helah and Naarah.

⁶Naarah bore him Ahuzzam, Hepher, Temeni, and Haahashtari. These were the sons of Naarah.

⁷The sons of Helah: Zereth, Jezoar, Ethnan, and Coz.

⁸Coz was the father of Anub and Zobebah and the clans of Aharhel son of Harum.

⁹Jabez ranked higher than his brothers; his mother called him Jabez because, as she said, she had borne him in pain.

¹⁰Jabez called to the God of Israel, I pray you, bless me and grant me wide territories. May your hand be with me; do me no harm, I pray you, and let me be free from pain; and God granted his petition.

¹¹ Kelub brother of Shuah was the father of Mehir the father of Eshton.

¹² Eshton was the father of Beth-rapha, Paseah, and Tehinnah father of Irnashash. These were the men of Rechah.

¹³ The sons of Kenaz: Othniel and Seraiah. The sons of Othniel: Hathath and Meonothai.

¹⁴ Meonothai was the father of Ophrah. Seraiah was the father of Joab founder of Ge-harashim, for they were craftsmen.

¹⁵ The sons of Caleb son of Jephunneh: Iru, Elah, and Naam. The son of Elah: Kenaz.

¹⁶ The sons of Jehallelel: Ziph and Ziphah, Tiria, and Asarel.

¹⁷ The sons of Ezra: Jether, Mered, Epher, and Jalon. These were the sons of Bithiah daughter of Pharaoh, whom Mered had married; she conceived and gave birth to Miriam, Shammai, and Ishbah founder of Eshtemoa. His Jewish wife was the mother of Jered founder of Gedor, Heber founder of Soco, and Jekuthiel founder of Zanoah.

¹⁸ (4: 17)

¹⁹The sons of his wife Hodiah sister of Naham were Daliah father of Keilah the Garmite, and Eshtemoa the Maacathite.

²⁰The sons of Shimon: Amnon, Rinnah, Ben-hanan, and Tilon. The sons of Ishi: Zoheth and Ben-zoheth.

²¹The sons of Shelah son of Judah: Er founder of Lecah, Laadah founder of Mareshah, the clans of the guild of linen-workers at Ashbea,

²²Jokim, the men of Kozeba, Joash, and Saraph who fell out with Moab and came back to Bethlehem. (The records are ancient.)

²³They were the potters, and those who lived at Netaim and Gederah were there on the king's service.

²⁴The sons of Simeon: Nemuel, Jamin, Jarib, Zerah, Saul,

²⁵his son Shallum, his son Mibsam, and his son Mishma.

²⁶The sons of Mishma: his son Hammuel, his son Zaccur, and his son Shimei.

²⁷Shimei had sixteen sons and six daughters, but others of his family had fewer children, and the clan as a whole

did not increase as much as the tribe of Judah.

²⁸They lived at Beersheba, Moladah, Hazar-shual,

²⁹Bilhah, Ezem, Tolad,

³⁰Bethuel, Hormah, Ziklag,

³¹Beth-marcaboth, Hazar-susim, Beth-biri, and Shaaraim. These were their towns until David came to the throne.

³²Their settlements were Etam, Ain, Rimmon, Tochen, and Ashan, five towns in all.

³³They had also hamlets round these towns as far as Baal. These were the places where they lived.

³⁴The names on their register were: Meshobab, Jamlech, Joshah son of Amaziah,

³⁵Joel, Jehu son of Joshibiah, son of Seraiah, son of Asiel,

³⁶Elioenai, Jaakobah, Jeshohaiah, Asaiah, Adiel, Jesimiel, Benaiah,

³⁷Ziza son of Shiphi, son of Allon, son of Jedaiah, son of Shimri, son of Shemaiah,

³⁸whose names are recorded as princes in their clans, and their families had greatly increased.

³⁹They then went from the approaches to Gedor east of the valley in search of pasture for their flocks.

⁴⁰They found rich and good pasture in a wide stretch of open country where everything was quiet and peaceful; before then it had been occupied by Hamites.

⁴¹During the reign of King Hezekiah of Judah those whose names are written above came and destroyed the tribes of Ham and the Meunites whom they found there. They annihilated them so that no trace of them has remained to this day; and they occupied the land in their place, for there was pasture for their flocks.

⁴²Of their number five hundred Simeonites invaded the hill-country of Seir, led by Pelatiah, Neariah, Rephaiah, and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi.

⁴³They destroyed all who were left of the surviving Amalekites; and they live there still.

5¹The sons of Reuben, the eldest of Israel's sons. (He had been, in fact, the first son born, but because he committed incest with a wife of his father's the status of the eldest

was transferred to the sons of Joseph, Israel's son, who, however, could not be registered as the eldest son.

²Judah held the leading place among his brothers because he fathered a ruler, and the status of the eldest was his, not Joseph's.)

³The sons of Reuben, the eldest of Israel's sons: Enoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi.

⁴The sons of Joel: his son Shemaiah, his son Gog, his son Shimei,

⁵his son Micah, his son Reaia, his son Baal,

⁶his son Beerah, whom King Tiglath-pileser of Assyria carried away into exile; he was a prince of the Reubenites.

⁷His kinsmen, family by family, as registered in their tribal lists: Jeiel the chief, Zechariah,

⁸Bela son of Azaz, son of Shema, son of Joel. They lived in Aroer, and their lands stretched as far as Nebo and Baal-meon.

⁹Eastwards they occupied territory as far as the edge of the desert which stretches from the river Euphrates, for they had large numbers of cattle in Gilead.

¹⁰During Saul's reign they made war on the Hagarites, whom they conquered, occupying their encampments over all the territory east of Gilead.

¹¹Adjoining them were the Gadites, occupying the district of Bashan as far as Salcah:

¹²Joel the chief; second in rank, Shapham; then Jaanai and Shaphat in Bashan.

¹³Their fellow-tribesmen belonged to the families of Michael, Meshullam, Sheba, Jorai, Jachan, Zia, and Heber, seven in all.

¹⁴These were the sons of Abihail son of Huri, son of Jaroah, son of Gilead, son of Michael, son of Jeshishai, son of Jahdo, son of Buz.

¹⁵Ahi son of Abdiel, son of Guni, was head of their family;

¹⁶they lived in Gilead, in Bashan and its villages, in all the common land of Sharon as far as it stretched.

¹⁷These registers were all compiled in the reigns of King Jotham of Judah and King Jeroboam of Israel.

¹⁸The sons of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh: of their fighting

men armed with shield and sword, their archers and their battle-trained soldiers, forty-four thousand seven hundred and sixty were ready for active service.

¹⁹They made war on the Hagarites, Jetur, Nephish, and Nodab.

²⁰They were given help against them, for they cried to their God for help in the battle, and because they trusted him he listened to their prayer, and the Hagarites and all their allies surrendered to them.

²¹They drove off their cattle, fifty thousand camels, two hundred and fifty thousand sheep, and two thousand donkeys, and they took a hundred thousand captives.

²²Many Hagarites had been killed, for the war was of God's making, and they occupied their land until the exile.

²³Half the tribe of Manasseh lived in the land from Bashan to Baal-hermon, Senir, and Mount Hermon, and were numerous also in Lebanon.

²⁴The heads of their families were: Epher, Ishi, Eliel, Azriel, Jeremiah, Hodaviah, and Jahdiel, all men of ability and repute, heads of their families.

²⁵ But they sinned against the God of their fathers, and turned wantonly to worship the gods of the peoples whom God had destroyed before them.

²⁶ So the God of Israel stirred up King Pul of Assyria, that is King Tiglath-pileser of Assyria, and he carried away Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh. He took them to Halah, Habor, Hara, and the river Gozan, where they are to this day.

6¹ THE sons of Levi: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari.

² The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel.

³ The children of Amram: Aaron, Moses, and Miriam. The sons of Aaron: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.

⁴ Eleazar was the father of Phinehas, Phinehas father of Abishua,

⁵ Abishua father of Bukki, Bukki father of Uzzi,

⁶ Uzzi father of Zerahiah, Zerahiah father of Meraioth,

⁷ Meraioth father of Amariah, Amariah father of Ahitub,

⁸ Ahitub father of Zadok, Zadok father of Ahimaaz,

⁹Ahimaaz father of Azariah, Azariah father of Johanan,

¹⁰and Johanan father of Azariah, the priest who officiated in the LORD's house which Solomon built at Jerusalem.

¹¹Azariah was the father of Amariah, Amariah father of Ahitub,

¹²Ahitub father of Zadok, Zadok father of Shallum,

¹³Shallum father of Hilkiah, Hilkiah father of Azariah,

¹⁴Azariah father of Seraiah, and Seraiah father of Jehozadak.

¹⁵Jehozadak was deported when the LORD sent Judah and Jerusalem into exile under Nebuchadnezzar.

¹⁶The sons of Levi: Gershom, Kohath, and Merari.

¹⁷The sons of Gershom: Libni and Shimei.

¹⁸The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel.

¹⁹The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. The clans of Levi, family by family:

²⁰Gershom: his son Libni, his son Jahath, his son Zimmah,

²¹his son Joah, his son Iddo, his son Zerah, his son Jeaterai.

²²The sons of Kohath: his son Amminadab, his son Korah, his son Assir,

²³his son Elkanah, his son Ebiasaph, his son Assir,

²⁴his son Tahath, his son Uriel, his son Uzziah, his son Saul.

²⁵The sons of Elkanah: Amasai and Ahimoth,

²⁶his son Elkanah, his son Zophai, his son Nahath,

²⁷his son Eliab, his son Jeroham, his son Elkanah.

²⁸The sons of Samuel: Joel the eldest and Abiah the second.

²⁹The sons of Merari: his son Mahli, his son Libni, his son Shimei, his son Uzza,

³⁰his son Shimea, his son Haggiah, his son Asaiah.

³¹These are the men whom David appointed to take charge of the music in the house of the LORD when the Ark should be deposited there.

³²They performed their musical duties at the front of the Tent of Meeting before Solomon built the house of the LORD in Jerusalem; they took their turns of duty as was laid down for them.

³³ The following, with their descendants, took this duty. Of the line of Kohath: Heman the musician, son of Joel, son of Samuel,

³⁴ son of Elkanah, son of Jeroham, son of Eliel, son of Toah,

³⁵ son of Zuph, son of Elkanah, son of Mahath, son of Amasai,

³⁶ son of Elkanah, son of Joel, son of Azariah, son of Zephaniah,

³⁷ son of Tahath, son of Assir, son of Ebiasaph, son of Korah,

³⁸ son of Izhar, son of Kohath, son of Levi, son of Israel.

³⁹ Heman's colleague Asaph stood at his right hand. He was the son of Berechiah, son of Shimea,

⁴⁰ son of Michael, son of Baaseiah, son of Malchiah,

⁴¹ son of Ethni, son of Zerah, son of Adaiah,

⁴² son of Ethan, son of Zimmah, son of Shimei,

⁴³ son of Jahath, son of Gershon, son of Levi.

⁴⁴ On their left stood their colleague of the line of Merari: Ethan son of Kishi, son of Abdi, son of Malluch,

⁴⁵son of Hashabiah, son of Amaziah,
son of Hilkiah,

⁴⁶son of Amzi, son of Bani, son of
Shemer,

⁴⁷son of Mahli, son of Mushi, son of
Merari, son of Levi.

⁴⁸Their kinsmen the Levites were
dedicated to all the service of the
Tabernacle, the house of God.

⁴⁹But it was Aaron and his descendants
who burnt the sacrifices on the altar of
whole-offering and the altar of incense,
in fulfilment of all the duties connected
with the most sacred gifts, and to make
expiation for Israel, exactly as Moses the
servant of God had commanded.

⁵⁰The sons of Aaron: his son Eleazar,
his son Phinehas, his son Abishua,

⁵¹his son Bukki, his son Uzzi, his son
Zerahiah,

⁵²his son Meraioth, his son Amariah,
his son Ahitub,

⁵³his son Zadok, his son Ahimaaz.

⁵⁴These are their settlements in
encampments in the districts assigned
to the descendants of Aaron, to the clan
of Kohath, for it was to them that the lot
had fallen:

⁵⁵ they were given Hebron in Judah, with the common land round it,

⁵⁶ but to Caleb son of Jephunneh were assigned the open country belonging to the town and its hamlets.

⁵⁷ To the sons of Aaron were given: Hebron the city of refuge, Libnah, Jattir, Eshtemoa,

⁵⁸ Hilen, Debir,

⁵⁹ Ashan, and Beth-shemesh, each with its common land.

⁶⁰ And from the tribe of Benjamin: Geba, Alemeth, and Anathoth, each with its common land, making thirteen towns in all by their clans.

⁶¹ To the remaining clans of the sons of Kohath ten towns were allotted from the half tribe of Manasseh.

⁶² To the sons of Gershom according to their clans they gave thirteen towns from the tribes of Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and Manasseh in Bashan.

⁶³ To the sons of Merari according to their clans they gave by lot twelve towns from the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun.

⁶⁴ Israel gave these towns, each with its common land, to the Levites.

⁶⁵ (The towns mentioned above, from the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin, were assigned by lot.)

⁶⁶ Some of the clans of Kohath had towns allotted to them.

⁶⁷ They gave them the city of refuge Shechem in the hill-country of Ephraim, Gezer,

⁶⁸ Jokmeam, Beth-horon,

⁶⁹ Aijalon, and Gath-rimmon, each with its common land.

⁷⁰ From the half tribe of Manasseh, Aner and Bileam, each with its common land, were given to the rest of the clans of Kohath.

⁷¹ To the sons of Gershom they gave from the half tribe of Manasseh: Golan in Bashan, and Ashtaroth, each with its common land.

⁷² From the tribe of Issachar: Kedesh, Daberath,

⁷³ Ramoth, and Anem, each with its common land.

⁷⁴ From the tribe of Asher: Mashal, Abdon,

⁷⁵ Hukok, and Rehob, each with its common land.

⁷⁶From the tribe of Naphtali: Kedesh in Galilee, Hammon, and Kiriathaim, each with its common land.

⁷⁷To the rest of the sons of Merari they gave from the tribe of Zebulun: Rimmon and Tabor, each with its common land.

⁷⁸On the east of Jordan, opposite Jericho, from the tribe of Reuben: Bezer-in-the-wilderness, Jahaz,

⁷⁹Kedemoth, and Mephaath, each with its common land.

⁸⁰From the tribe of Gad: Ramoth in Gilead, Mahanaim,

⁸¹Heshbon, and Jazer, each with its common land.

7¹The sons of Issachar: Tola, Pua, Jashub, and Shimron, four.

²The sons of Tola: Uzzi, Rephaiah, Jeriel, Jahmai, Jibsam, and Samuel, all able men and heads of families by paternal descent from Tola according to their tribal lists; their number in David's time was twenty-two thousand six hundred.

³The son of Uzzi: Izrahiah, and the sons of Izrahiah -- Michael, Obadiah, Joel, and Isshiah -- making a total of five, all of them chiefs.

⁴In addition there were bands of fighting men recorded by families according to the tribal lists to the number of thirty-six thousand, for they had many wives and children.

⁵Their fellow-tribesmen in all the clans of Issachar were able men, eighty-seven thousand; every one of them was registered.

⁶The sons of Benjamin: Bela, Becher, and Jediael, three.

⁷The sons of Bela: Ezbon, Uzzi, Uzziel, Jerimoth, and Iri, five. They were heads of their families and able men; the number registered was twenty-two thousand and thirty-four.

⁸The sons of Becher: Zemira, Joash, Eliezer, Elioenai, Omri, Jeremoth, Abijah, Anathoth, and Alemeth; all these were sons of Becher

⁹according to their tribal lists, heads of their families and able men; and the number registered was twenty thousand two hundred.

¹⁰The son of Jediael: Bilhan. The sons of Bilhan: Jeush, Benjamin, Ehud, Kenaanah, Zethan, Tarshish, and Ahishahar.

¹¹ All these were descendants of Jediael, heads of families and able men. The number was seventeen thousand two hundred men, fit for active service in war.

¹² The sons of Dan: Hushim and the sons of Aher.

¹³ The sons of Naphtali: Jahziel, Guni, Jezer, Shallum. These were sons of Bilhah.

¹⁴ The sons of Manasseh, born of his concubine, an Aramaean: Machir father of Gilead.

¹⁵ Machir married a woman whose name was Maacah. The second son was named Zelophehad, and Zelophehad had daughters.

¹⁶ Maacah wife of Machir had a son whom she named Peresh. His brother's name was Sheresh, and his sons were Ulam and Rakem.

¹⁷ The son of Ulam: Bedan. These were the sons of Gilead son of Machir, son of Manasseh.

¹⁸ His sister Hammoleketh was the mother of Ishhod, Abiezer, and Mahlah.

¹⁹ The sons of Shemida: Ahian, Shechem, Likhi, and Aniam.

²⁰The sons of Ephraim: Shuthelah, his son Bered, his son Tahath, his son Eladah, his son Tahath,

²¹his son Zabad, his son Shuthelah. Ephraim's other sons Ezer and Elead were killed by the native Gittites when they came down to lift their cattle.

²²Their father Ephraim mourned for them a long while, and his kinsmen came to comfort him.

²³Then he had intercourse with his wife; she conceived and had a son whom he named Beriah (because disaster had come on his family).

²⁴He had a daughter named Sherah; she built Lower and Upper Beth-horon and Uzen-sherah.

²⁵He also had a son named Rephah; his son was Resheph, his son Telah, his son Tahan,

²⁶his son Laadan, his son Ammihud, his son Elishama,

²⁷his son Nun, his son Joshua.

²⁸Their lands and settlements were: Bethel and its dependent villages, to the east Naaran, to the west Gezer, Shechem, and Gaza, with their villages.

²⁹In the possession of Manasseh were Beth-shean, Taanach, Megiddo, and Dor, with their villages. In all of these lived the descendants of Joseph the son of Israel.

³⁰The sons of Asher: Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, and Beriah, together with their sister Serah.

³¹The sons of Beriah: Heber and Malchiel father of Birzavith.

³²Heber was the father of Japhlet, Shomer, Hotham, and their sister Shua.

³³The sons of Japhlet: Pasach, Bimhal, and Ashvath. These were the sons of Japhlet.

³⁴The sons of Shomer: Ahi, Rohgah, Jehubbah, and Aram.

³⁵The sons of his brother Hotham: Zophah, Imna, Shelesh, and Amal.

³⁶The sons of Zophah: Suah, Harnepher, Shual, Beri, Imrah,

³⁷Bezer, Hod, Shamma, Shilshah, Ithran, and Beera.

³⁸The sons of Jether: Jephunneh, Pispah, and Ara.

³⁹The sons of Ulla: Arah, Hanniel, and Rezia.

⁴⁰All these were descendants of Asher, heads of families, picked men of ability, leading princes. They were enrolled among the fighting troops; the total number was twenty-six thousand men.

8¹The sons of Benjamin were: the eldest Bela, the second Ashbel, the third Aharah,

²the fourth Nohah, and the fifth Rapha.

³The sons of Bela: Addar, Gera father of Ehud,

⁴Abishua, Naaman, Ahoah,

⁵Gera, Shephuphan, and Huram.

⁶These were the sons of Ehud, heads of families living in Geba, who were removed to Manahath:

⁷Naaman, Ahiah, and Gera -- he it was who removed them; he was the father of Uzza and Ahihud.

⁸Shaharaim had sons born to him in Moabite country, after putting away his wives Mahasham and Baara.

⁹By his wife Hodesh he had Jobab, Zibia, Mesha, Malcham,

¹⁰Jeuz, Sachiah, and Mirmah. These were his sons, heads of families.

¹¹By Mahasham he had had Abitub and Elpaal.

¹²The sons of Elpaal: Eber, Misham, Shamed who built Ono and Lod with its villages,

¹³also Beriah and Shema who were heads of families living in Aijalon, having cleared out the inhabitants of Gath.

¹⁴Ahio, Shashak, Jeremoth,

¹⁵Zebadiah, Arad, Eder,

¹⁶Michael, Ishpah, and Joha were sons of Beriah;

¹⁷Zebadiah, Meshullam, Hizki, Heber,

¹⁸Ishmerai, Jezliah, and Jobab were sons of Elpaal;

¹⁹Jakim, Zichri, Zabdi,

²⁰Elienai, Zillethai, Eliel,

²¹Adaiah, Beraiah, and Shimrath were sons of Shimei;

²²Ishpan, Heber, Eliel,

²³Abdon, Zichri, Hanan,

²⁴Hananiah, Elam, Antothiah,

²⁵Iphedeiah, and Penuel were sons of Shashak;

²⁶Shamsherai, Shehariah, Athaliah,

²⁷Jaareshiah, Elijah, and Zichri were sons of Jeroham.

²⁸These were enrolled in the tribal lists as heads of families, chiefs living in Jerusalem.

²⁹ Jehiel founder of Gibeon lived at Gibeon; his wife's name was Maacah.

³⁰ His eldest son was Abdon, followed by Zur, Kish, Baal, Nadab,

³¹ Gedor, Ahio, Zecher, and Mikloth.

³² Mikloth was the father of Shimeah; they lived alongside their kinsmen in Jerusalem.

³³ Ner was the father of Kish, Kish father of Saul, Saul father of Jonathan, Malchishua, Abinadab, and Eshbaal.

³⁴ Jonathan's son was Meribbaal, who was the father of Micah.

³⁵ The sons of Micah: Pithon, Melech, Tarea, and Ahaz.

³⁶ Ahaz was the father of Jehoaddah, Jehoaddah father of Alemeth, Azmoth, and Zimri. Zimri was the father of Moza,

³⁷ and Moza father of Binea; his son was Raphah, his son Elasa, and his son Azel.

³⁸ Azel had six sons, whose names were Azrikam, Bocheru, Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah, and Hanan. All these were sons of Azel.

³⁹ The sons of his brother Eshek: the eldest Ulam, the second Jeush, the third Eliphelet.

⁴⁰The sons of Ulam were able men, archers, and they had many sons and grandsons, a hundred and fifty. All these were descendants of Benjamin.

9¹ ALL Israel were registered and recorded in the book of the kings of Israel; but Judah for their sins were carried away to exile in Babylon.

²The first to occupy their ancestral land in their towns were lay Israelites, priests, Levites, and temple servitors.

³Jerusalem was occupied partly by Judahites, partly by Benjamites, and partly by men of Ephraim and Manasseh.

⁴Judahites: Uthai son of Ammihud, son of Omri, son of Imri, son of Bani, a descendant of Perez son of Judah.

⁵Shelanites: Asaiah the eldest and his sons.

⁶The sons of Zerah: Jeuel and six hundred and ninety of their kinsmen.

⁷Benjamites: Sallu son of Meshullam, son of Hodaviah, son of Hassenuah,

⁸Ibneiah son of Jeroham, Elah son of Uzzi, son of Micri, Meshullam son of Shephatiah, son of Reuel, son of Ibnijah,

⁹and their recorded kinsmen numbering nine hundred and fifty-six, all heads of families.

¹⁰Priests: Jedaiah, Jehoiarib, Jachin,

¹¹Azariah son of Hilkiah, son of Meshullam, son of Zadok, son of Meraioth, son of Ahitub, the official in charge of the house of God,

¹²Adaiah son of Jeroham, son of Pashhur, son of Malchiah, Maasai son of Adiel, son of Jahzerah, son of Meshullam, son of Meshillemith, son of Immer,

¹³and their colleagues, heads of families numbering one thousand seven hundred and sixty, men of substance with responsibility for the work connected with the service of the house of God.

¹⁴Levites: Shemaiah son of Hasshub, son of Azrikam, son of Hashabiah, a descendant of Merari,

¹⁵Bakbakkar, Heresh, Galal, Mattaniah son of Mica, son of Zichri, son of Asaph,

¹⁶Obadiah son of Shemaiah, son of Galal, son of Jeduthun, and Berechiah son of Asa, son of Elkanah, who lived in the hamlets of the Netophathites.

¹⁷The door-keepers were Shallum, Akkub, Talmon, and Ahiman; their brother Shallum was the chief.

¹⁸Until then they had all been door-keepers in the quarters of the Levites at the King's Gate, on the east.

¹⁹Shallum son of Kore, son of Ebiasaph, son of Korah, and his kinsmen of the Korahite family were responsible for service as guards of the thresholds of the Tabernacle; their ancestors had performed the duty of guarding the entrances to the camp of the LORD.

²⁰Phinehas son of Eleazar had been their overseer in the past -- the LORD was with him.

²¹Zechariah son of Meshelemiah was the door-keeper of the Tent of Meeting.

²²Those picked to be door-keepers numbered two hundred and twelve in all, registered in their hamlets. David and Samuel the seer had installed them because they were trustworthy.

²³They and their sons had charge, by watches, of the gates of the house, the tent-dwelling of the LORD.

²⁴The door-keepers were to be on four sides, east, west, north, and south.

²⁵ Their kinsmen from their hamlets had to come on duty with them for seven days at a time in turn.

²⁶ The four principal door-keepers were chosen for their trustworthiness; they were Levites and had charge of the rooms and the stores in the house of God.

²⁷ They always slept in the precincts of the house of God (for the watch was their duty) and they had charge of the key for opening the gates every morning.

²⁸ Some of them had charge of the vessels used in the service of the temple, keeping count of them as they were brought in and taken out.

²⁹ Some of them were detailed to take charge of the furniture and all the sacred vessels, the flour, the wine, the oil, the incense, and the spices.

³⁰ Some of the priests compounded the ointment for the perfumes.

³¹ Mattithiah the Levite, the eldest son of Shallum the Korahite, was in charge of the preparation of the wafers because he was trustworthy.

³²Some of their Kohathite kinsmen were in charge of setting out the rows of the Bread of the Presence every sabbath.

³³These are the musicians, heads of Levite families, who were lodged in rooms set apart for them, because they were liable for duty by day and by night.

³⁴These are the heads of Levite families, chiefs according to their tribal lists, living in Jerusalem.

³⁵Jehiel founder of Gibeon lived at Gibeon; his wife's name was Maacah,

³⁶and his sons were Abdon the eldest, Zur, Kish, Baal, Ner, Nadab,

³⁷Gedor, Ahio, Zechariah, and Mikloth.

³⁸Mikloth was the father of Shimeam; they lived alongside their kinsmen in Jerusalem.

³⁹Ner was the father of Kish, Kish father of Saul, Saul father of Jonathan, Malchishua, Abinadab, and Eshbaal.

⁴⁰The son of Jonathan was Meribbaal, and Meribbaal was the father of Micah.

⁴¹The sons of Micah: Pithon, Melech, Tahrea, and Ahaz.

⁴²Ahaz was the father of Jarah, Jarah father of Alemeth, Azmoth, and Zimri; Zimri father of Moza,

⁴³ and Moza father of Binea; his son was Rephaiah, his son Elasah, his son Azel.

⁴⁴ Azel had six sons, whose names were Azrikam, Bocheru, Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah, and Hanan. These were the sons of Azel.

10¹ THE Philistines engaged Israel in battle, and the Israelites were routed, leaving their dead on Mount Gilboa.

² The Philistines closely pursued Saul and his sons, and Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malchishua, the sons of Saul, were killed.

³ The battle went hard for Saul, and when the archers caught up with him they wounded him.

⁴ He said to his armour-bearer, Draw your sword and run me through, so that these uncircumcised brutes may not come and make sport of me. But the armour-bearer refused; he dared not. Thereupon Saul took his own sword and fell on it.

⁵ When the armour-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he too fell on his sword and died.

⁶Thus Saul and his three sons died; his whole house perished together.

⁷When all the Israelites in the valley saw that their army had fled and that Saul and his sons had perished, they fled likewise, abandoning their towns; and the Philistines moved in and occupied them.

⁸Next day, when the Philistines came to strip the slain, they found Saul and his sons lying dead on Mount Gilboa.

⁹They stripped him, cut off his head, and took away his armour; then they sent messengers through the length and breadth of their land to carry the good news to idols and people alike.

¹⁰They deposited his armour in the temple of their god, and nailed up his skull in the temple of Dagon.

¹¹When the people of Jabesh-gilead heard everything the Philistines had done to Saul,

¹²all the warriors among them set out to recover the bodies of Saul and his sons. They brought them back to Jabesh and buried their bones under the oak tree there, and for seven days they fasted.

¹³ Thus Saul paid with his life for his unfaithfulness: he had disobeyed the word of the LORD and had resorted to ghosts for guidance.

¹⁴ He had not sought guidance of the LORD, who therefore destroyed him and transferred the kingdom to David son of Jesse.

11 ¹ ALL Israel assembled and came to David at Hebron. We are your own flesh and blood, they said.

² In the past, while Saul was still king, it was you that led the forces of Israel on their campaigns. To you the LORD your God said, You are to be shepherd of my people Israel; you are to be their prince.

³ The elders of Israel all came to the king at Hebron; there David made a covenant with them before the LORD, and they anointed David king over Israel, as the LORD had said through the lips of Samuel.

⁴ David and all Israel went to Jerusalem, that is Jebus, where the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the region, lived.

⁵ The people of Jebus said to David, You will never come in here; none the less

David did capture the stronghold of Zion, and it is now known as the City of David.

⁶David had said, The first man to kill a Jebusite will become a commander or an officer, and the first man to go up was Joab son of Zeruah; so he was given the command.

⁷David took up his residence in the stronghold: that is why it was called the City of David.

⁸He built the city around it: David started at the Millo and included its neighbourhood, while Joab reconstructed the rest of the city.

⁹David steadily grew more and more powerful, for the LORD of Hosts was with him.

¹⁰These were the chief of David's heroes, men who lent their full strength to his government and, with all Israel, joined in making him king; such was the LORD's decree for Israel.

¹¹First came Jashobeam the Hachmonite, chief of the three; it was he who brandished his spear over three hundred, all slain at one time.

¹²Next to him was Eleazar son of Dodo the Ahohite, one of the heroic three.

¹³He was with David at Pas-dammim where the Philistines had gathered for battle in a field carrying a good crop of barley. When the people had fled from the Philistines

¹⁴he stood his ground in the field, defended it, and defeated them. So the LORD brought about a great victory.

¹⁵Three of the thirty chiefs went down to the rock to join David at the cave of Adullam, while the Philistines were encamped in the valley of Rephaim.

¹⁶David was then in the stronghold, and a Philistine garrison held Bethlehem.

¹⁷One day David exclaimed with longing, If only I could have a drink of water from the well by the gate at Bethlehem!

¹⁸At this the three made their way through the Philistine lines and drew water from the well by the gate of Bethlehem and brought it to David. But he refused to drink it; he poured it out to the LORD,

¹⁹saying, God forbid that I should do such a thing! Can I drink the blood of these men? They have brought it at the risk of their lives. So he would not drink

it. Such were the exploits of the heroic three.

²⁰Abishai the brother of Joab was chief of the thirty; he it was who brandished his spear over three hundred dead. He was famous among the thirty.

²¹He surpassed in reputation the rest of the thirty; he became their captain, but he did not rival the three.

²²Benaiah son of Jehoiada, from Kabzeel, was a hero of many exploits. It was he who slew the two champions of Moab, and who once went down into a pit and killed a lion on a snowy day.

²³He also killed an Egyptian, a giant seven and a half feet high armed with a spear as big as the beam of a loom. Benaiah went to meet him with a club, wrested the spear out of the Egyptian's hand, and killed him with his own weapon.

²⁴Such were the exploits of Benaiah son of Jehoiada, famous among the heroic thirty.

²⁵He was more famous than the rest of the thirty, but he did not rival the three. David appointed him to his household.

²⁶ These were his valiant heroes: Asahel the brother of Joab; Elhanan son of Dodo from Bethlehem;

²⁷ Shammoth from Harod; Helez from a place unknown;

²⁸ Ira son of Ikkesh from Tekoa; Abiezer from Anathoth;

²⁹ Sibbechai from Hushah; Ilai the Ahohite;

³⁰ Maharai from Netophah; Heled son of Baanah from Netophah;

³¹ Ithai son of Ribai from Gibeah of Benjamin; Benaiah from Pirathon;

³² Hurai from the wadis of Gaash; Abiel from Beth-arabah;

³³ Azmoth from Bahurim; Eliahba from Shaalbon;

³⁴ Hashem the Gizonite; Jonathan son of Shage the Hararite;

³⁵ Ahiam son of Sacar the Hararite; Eliphal son of Ur;

³⁶ Hopher from Mecherah; Ahijah from a place unknown;

³⁷ Hezro from Carmel; Naarai son of Ezbai;

³⁸ Joel brother of Nathan; Mibhar son of Hageri;

³⁹ Zelek the Ammonite; Naharai from Beroth, armour-bearer to Joab son of Zeruiah;

⁴⁰ Ira the Ithrite; Gareb the Ithrite;

⁴¹ Uriah the Hittite; Zabad son of Ahlai.

⁴² Adina son of Shiza the Reubenite, a chief of the Reubenites, was over these thirty.

⁴³ Also Hanan son of Maacah, and Joshaphat the Mithnite;

⁴⁴ Uzzia from Ashtaroth, Shama and Jeiel the sons of Hotham from Aroer;

⁴⁵ Jediael son of Shimri, and his brother Joha the Tizite;

⁴⁶ Eliel the Mahavite, and Jeribai and Joshaviah sons of Elnaam, and Ithmah the Moabite;

⁴⁷ Eliel and Obed, and Jaasiel from Zobah.

12¹ These are the men who joined David at Ziklag while he was banned from the presence of Saul son of Kish. They ranked among the warriors valiant in battle;

² they carried bows and could sling stones or shoot arrows with the left hand or the right. They were Benjamites, kinsmen of Saul.

³The foremost were Ahiezer and Joash, the sons of Shemaah of Gibeah; Jeziel and Pelet, men of Beth-azmoth; Berakah and Jehu from Anathoth;

⁴Ishmaiah the Gibeonite, a hero among the thirty and a chief among them; Jeremiah, Jahaziel, Johanan, and Jozabad from Gederah;

⁵Eluzai, Jerimoth, Bealiah, Shemariah, and Shephatiah the Hariphite;

⁶Elkanah, Isshiah, Azarel, Joezer, Jashobeam, the Korahites;

⁷and Joelah and Zebadiah sons of Jeroham from Gedor.

⁸Some Gadites also joined David at the stronghold in the wilderness, valiant men trained for war, experts with the heavy shield and spear, grim as lions and swift as gazelles on the mountains.

⁹Ezer was their chief, Obadiah the second, Eliab the third;

¹⁰Mishmannah the fourth and Jeremiah the fifth;

¹¹Attai the sixth and Eliel the seventh;

¹²Johanan the eighth and Elzabad the ninth;

¹³Jeremiah the tenth and Machbanai the eleventh.

¹⁴These were chiefs of the Gadites in the army, the least of them a match for a hundred, the greatest a match for a thousand.

¹⁵These were the men who in the first month crossed the Jordan, which was in full flood in all its reaches; they cleared the valleys, east and west.

¹⁶Some men of Benjamin and Judah came to David at the stronghold.

¹⁷David went out to them and said, If you come as friends to help me, join me and welcome; but if you come to betray me to my enemies, innocent though I am of any crime of violence, may the God of our fathers see and judge.

¹⁸At that a spirit took possession of Amasai, the chief of the thirty, and he said: We are on your side, David! We are with you, son of Jesse! All prosperity to you and to him who helps you, for your God is your helper. So David welcomed them and attached them to the columns of his raiding parties.

¹⁹Some men of Manasseh had deserted to David when he went with the Philistines to war against Saul, though he did not, in fact, fight on the side of

the Philistines. Their lords dismissed him, saying to themselves that he would desert them for his master Saul, and that would cost them their heads.

²⁰The men of Manasseh who deserted to him when he went to Ziklag were these: Adnah, Jozabad, Jediahel, Michael, Jozabad, Elihu, and Zillethai, each commanding his thousand in Manasseh.

²¹It was they who stood valiantly by David against the raiders, for they were all good fighters, and they were given commands in his forces.

²²Day by day men came in to help David, until he had gathered an immense army.

²³These are the numbers of the armed bands which joined David at Hebron to transfer the sovereignty to him in succession to Saul, as the LORD had said:

²⁴men of Judah, bearing heavy shield and spear, six thousand eight hundred drafted for active service;

²⁵of Simeon, fighting men drafted for active service, seven thousand one hundred;

²⁶of Levi, four thousand six hundred,

²⁷ together with Jehoiada prince of the house of Aaron and three thousand seven hundred men,

²⁸ and Zadok, a valiant fighter, with twenty-two officers of his own clan;

²⁹ of Benjamin, Saul's kinsmen, three thousand, though most of them had hitherto remained loyal to the house of Saul;

³⁰ of Ephraim, twenty thousand eight hundred fighting men, famous in their own clans;

³¹ of the half tribe of Manasseh, eighteen thousand, who had been nominated to come and make David king;

³² of Issachar, whose tribesmen were skilled in reading the signs of the times to discover what course Israel should follow, two hundred chiefs with all their kinsmen under their command;

³³ of Zebulun, fifty thousand troops well-drilled for battle, armed with every kind of weapon, bold and single-minded;

³⁴ of Naphtali, a thousand officers with thirty-seven thousand men equipped with heavy shield and spear;

³⁵ of the Danites, twenty-eight thousand six hundred well-drilled for battle;

³⁶ of Asher, forty thousand troops well-drilled for battle;

³⁷ of the Reubenites and the Gadites and the half tribe of Manasseh east of Jordan, a hundred and twenty thousand armed with every kind of weapon.

³⁸ All these valiant men trained for war came to Hebron, fully determined to make David king over the whole of Israel; the rest of Israel, too, were of one mind to make him king.

³⁹ They spent three days there with David, eating and drinking, for their kinsmen made provision for them.

⁴⁰ Also their neighbours round about, as far away as Issachar, Zebulun, and Naphtali, brought food on donkeys and camels, on mules and oxen: supplies of meal, fig-cakes, raisin-cakes, wine and oil, oxen and sheep in plenty; for there was rejoicing in Israel.

13¹ DAVID consulted the officers over units of a thousand and a hundred on every matter brought forward.

²Then he said to the whole assembly of Israel, If you approve, and if the LORD our God opens a way, let us send to our kinsmen who have stayed behind in all the districts of Israel, and also to the priests and Levites in the cities and towns where they have common lands, bidding them join us.

³Let us fetch the Ark of our God, for while Saul lived we never resorted to it.

⁴With the approval of the whole nation the assembly resolved unanimously to do this.

⁵So David assembled all Israel from the Shihor in Egypt to Lebo-hamath, in order to fetch the Ark of God from Kiriath-jearim.

⁶David and all Israel went up to Baalah, to Kiriath-jearim, which belonged to Judah, to fetch from there the Ark of God, the LORD enthroned upon the cherubim, the Ark which bore his name.

⁷They mounted the Ark on a new cart and conveyed it from the house of Abinadab, with Uzza and Ahio guiding the cart.

⁸David and all Israel danced for joy before God with all their might to

the sound of singing, of lyres, lutes, tambourines, cymbals, and trumpets.

⁹When they came to the threshing-floor of Kidon, the oxen stumbled, and Uzza reached out his hand to hold the Ark.

¹⁰The LORD was angry with Uzza and struck him down because he had put out his hand to the Ark. So he died there before God.

¹¹David was vexed because the LORD's anger had broken out on Uzza, and he called the place Perez-uzza, the name it still bears.

¹²David was afraid of God that day and said, How can the Ark of God come to me?

¹³So he did not take the Ark with him into the City of David; he turned aside and carried it to the house of Obed-edom the Gittite.

¹⁴The Ark of God remained in its tent beside Obed-edom's house for three months, and the LORD blessed the family of Obed-edom and all that he had.

14¹ King Hiram of Tyre sent envoys to David with cedar logs, and with them masons and carpenters to build him a house.

² David knew by now that the LORD had confirmed him as king over Israel and had enhanced his royal power for the sake of his people Israel.

³ David married more wives in Jerusalem, and more sons and daughters were born to him.

⁴ These are the names of the children born to him in Jerusalem: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon,

⁵ Ibhar, Elishua, Elpelet,

⁶ Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia,

⁷ Elishama, Beeliada, and Eliphelet.

⁸ When the Philistines learnt that David had been anointed king over the whole of Israel, they came up in force to seek him out. David, getting wind of this, went out to face them.

⁹ When the Philistines came and raided the valley of Rephaim,

¹⁰ David enquired of God, 'If I attack the Philistines, will you deliver them into my hands?' The LORD answered, 'Go, I shall deliver them into your hands.'

¹¹ He went up and attacked and defeated them at Baal-perazim. God has used me to break through my enemies' lines', David said, 'as a river breaks

through its banks. That is why the place was named Baal-perazim.

¹²The Philistines abandoned their gods there, and by David's orders these were burnt.

¹³The Philistines made another raid on the valley.

¹⁴Again David enquired of God, who said to him, No, you must attack towards their rear; make a detour without making contact and come upon them opposite the aspens.

¹⁵As soon as you hear a rustling sound in the treetops, then give battle at once, for God will have gone out before you to defeat the Philistine army.

¹⁶David did as God had commanded, and the Philistine army was driven in flight all the way from Gibeon to Gezer.

¹⁷David's fame spread through every land, and the LORD inspired all nations with dread of him.

15 ¹DAVID built himself quarters in the City of David, and prepared a place for the Ark of God and pitched a tent for it.

²He decreed that only Levites should carry the Ark of God, since they had

been chosen by the LORD to carry it and to serve him for ever.

³David assembled all Israel at Jerusalem to bring up the Ark of the LORD to the place he had prepared for it.

⁴He gathered together the descendants of Aaron and the Levites:

⁵of the descendants of Kohath, Uriel the chief with a hundred and twenty of his kinsmen;

⁶of the descendants of Merari, Asaiah the chief with two hundred and twenty of his kinsmen;

⁷of the descendants of Gershon, Joel the chief with a hundred and thirty of his kinsmen;

⁸of the descendants of Elizaphan, Shemaiah the chief with two hundred of his kinsmen;

⁹of the descendants of Hebron, Eliel the chief with eighty of his kinsmen;

¹⁰of the descendants of Uzziel, Amminadab the chief with a hundred and twelve of his kinsmen.

¹¹David summoned Zadok and Abiathar the priests, together with the Levites Uriel, Asaiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel, and Amminadab,

¹²and said to them, You are heads of families of the Levites; hallow yourselves, you and your kinsmen, and bring up the Ark of the LORD the God of Israel to the place which I have prepared for it.

¹³It was because you were not present the first time that the LORD our God broke out upon us. For we had not sought his guidance as we should have done.

¹⁴The priests and the Levites then hallowed themselves to bring up the Ark of the LORD the God of Israel,

¹⁵and the Levites carried the Ark of God, bearing it on their shoulders with poles as Moses had ordered on instructions from the LORD.

¹⁶David ordered the chiefs of the Levites to install as musicians those of their kinsmen who were players skilled in making joyful music on their instruments -- lutes, lyres, and cymbals.

¹⁷The Levites installed Heman son of Joel and, from his kinsmen, Asaph son of Berechiah; and from their kinsmen the Merarites, Ethan son of Kushaiah,

¹⁸ together with their kinsmen of the second degree Zechariah, Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, and Mikneiah, and the door-keepers Obed-edom and Jeiel.

¹⁹ They installed the musicians Heman, Asaph, and Ethan to sound the bronze cymbals;

²⁰ Zechariah, Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Maaseiah, and Benaiah to play on lutes;

²¹ Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah, Obed-edom, Jeiel, and Azaziah to play on lyres.

²² Kenaniah, officer of the Levites, was precentor in charge of the music because of his proficiency.

²³ Berechiah and Elkanah were door-keepers for the Ark,

²⁴ while the priests Shebaniah, Joshaphat, Nethanel, Amasai, Zechariah, Benaiah, and Eliezer sounded the trumpets before the Ark of God; and Obed-edom and Jehiah also were door-keepers for the Ark.

²⁵ Then David and the elders of Israel and the captains of units of a thousand

went to bring up the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD with much rejoicing from the house of Obed-edom.

²⁶Because God had helped the Levites who carried the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD, they sacrificed seven bulls and seven rams.

²⁷David and all the Levites who carried the Ark, and the musicians, and Kenaniah the precentor, were arrayed in robes of fine linen; and David had on a linen ephod.

²⁸All Israel escorted the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD with acclamation, blowing on horns and trumpets, clashing cymbals, and playing on lutes and lyres.

²⁹As the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD was entering the City of David, Saul's daughter Michal looked down from a window and saw King David dancing and making merry, and she despised him in her heart.

16¹After they had brought the Ark of God, they put it inside the tent that David had set up for it, and they offered whole-offerings and shared-offerings before God.

² Having completed these sacrifices, David blessed the people in the name of the LORD

³ and distributed food, a loaf of bread, a portion of meat, and a cake of raisins, to each Israelite, man or woman.

⁴ He appointed certain Levites to serve before the Ark of the LORD, to celebrate, to give thanks, and to praise the LORD the God of Israel.

⁵ Their leader was Asaph; second to him was Zechariah; then came Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Mattithiah, Eliab, Benaiah, Obed-edom, and Jeiel, with lutes and lyres; Asaph, who sounded the cymbals;

⁶ and Benaiah and Jahaziel the priests, who blew the trumpets regularly before the Ark of the Covenant of God.

⁷ IT was then that David first ordained the offering of thanks to the LORD by Asaph and his kinsmen:

⁸ Give thanks to the LORD, invoke him by name, make known his deeds among the peoples.

⁹ Pay him honour with song and psalm and tell of all his marvellous deeds.

¹⁰Exult in his hallowed name; let those who seek the LORD be joyful in heart.

¹¹Look to the LORD and be strong; at all times seek his presence.

¹²Remember the marvels he has wrought, his portents and the judgements he has given,

¹³you descendants of Israel, his servants, you children of Jacob, his chosen ones!

¹⁴He is the LORD our God; his judgements cover the whole world.

¹⁵He is ever mindful of his covenant, the promise he ordained for a thousand generations,

¹⁶the covenant made with Abraham, his oath given to Isaac,

¹⁷and confirmed as a statute for Jacob, as an everlasting covenant for Israel:

¹⁸I shall give you the land of Canaan, he said, as your allotted holding.

¹⁹A small company it was, few in number, strangers in that land,

²⁰wandering from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another;

²¹but he let no one oppress them; on their account he rebuked kings:

²² Do not touch my anointed servants, he said; do no harm to my prophets.

²³ Sing to the LORD, all the earth, proclaim his victory day by day.

²⁴ Declare his glory among the nations, his marvellous deeds to every people.

²⁵ Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; he is more to be feared than all gods.

²⁶ For the gods of the nations are idols every one; but the LORD made the heavens.

²⁷ Majesty and splendour attend him, might and joy are in his dwelling.

²⁸ Ascribe to the LORD, you families of nations, ascribe to the LORD glory and might;

²⁹ ascribe to the LORD the glory due to his name. Bring an offering and come before him. Worship the LORD in holy attire.

³⁰ Tremble before him, all the earth. He has established the earth immovably.

³¹ Let the heavens rejoice and the earth be glad; let it be declared among the nations, The LORD is king.

³²Let the sea resound and everything in it, let the fields exult and all that is in them;

³³let the trees of the forest shout for joy before the LORD, when he comes to judge the earth.

³⁴It is good to give thanks to the LORD, for his love endures for ever.

³⁵Cry, Deliver us, God our saviour; gather us in and save us from the nations that we may give thanks to your holy name and make your praise our pride.

³⁶Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. And all the people said Amen and Praise the LORD.

³⁷David left Asaph and his kinsmen there before the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD, to perform regular service before the Ark as each day's duty required.

³⁸As door-keepers he left Obed-edom son of Jeduthun, and Hosah. Obed-edom and his kinsmen were sixty-eight in number.

³⁹He left Zadok the priest and his kinsmen the priests before the

Tabernacle of the LORD at the shrine in Gibeon,

⁴⁰to make offerings there to the LORD upon the altar of whole-offering regularly morning and evening, exactly as it is written in the law enjoined by the LORD on Israel.

⁴¹With them he left Heman and Jeduthun and the other men chosen by name to give thanks to the LORD, for his love endures for ever.

⁴²They had trumpets and cymbals for the players, and the instruments used for sacred song. The sons of Jeduthun kept the gate.

⁴³So all the people went home, and David returned to greet his household.

17 ¹ONCE David was established in his palace, he said to Nathan the prophet, Here I am living in a house of cedar, while the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD is housed in a tent.

²Nathan answered, Do whatever you have in mind, for God is with you.

³But that same night the word of God came to Nathan:

⁴Go and say to David my servant, This is the word of the LORD: It is not you who are to build me a house to dwell in.

⁵Down to this day I have never dwelt in a house since I brought Israel up from Egypt; I lived in a tent and a tabernacle.

⁶Wherever I journeyed with Israel, did I ever ask any of the judges whom I appointed shepherds of my people why they had not built me a cedar house?

⁷Then say this to my servant David: This is the word of the LORD of Hosts: I took you from the pastures and from following the sheep to be prince over my people Israel.

⁸I have been with you wherever you have gone, and have destroyed all the enemies in your path. I shall bring you fame like the fame of the great ones of the earth.

⁹I shall assign a place for my people Israel; there I shall plant them to dwell in their own land. They will be disturbed no more; never again will the wicked wear them down as they did

¹⁰in the past from the day when I appointed judges over my people Israel; and I shall subdue all your enemies. But

I shall make you great and the LORD will build up your royal house.

¹¹When your life ends and you go to join your forefathers, I shall set up one of your family, one of your own sons, to succeed you, and I shall establish his kingdom.

¹²It is he who will build me a house, and I shall establish his throne for all time.

¹³I shall be a father to him, and he will be my son. I shall never withdraw my love from him as I withdrew it from your predecessor.

¹⁴But I shall give him a sure place in my house and kingdom for all time, and his throne will endure for ever.

¹⁵Nathan recounted to David all that had been said to him and all that had been revealed.

¹⁶Then King David went into the presence of the LORD and, taking his place there, said, Who am I, LORD God, and what is my family, that you have brought me thus far?

¹⁷It was a small thing in your sight, God, to have planned for your servant's house in days long past, and now you

look on me as a man already embarked on a high career, LORD God.

¹⁸What more can David say to you of the honour you have done your servant? You yourself know your servant.

¹⁹For the sake of your servant, LORD, in accordance with your purpose, you have done this great thing and revealed all the great things to come.

²⁰There is none like you, LORD; there is no God but you, as everything we have heard bears witness.

²¹And your people Israel, to whom can they be compared? Is there any other nation on earth whom you, God, have set out to redeem from slavery to be your people? You have won renown for yourself by great and awesome deeds, driving out nations to make way for your people whom you redeemed from Egypt.

²²You have made your people Israel your own for ever, and you, LORD, have become their God.

²³But now, LORD, let what you have promised for your servant and his house stand fast for all time; make good what you have promised.

²⁴Let it stand fast, that your fame may be great for evermore, and let people say, The LORD of Hosts, the God of Israel, is Israel's God; and may the house of your servant David be established before you.

²⁵You, my God, have shown me your purpose, to build up your servant's house; therefore I have been able to pray before you.

²⁶LORD, you are God, and you have made these noble promises to your servant.

²⁷Be pleased now to bless your servant's house, so that it may continue always before you; you it is who have blessed it, and it shall be blessed for ever.

18¹AFTER this David attacked and subdued the Philistines, and took from them Gath with its villages.

²He defeated the Moabites, and they became subject to him and paid him tribute.

³He also defeated King Hadadezer of Zobah-hamath, who was on his way to set up his monument of victory by the river Euphrates.

⁴From him David captured a thousand chariots, seven thousand horsemen, and twenty thousand foot-soldiers; he hamstrung all the chariot-horses, except a hundred which he retained.

⁵When the Aramaeans of Damascus came to the aid of King Hadadezer of Zobah, David destroyed twenty-two thousand of them,

⁶and stationed garrisons among these Aramaeans; they became subject to him and paid him tribute. Thus the LORD gave David victory wherever he went.

⁷David took the gold shields borne by Hadadezer's servants and brought them to Jerusalem;

⁸he also removed from Hadadezer's cities Tibhath and Kun a great quantity of bronze, from which Solomon made the bronze Sea, the pillars, and the bronze vessels.

⁹When King Tou of Hamath heard that David had defeated the entire army of King Hadadezer of Zobah,

¹⁰he sent his son Hadoram to King David to greet him and to congratulate him on his victory over Hadadezer in battle, for Hadadezer had been at war

with Tou; Hadoram brought with him vessels of gold, silver, and bronze.

¹¹ These King David dedicated to the LORD, along with the silver and gold which he had carried away from all the nations, from Edom and Moab, from the Ammonites and Philistines, and from Amalek.

¹² Abishai son of Zeruah killed eighteen thousand of the Edomites in the valley of Salt;

¹³ he stationed garrisons throughout Edom, and all the Edomites became subject to David. The LORD gave David victory wherever he went.

¹⁴ David ruled over the whole of Israel and maintained law and justice among all his people.

¹⁵ Joab son of Zeruah was in command of the army; Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was secretary of state;

¹⁶ Zadok and Abiathar son of Ahimelech, son of Ahitub, were priests; Shavsha was adjutant-general;

¹⁷ Benaiah son of Jehoiada commanded the Kerethite and Pelethite guards. The eldest sons of David were in attendance on the king.

19¹ Some time afterwards Nahash king of the Ammonites died and was succeeded by his son.

² David said, I must keep up the same loyal friendship with Hanun son of Nahash as his father showed me, and he sent a mission to condole with him on the death of his father. When David's envoys entered the country of the Ammonites to condole with Hanun,

³ the Ammonite princes said to Hanun, Do you suppose David means to do honour to your father when he sends envoys to condole with you? These men of his are spies whom he has sent to find out how to overthrow the country.

⁴ So Hanun took David's servants, shaved them, and cut off half their garments up to the buttocks, and then dismissed them.

⁵ Hearing how they had been treated, David ordered them to be met, for they were deeply humiliated; he told them to wait in Jericho and not return until their beards had grown again.

⁶ The Ammonites realized that they had given offence to David, so Hanun and the Ammonites sent a thousand talents

of silver to hire chariots and horsemen from Aram-naharaim, Maacah, and Aram-zobah.

⁷They hired thirty-two thousand chariots and the king of Maacah and his people, who came and encamped before Medeba, while the Ammonites came from their cities and mustered for battle.

⁸When this was reported to David, he sent Joab out with all the fighting men.

⁹The Ammonites came on and took up their position at the entrance to the city, while the allied kings took up theirs in the open country.

¹⁰When Joab saw that he was threatened from both front and rear, he detailed some picked Israelite troops and drew them up facing the Aramaeans.

¹¹The rest of his forces he put under his brother Abishai, who took up a position facing the Ammonites.

¹²If the Aramaeans prove too strong for me, he said, you must come to my relief; and if the Ammonites prove too strong for you, I shall come to yours.

¹³Courage! Let us fight bravely for our people and for the cities of our God. And may the LORD's will be done.

¹⁴ Joab and his men engaged with the Aramaeans closely and put them to flight;

¹⁵ and when the Ammonites saw them in flight, they too fled before his brother Abishai and withdrew into the city. Then Joab came to Jerusalem.

¹⁶ The Aramaeans, reviewing their defeat by Israel, sent messengers to summon other Aramaeans from the Great Bend of the Euphrates under Shophach, commander of Hadadezer's army.

¹⁷ Their movement was reported to David, who immediately mustered all the forces of Israel, crossed the Jordan, and advanced against them and took up battle positions. The Aramaeans likewise took up positions facing David and engaged him,

¹⁸ but were put to flight by Israel. David slew seven thousand Aramaeans in chariots and forty thousand infantry, killing Shophach the commander of the army.

¹⁹ When Hadadezer's men saw that they had been worsted by Israel, they sued for peace and submitted to David. The

Aramaeans were never willing to help the Ammonites again.

20¹ AT the turn of the year, when kings go out to battle, Joab led the army out and ravaged the Ammonite country, while David remained in Jerusalem. Joab came to Rabbah and laid siege to it, and after reducing it he razed it to the ground.

² David took the crown from the head of Milcom and found that it weighed a talent of gold and was set with a precious stone, and it was placed on David's head; he also removed a vast quantity of booty from the city.

³ He brought out its inhabitants and set them to work with saws and other iron tools, sharp and toothed. David did this to all the Ammonite towns; then he and all his army returned to Jerusalem.

⁴ Some time later war with the Philistines broke out in Gezer; it was then that Sibbechai from Hushah killed Sippai, a descendant of the Rephaim, and the Philistines were reduced to submission.

⁵ In another campaign against the Philistines, Elhanan son of Jair killed

Lahmi brother of Goliath of Gath, whose spear had a shaft like a weaver's beam.

⁶In yet another campaign in Gath there appeared a giant with six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot, twenty-four in all. He too was descended from the Rephaim;

⁷when he defied Israel, Jonathan son of David's brother Shimea killed him.

⁸These giants were the descendants of the Rephaim in Gath, and they all fell at the hands of David and his men.

21 ¹NOW SATAN, setting himself against Israel, incited David to make a census of the people.

²The king commanded Joab and the officers of the army to go out and number Israel from Beersheba to Dan, and to report back the number to him.

³Joab answered, Even if the LORD should increase his people a hundredfold, would not your majesty still be king and all the people your slaves? Why should your majesty want to do this? It will only bring guilt on Israel.

⁴But Joab was overruled by the king; he set out and went up and down the whole country. He then came to Jerusalem

⁵and reported to David the numbers recorded: those capable of bearing arms were one million one hundred thousand in Israel, and four hundred and seventy thousand in Judah.

⁶Levi and Benjamin were not counted by Joab, so deep was his repugnance against the king's order.

⁷God also was displeased with the order, and he proceeded to punish Israel.

⁸David said to God, I have acted very wickedly: I pray you remove your servant's guilt, for I have been very foolish.

⁹The LORD said to Gad, David's seer,

¹⁰Go and tell David, This is the word of the LORD: I offer three things; choose one and I shall bring it on you.

¹¹Gad came to David and said, This is the word of the LORD: Make your choice:

¹²three years of famine, three months of harrying by your foes and close pursuit by the sword of your enemy, or three days of the LORD's own sword, bringing pestilence throughout the land, and the LORD's angel working destruction in all the territory of Israel. Consider now

what answer I am to take back to him who sent me.

¹³David said to Gad, This is a desperate plight I am in; let me fall into the hands of the LORD, for his mercy is very great; and let me not fall into the hands of man.

¹⁴The LORD sent a pestilence throughout Israel, and seventy thousand Israelites died.

¹⁵God sent an angel to Jerusalem to destroy it; but, as he was destroying it, the LORD saw and repented of the evil, and said to the destroying angel at the moment when he was standing at the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite, Enough! Stay your hand.

¹⁶When David looked up and saw the angel of the LORD standing between earth and heaven, and in his hand a drawn sword stretched out over Jerusalem, he and the elders, clothed in sackcloth, fell prostrate to the ground.

¹⁷David said to God, It was I who gave the order to count the people. It is I who have sinned, I, the shepherd, who have committed the wrong; but these poor sheep, what have they done? LORD my

God, let your hand fall on me and on my family, but check this plague on the people.

¹⁸The angel of the LORD, speaking through the lips of Gad, commanded David to go to the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite and to set up there an altar to the LORD.

¹⁹David went up as Gad had bidden him in the LORD's name.

²⁰Ornan's four sons who were with him hid themselves, but he was busy threshing his wheat when he turned and saw the angel.

²¹As David approached, Ornan looked up and, seeing the king, came out from the threshing-floor and prostrated himself before him.

²²David said to Ornan, Let me have the site of the threshing-floor, so that I may build on it an altar to the LORD; sell it to me at the full price, so that the plague which has attacked the people may be stopped.

²³Ornan answered, Take it and let your majesty do as he thinks fit; see, here are the oxen for whole-offerings, the threshing-sledges for the fuel, and the

wheat for the grain-offering; I give you everything.

²⁴ But King David said to Ornan, No, I shall pay the full price; I am not going to present to the LORD what is yours, or offer a whole-offering which has cost me nothing.

²⁵ So David gave Ornan six hundred shekels of gold for the site.

²⁶ He built an altar to the LORD there, and offered whole-offerings and shared-offerings. He called to the LORD, who answered him with fire falling from heaven on the altar of whole-offering.

²⁷ Then, at the LORD's command, the angel sheathed his sword.

²⁸ It was when David saw that the LORD had answered him at the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite that he offered sacrifice there.

²⁹ The Tabernacle of the LORD and the altar of whole-offering which Moses had made in the wilderness were then at the shrine in Gibeon;

³⁰ but David had been unable to go there and seek God's guidance, so shocked and shaken was he at the sight of the angel's sword.

22¹ Then David said, This is to be the house of the LORD God, and this is to be an altar of whole-offering for Israel.

² DAVID now gave orders to assemble the aliens resident in Israel, and he set them as masons to dress hewn stones for building the house of God.

³ He laid in a great store of iron to make nails and clamps for the doors, and more bronze than could be weighed,

⁴ and cedar-wood without limit; the men of Sidon and Tyre brought David an ample supply of cedar.

⁵ David said, My son Solomon is a boy of tender years, and the house that is to be built for the LORD must be exceedingly magnificent, renowned and celebrated in every land; therefore I must make provision for it myself. So David before his death made abundant provision.

⁶ He sent for Solomon his son and charged him with building a house for the LORD the God of Israel.

⁷ Solomon, my son, he said, it was my intention to build a house for the name of the LORD my God;

⁸but the LORD forbade me and said, You have shed much blood in my sight and waged great wars; for this reason you are not to build a house for my name.

⁹But you will have a son who will be a man of peace; I shall give him peace from all his enemies on every side; his name will be Solomon, Man of Peace, and I shall grant peace and quiet to Israel in his days.

¹⁰It is he who will build a house for my name; he will be my son and I shall be a father to him, and I shall establish his royal throne over Israel for ever.

¹¹Now, my son, may the LORD be with you! May you prosper and build the house of the LORD your God as he promised you would.

¹²May the LORD grant you insight and understanding, so that when he gives you authority in Israel you may keep the law of the LORD your God.

¹³You will prosper only if you are careful to observe the decrees and ordinances which the LORD enjoined upon Moses for Israel; be strong and resolute, neither faint-hearted nor dismayed.

¹⁴At the cost of some trouble, I have here ready for the house of the LORD a hundred thousand talents of gold and a million talents of silver, with great quantities of bronze and iron, more than can be weighed; timber and stone, too, I have got ready; and you may add to them.

¹⁵Besides, you have at your disposal a large force of workmen, masons, sculptors, and carpenters, and every kind of skilled craftsmen

¹⁶in gold and silver, bronze and iron. Set to work, and the LORD be with you!

¹⁷David ordered all the officers of Israel to help Solomon his son:

¹⁸Is not the LORD your God with you? Will he not give you peace on every side? For he has given the inhabitants of the land into my power; the land will be subdued before the LORD and his people.

¹⁹Devote yourselves, therefore, heart and soul, to seeking guidance of the LORD your God, and set about building his sanctuary, so that the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD and God's holy

vessels may be brought into the house built for his name.

23¹ David was now an old man, weighed down with years, and he appointed Solomon his son king over Israel.

² He assembled all the officers of Israel, the priests, and the Levites.

³ The Levites were enrolled from the age of thirty upwards, their males being thirty-eight thousand in all.

⁴ Of these, twenty-four thousand were to be responsible for the maintenance and service of the house of the LORD, six thousand to act as officers and magistrates,

⁵ four thousand to be door-keepers, and four thousand to praise the LORD with the musical instruments which David had produced for the service of praise.

⁶ David organized them in divisions, called after Gershon, Kohath, and Merari, the sons of Levi.

⁷ The sons of Gershon: Laadan and Shimei.

⁸ The sons of Laadan: Jehiel the chief, Zetham, and Joel, three.

⁹These were the heads of the families grouped under Laadan.

¹⁰The sons of Shimei: Jahath, Ziza, Jeush, and Beriah, four.

¹¹Jahath was the chief and Ziza the second, but Jeush and Beriah, having few children, were reckoned for duty as a single family.

¹²The sons of Kohath: Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, four.

¹³The sons of Amram: Aaron and Moses. Aaron was set apart, he and his sons in perpetuity, to dedicate the most holy gifts, to burn sacrifices before the LORD, to serve him, and to give the blessing in his name for ever,

¹⁴but the sons of Moses, the man of God, were to keep the name of Levite.

¹⁵The sons of Moses: Gershom and Eliezer.

¹⁶The sons of Gershom: Shubael the chief.

¹⁷The sons of Eliezer: Rehabiah the chief. Eliezer had no other sons, but Rehabiah had very many.

¹⁸The sons of Izhar: Shelomoth the chief.

¹⁹The sons of Hebron: Jeriah the chief, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, and Jekameam the fourth.

²⁰The sons of Uzziel: Micah the chief and Isshiah the second.

²¹The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi. The sons of Mahli: Eleazar and Kish.

²²When Eleazar died, he left daughters but no sons, and their cousins, the sons of Kish, married them.

²³The sons of Mushi: Mahli, Eder, and Jeremoth, three.

²⁴Such were the Levites, grouped by families in the father's line whose heads were named in the detailed list; they performed duties in the service of the house of the LORD, from the age of twenty upwards.

²⁵For David said, The LORD the God of Israel has given his people peace and has made his dwelling in Jerusalem for ever.

²⁶The Levites will no longer have to carry the Tabernacle or any of the vessels for its service.

²⁷According to these last instructions of David the Levites were enrolled from the age of twenty upwards.

²⁸Their duty was to help the descendants of Aaron in the service of the house of the LORD: they were responsible for the care of the courts and the rooms, for the cleansing of all holy things, and for the general service of the house of God;

²⁹for the rows of the Bread of the Presence, the flour for the grain-offerings, unleavened wafers, cakes baked on the griddle, and pastry, and for the weights and measures.

³⁰They were to be on duty continually before the LORD every morning and evening, giving thanks and praise to him,

³¹and whenever whole-offerings were presented to the LORD, on sabbaths, new moons, and at the appointed seasons, according to their prescribed number.

³²The Levites were to have charge of the Tent of Meeting and of the sanctuary, but Aaron's descendants, their kinsmen, were charged with the service of worship in the house of the LORD.

24¹ The divisions of the sons of Aaron: his sons were Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar.

² Nadab and Abihu died before their father, leaving no sons; therefore Eleazar and Ithamar held the office of priest.

³ David, acting with Zadok of the sons of Eleazar and with Ahimelech of the sons of Ithamar, organized them in divisions for the discharge of the duties of their office.

⁴ The male heads of families proved to be more numerous in the line of Eleazar than in that of Ithamar, so that sixteen heads of families were grouped under the line of Eleazar and eight under that of Ithamar.

⁵ He organized them by drawing lots among them, for there were sacred officers and officers of God in the line of Eleazar and in that of Ithamar.

⁶ Shemaiah the clerk, a Levite, son of Nethanel, wrote down the names in the presence of the king, the officers, Zadok the priest, and Ahimelech son of Abiathar, and of the heads of the priestly and levitical families, one priestly family

being taken from the line of Eleazar and one from that of Ithamar.

⁷The first lot fell to Jehoiarib, the second to Jedaiah,

⁸the third to Harim, the fourth to Seorim,

⁹the fifth to Malchiah, the sixth to Mijamin,

¹⁰the seventh to Hakkoz, the eighth to Abijah,

¹¹the ninth to Jeshua, the tenth to Shecaniah,

¹²the eleventh to Eliashib, the twelfth to Jakim,

¹³the thirteenth to Huppah, the fourteenth to Jeshebeab,

¹⁴the fifteenth to Bilgah, the sixteenth to Immer,

¹⁵the seventeenth to Hezir, the eighteenth to Apses,

¹⁶the nineteenth to Pethahiah, the twentieth to Jehezkel,

¹⁷the twenty-first to Jachin, the twenty-second to Gamul,

¹⁸the twenty-third to Delaiah, and the twenty-fourth to Maaziah.

¹⁹This was their order of duty for the discharge of their service when

they entered the house of the LORD, according to the rule prescribed for them by their ancestor Aaron, who had received his instructions from the LORD the God of Israel.

²⁰Of the remaining Levites: of the sons of Amram: Shubael. Of the sons of Shubael: Jehdeiah.

²¹Of Rehabiah: Isshiah, the chief of Rehabiah's sons.

²²Of the line of Izhar: Shelomoth. Of the sons of Shelomoth; Jahath.

²³The sons of Hebron: Jeriah the chief, Amariah the second, Jahaziel the third, and Jekameam the fourth.

²⁴The sons of Uzziel: Micah. Of the sons of Micah: Shamir;

²⁵Micah's brother: Isshiah. Of the sons of Isshiah: Zechariah.

²⁶The sons of Merari: Mahli and Mushi and also Jaaziah his son.

²⁷The sons of Merari: of Jaaziah: Beno, Shoham, Zaccur, and Ibri.

²⁸Of Mahli: Eleazar, who had no sons;

²⁹of Kish: the sons of Kish: Jerahmeel;

³⁰and the sons of Mushi: Mahli, Eder, and Jerimoth. These were the Levites by families.

³¹ These also, side by side with their kinsmen the descendants of Aaron, cast lots in the presence of King David, Zadok, Ahimelech, and the heads of the priestly and levitical families, the senior and junior houses casting lots side by side.

25 ¹ David and his chief officers assigned special duties to the sons of Asaph, of Heman, and of Jeduthun, leaders in inspired prophecy to the accompaniment of lyres, lutes, and cymbals; the list of those who performed this work in the temple was as follows.

² Of the sons of Asaph: Zaccur, Joseph, Nethaniah, and Asarelah; these were under Asaph, a leader in inspired prophecy under the king.

³ Of the sons of Jeduthun: Gedaliah, Izri, Isaiah, Shimei, Hashabiah, Mattithiah, these six under their father Jeduthun, a leader in inspired prophecy to the accompaniment of the lyre, giving thanks and praise to the LORD.

⁴ Of the sons of Heman: Bukkiah, Mattaniah, Uzziel, Shubael, Jerimoth, Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti,

Romamti-ezer, Joshbekashah, Mallothi, Hothir, and Mahazioth;

⁵all these were sons of Heman the king's seer, given to him through the promises of God for his greater glory. God had given Heman fourteen sons and three daughters,

⁶and they all served under their father for the singing in the house of the LORD; they took part in the service of the house of God, with cymbals, lutes, and lyres, while Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman were under the king.

⁷Reckoned with their kinsmen, trained singers of the LORD, they brought the total number of skilled musicians up to two hundred and eighty-eight.

⁸They cast lots for their duties, young and old, master-singer and apprentice side by side.

⁹The first lot fell to Joseph: he and his brothers and his sons, twelve. The second to Gedaliah: he and his brothers and his sons, twelve.

¹⁰The third to Zaccur: his sons and his brothers, twelve.

¹¹The fourth to Izri: his sons and his brothers, twelve.

¹²The fifth to Nethaniah: his sons and his brothers, twelve.

¹³The sixth to Bukkiah: his sons and his brothers, twelve.

¹⁴The seventh to Asarelah: his sons and his brothers, twelve.

¹⁵The eighth to Isaiah: his sons and his brothers, twelve.

¹⁶The ninth to Mattaniah: his sons and his brothers, twelve.

¹⁷The tenth to Shimei: his sons and his brothers, twelve.

¹⁸The eleventh to Azarel: his sons and his brothers, twelve.

¹⁹The twelfth to Hashabiah: his sons and his brothers, twelve.

²⁰The thirteenth to Shubael: his sons and his brothers, twelve.

²¹The fourteenth to Mattithiah: his sons and his brothers, twelve.

²²The fifteenth to Jeremoth: his sons and his brothers, twelve.

²³The sixteenth to Hananiah: his sons and his brothers, twelve.

²⁴The seventeenth to Joshbekashah: his sons and his brothers, twelve.

²⁵The eighteenth to Hanani: his sons and his brothers, twelve.

²⁶The nineteenth to Mallothi: his sons and his brothers, twelve.

²⁷The twentieth to Eliathah: his sons and his brothers, twelve.

²⁸The twenty-first to Hothir: his sons and his brothers, twelve.

²⁹The twenty-second to Giddalti: his sons and his brothers, twelve.

³⁰The twenty-third to Mahazioth: his sons and his brothers, twelve.

³¹The twenty-fourth to Romamti-ezer: his sons and his brothers, twelve.

26¹The divisions of the door-keepers: Korahites: Meshelemiah son of Kore, son of Ebiasaph.

²Sons of Meshelemiah: Zechariah the eldest, Jediael the second, Zebadiah the third, Jathniel the fourth,

³Elam the fifth, Jehohanan the sixth, Eliehoenai the seventh.

⁴Sons of Obed-edom: Shemaiah the eldest, Jehozabad the second, Joah the third, Sacar the fourth, Nethanel the fifth,

⁵Ammiel the sixth, Issachar the seventh, Peulthai the eighth (for God had blessed him).

⁶Shemaiah, his son, was the father of sons who had authority in their family, for they were men of great ability.

⁷Sons of Shemaiah: Othni, Rephael, Obed, Elzabad, and his brothers Elihu and Semachiah, men of ability.

⁸All these belonged to the family of Obed-edom; they, their sons and brothers, were men of ability, fit for service in the temple; total: sixty-two.

⁹Sons and brothers of Meshelemiah, all men of ability, eighteen.

¹⁰Sons of Hosah, a Merarite: Shimri the chief (he was not the eldest, but his father had made him chief),

¹¹Hilkiah the second, Tebaliah the third, Zechariah the fourth. Total of Hosah's sons and brothers: thirteen.

¹²The male heads of families constituted the divisions of the door-keepers; their duty was to serve in the house of the LORD side by side with their kinsmen.

¹³Young and old, family by family, they cast lots for the gates.

¹⁴The lot for the east gate fell to Shelemiah; then lots were cast for his son Zechariah, a prudent counsellor, and he was allotted the north gate.

¹⁵To Obed-edom was allotted the south gate, and the gatehouse to his sons.

¹⁶Hosah was allotted the west gate, together with the Shallecheth gate on the ascending causeway. Guard corresponded to guard.

¹⁷Six Levites were on duty daily on the east side, four on the north and four on the south, and two at each gatehouse;

¹⁸at the western colonnade there were four at the causeway and two at the colonnade itself.

¹⁹These were the divisions of the door-keepers, Korahites and Merarites.

²⁰Fellow-Levites were in charge of the stores of the house of God and of the stores of sacred gifts.

²¹Of the children of Laadan, descendants of the Gershonite line through Laadan, heads of families in the group of Laadan the Gershonite: Jehiel

²²and his brothers Zetham and Joel were in charge of the stores of the house of the LORD.

²³Of the families of Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel,

²⁴Shubael son of Gershom, son of Moses, was overseer of the stores.

²⁵The line of Eliezer his brother: his son Rehabiah, his son Isaiah, his son Joram, his son Zichri, and his son Shelomoth.

²⁶This Shelomoth and his kinsmen were in charge of all the stores of the sacred gifts dedicated by King David, the heads of families, the officers over units of a thousand and a hundred, and other officers of the army.

²⁷They had dedicated some of the spoils taken in the wars for the upkeep of the house of the LORD.

²⁸Everything which Samuel the seer, Saul son of Kish, Abner son of Ner, and Joab son of Zeruah had dedicated, in short every sacred gift, was under the charge of Shelomoth and his kinsmen.

²⁹Of the family of Izhar: Kenaniah and his sons acted as clerks and magistrates in the secular affairs of Israel.

³⁰Of the family of Hebron: Hashabiah and his kinsmen, men of ability to the number of seventeen hundred, had the oversight of Israel west of the Jordan, both in the work of the LORD and in the service of the king.

³¹Also of the family of Hebron, Jeriah was the chief. (In the fortieth year of

David's reign search was made in the family histories of the Hebronites, and men of great ability were found among them at Jazer in Gilead.)

³²His kinsmen, all men of ability, two thousand seven hundred of them, heads of families, were charged by King David with the oversight of the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, in religious and civil affairs alike.

27 ¹THE number of the Israelites -- that is to say, of the heads of families, the officers over units of a thousand and a hundred, and the clerks who had their share in the king's service in the various divisions which took monthly turns of duty throughout the year -- was twenty-four thousand in each division.

²First, Jashobeam son of Zabdiel commanded the division for the first month with twenty-four thousand in his division;

³a member of the house of Perez, he was chief officer of the temple staff for the first month.

⁴Eleazar son of Dodai the Ahohite commanded the division for the second

month with twenty-four thousand in his division.

⁵Third, Benaiah son of Jehoiada the chief priest, commander of the army, was the officer for the third month with twenty-four thousand in his division

⁶(he was the Benaiah who was one of the thirty warriors and was a chief among the thirty); but his son Ammizabad commanded his division.

⁷Fourth, Asahel, the brother of Joab, was the officer commanding for the fourth month with twenty-four thousand in his division; and his successor was Zebadiah his son.

⁸Fifth, Shamhuth the Zerahite was the officer commanding for the fifth month with twenty-four thousand in his division.

⁹Sixth, Ira son of Ikkesh, a man of Tekoa, was the officer commanding for the sixth month with twenty-four thousand in his division.

¹⁰Seventh, Helez, an Ephraimite from a place unknown, was the officer commanding for the seventh month with twenty-four thousand in his division.

¹¹ Eighth, Sibbechai from Hushah, of the family of Zerah, was the officer commanding for the eighth month with twenty-four thousand in his division.

¹² Ninth, Abiezer, from Anathoth in Benjamin, was the officer commanding for the ninth month with twenty-four thousand in his division.

¹³ Tenth, Maharai the Netophathite, of the family of Zerah, was the officer commanding for the tenth month with twenty-four thousand in his division.

¹⁴ Eleventh, Benaiah the Pirathonite, from Ephraim, was the officer commanding for the eleventh month with twenty-four thousand in his division.

¹⁵ Twelfth, Heldai the Netophathite, of the family of Othniel, was the officer commanding for the twelfth month with twenty-four thousand in his division.

¹⁶ The following were the principal officers in charge of the tribes of Israel: of Reuben, Eliezer son of Zichri; of Simeon, Shephatiah son of Maacah;

¹⁷ of Levi, Hashabiah son of Kemuel; of Aaron, Zadok;

¹⁸ of Judah, Elihu a kinsman of David; of Issachar, Omri son of Michael;

¹⁹ of Zebulun, Ishmaiah son of Obadiah;
of Naphtali, Jerimoth son of Azriel;

²⁰ of Ephraim, Hoshea son of Azaziah;
of the half tribe of Manasseh, Joel son of
Pedaiah;

²¹ of the half of Manasseh in Gilead,
Iddo son of Zechariah; of Benjamin,
Jaasiel son of Abner;

²² of Dan, Azarel son of Jeroham. These
were the officers in charge of the tribes
of Israel.

²³ David took no census of those under
twenty years of age, for the LORD had
promised to make the Israelites as many
as the stars in the sky.

²⁴ Joab son of Zeruah did begin to take
a census but he did not finish it; the
census brought down wrath on Israel,
and it was not entered in the annals of
King David's reign.

²⁵ Azmoth son of Adiel was in charge
of the king's stores; Jonathan son of
Uzziah was in charge of the stores in the
country, in the cities, in the villages, and
in the fortresses.

²⁶ Ezri son of Kelub had oversight of the
workers on the land;

²⁷ Shimei from Ramah was in charge of the vine-dressers, while Zabdi from Shephem had charge of the produce of the vineyards for the wine cellars.

²⁸ Baal-hanan the Gederite supervised the wild olives and the sycomore-figs in the Shephelah; Joash was in charge of the oil stores.

²⁹ Shitrai from Sharon was in charge of the herds grazing in Sharon, Shaphat son of Adlai of the herds in the valleys.

³⁰ Obil the Ishmaelite was in charge of the camels, Jehdeiah the Meronothite of the donkeys.

³¹ Jaziz the Hagarite was in charge of the flocks. All these were the officers in charge of King David's possessions.

³² David's favourite nephew Jonathan, a counsellor, a discreet and learned man, and Jehiel the Hachmonite, were tutors to the king's sons.

³³ Ahithophel was a king's counsellor; Hushai the Archite was the king's Friend.

³⁴ Ahithophel was succeeded by Jehoiada son of Benaiah and by Abiathar. Joab was commander of the army.

28¹ DAVID assembled at Jerusalem all the officers of Israel, the

officers over the tribes, over the divisions engaged in the king's service, over the units of a thousand and a hundred, and officials in charge of all the property and the cattle of the king and of his sons, as well as the eunuchs, the heroes, and all the men of ability.

²King David stood up and addressed them: Hear me, my kinsmen and my people. I had it in mind to build a house as a resting-place for the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD which might serve as a footstool for our God, and I made preparations to build it.

³But God said to me, You are not to build a house for my name, because you have been a fighting man and you have shed blood.

⁴Nevertheless, the LORD the God of Israel chose me out of all my father's family to be king over Israel for ever. For it was Judah that he chose as ruling tribe, and, out of the house of Judah, my father's family; and among my father's sons it was I whom he was pleased to make king over all Israel.

⁵And out of all my sons -- for the LORD gave me many sons -- he has chosen

Solomon to sit on the throne of the LORD's sovereignty over Israel;

⁶he said to me, It is Solomon your son who is to build my house and my courts, for I have chosen him to be a son to me and I shall be a father to him.

⁷I shall establish his sovereignty for ever, if he steadfastly obeys my commandments and my laws as he now does.

⁸Now therefore, in the sight of all Israel, the assembly of the LORD, and in the hearing of our God, I say to you: Study carefully all the commandments of the LORD your God, in order that you may possess this good land and hand it down as an inheritance for all time to your children after you.

⁹And you, Solomon my son, acknowledge your father's God and serve him with whole heart and willing mind, for the LORD searches all hearts and discerns whatever plan may be devised. If you search for him, he will let you find him, but if you forsake him, he will cast you off for ever.

¹⁰Remember, then, that the LORD has chosen you to build a house as a sanctuary: be steadfast and do it.

¹¹David gave Solomon his son the plan of the porch of the temple and its buildings, strong-rooms, roof-chambers and inner courts, and the shrine of expiation;

¹²also the plans of all he had in mind for the courts of the house of the LORD and for all the rooms around it, for the stores of God's house, and for the stores of the sacred gifts.

¹³He gave directions for the divisions of the priests and Levites, for all the work connected with the service of the house of the LORD, and for all the vessels used in its service.

¹⁴He prescribed the weight of gold for all the gold vessels used in the various services, and the weight of silver for all the silver vessels used in the various services;

¹⁵and the weight of gold for the gold lampstands and their lamps; and the weight of silver for the silver lampstands, the weight required for each lampstand

and its lamps according to the use of each;

¹⁶and the weight of gold for each of the tables for the rows of the Bread of the Presence, and of silver for the silver tables.

¹⁷He prescribed also the weight of pure gold for the forks, tossing-bowls, and cups, the weight of gold for each of the golden dishes, and of silver for each of the silver dishes;

¹⁸the weight also of refined gold for the altar of incense, and of gold for the model of the chariot, that is the cherubim with their wings spread to screen the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD.

¹⁹All this was drafted by the LORD's own hand, said David; my part was to consider the detailed working out of the plan.

²⁰Then David said to Solomon his son, Be steadfast and resolute and carry it out; be neither faint-hearted nor dismayed, for the LORD God, my God, will be with you; he will neither fail you nor forsake you, until you have finished

all the work needed for the service of the house of the LORD.

²¹ Here are the divisions of the priests and the Levites, ready for all the service of the house of God. In all the work you will have the help of every willing craftsman for any task; and the officers and all the people are entirely at your command.

29 ¹ KING David said to the whole assembly, My son Solomon is the one chosen by God, Solomon alone, a boy of tender years; and this is a great work, for it is a habitation not for man but for the LORD God.

² Now to the best of my ability I have made ready for the house of my God gold for the gold work, silver for the silver, bronze for the bronze, iron for the iron, and wood for the woodwork, together with cornelian and other gems for setting, stones for mosaic work, precious stones of every sort, and marble in plenty.

³ Further, because I delight in the house of my God, I have given my own private store of gold and silver for the house of my God -- over and above all the store

which I have collected for the sanctuary
--

⁴namely three thousand talents of gold from Ophir, and seven thousand talents of fine silver for overlaying the walls of the buildings,

⁵for providing gold for the gold work, silver for the silver, and for any work to be done by skilled craftsmen. Now who is willing to give with open hand to the LORD today?

⁶Then the heads of families, the officers administering the tribes of Israel, the officers over units of a thousand and a hundred, and the officers in charge of the king's service, responded willingly

⁷and gave for the work of the house of God five thousand talents of gold, ten thousand darics, ten thousand talents of silver, eighteen thousand talents of bronze, and a hundred thousand talents of iron.

⁸Further, those who possessed precious stones gave them to the treasury of the house of the LORD, into the charge of Jehiel the Gershonite.

⁹The people rejoiced at this willing response, because in the loyalty of their

hearts they had given willingly to the LORD; King David also was full of joy.

¹⁰David blessed the LORD in the presence of all the assembly, saying: Blessed are you, LORD God of our father Israel, from of old and for ever.

¹¹Yours, LORD, is the greatness and the power, the glory, the splendour, and the majesty; for everything in heaven and on earth is yours; yours, LORD, is the sovereignty, and you are exalted over all as head.

¹²Wealth and honour come from you; you rule over all; might and power are of your disposing; yours it is to give power and strength to all.

¹³Now, our God, we give you thanks and praise your glorious name.

¹⁴But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give willingly like this? For everything comes from you, and it is only of your gifts that we give to you.

¹⁵We are aliens before you and settlers, as were all our fathers; our days on earth are like a shadow, and we have no abiding place.

¹⁶LORD our God, from you comes all this wealth that we have laid up to build a house in honour of your holy name, and it is all yours.

¹⁷I know that you test the heart and that integrity pleases you, my God; with an honest heart I have given all these gifts willingly, and have rejoiced now to see your people who are here present give willingly to you.

¹⁸LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, our forefathers, maintain this purpose for ever in your people's thoughts and direct their hearts toward yourself.

¹⁹Grant that Solomon my son may loyally keep your commandments, your solemn charge, and your statutes, that he may fulfil them all, and build the palace for which I have made provision.

²⁰Turning to the whole assembly, David said, Now bless the LORD your God. Then all the assembly blessed the LORD the God of their forefathers, bowing low and prostrating themselves before the LORD and the king.

²¹The next day they sacrificed to the LORD and offered whole-offerings to

him: a thousand oxen, a thousand rams, a thousand lambs, with the prescribed drink-offerings, and abundant sacrifices for all Israel.

²² So they ate and drank before the LORD that day with great rejoicing. They then appointed Solomon, David's son, king a second time and anointed him as the LORD's prince, and Zadok as priest.

²³ So Solomon sat on the LORD's throne as king in place of his father David, and he prospered and all Israel obeyed him.

²⁴ All the officers and the warriors, as well as all the sons of King David, swore fealty to King Solomon.

²⁵ The LORD made Solomon stand very high in the eyes of all Israel, and bestowed upon him sovereignty such as no king in Israel had had before him.

²⁶ David son of Jesse had ruled over the whole of Israel,

²⁷ and the length of his reign over Israel was forty years, seven years in Hebron and thirty-three in Jerusalem.

²⁸ He died in ripe old age, full of years, wealth, and honour; and Solomon his son ruled in his stead.

²⁹The events of King David's reign from first to last are recorded in the books of Samuel the seer, of Nathan the prophet, and of Gad the seer,

³⁰with a full account of his reign, his prowess, and of the times through which he and Israel and all the kingdoms of the world had passed.

2 Chronicles

1 ¹ KING Solomon, David's son, strengthened his hold on the kingdom, for the LORD his God was with him and made him very great.

² Solomon addressed all Israel, the officers over units of a thousand and of a hundred, the judges, and all the leading men of Israel, the heads of families.

³ Then he, together with all the assembled people, went to the shrine at Gibeon, for the Tent of Meeting, which Moses the LORD's servant had made in the wilderness, was there.

⁴ (The Ark of God had been brought up from Kiriath-jearim by David to the place which he had prepared for it; he had pitched a tent for it in Jerusalem.)

⁵ The bronze altar also, which Bezalel son of Uri, son of Hur, had made, was at Gibeon in front of the Tabernacle of the LORD; and Solomon and the assembly resorted to it.

⁶ Solomon went up to this bronze altar before the LORD in the Tent of

Meeting and offered on it a thousand whole-offerings.

⁷ God appeared to Solomon that night and said, What shall I give you? Tell me.

⁸ He answered, You have shown great and constant love to David my father and you have made me king in his place.

⁹ Now, LORD God, let your promise to David my father be confirmed, for you have made me king over a people as numerous as the dust on the earth;

¹⁰ now grant me wisdom and knowledge, that I may lead this people; otherwise who can govern this great people of yours?

¹¹ God said to Solomon, Because this is what you desire, because you have not asked for wealth or possessions or honour, or the lives of those hostile to you, or even long life for yourself, but have asked for wisdom and knowledge to govern my people over whom I have made you king,

¹² wisdom and knowledge are granted to you; I shall also give you wealth and possessions and glory, such as no king before you has had, and none after you shall have.

¹³Then Solomon returned to Jerusalem from before the Tent of Meeting at the shrine at Gibeon, and reigned over Israel.

¹⁴Solomon amassed chariots and horses; he had fourteen hundred chariots and twelve thousand horses; he stationed some in the chariot-towns, while others he kept at hand in Jerusalem.

¹⁵The king made silver and gold as common in Jerusalem as stone, and cedar as plentiful as the sycomore-fig is in the Shephelah.

¹⁶Horses were imported from Egypt and Kue for Solomon; the merchants of the king obtained them from Kue by purchase.

¹⁷Chariots were imported from Egypt for six hundred silver shekels each, and horses for a hundred and fifty; in the same way the merchants obtained them for export from all the kings of the Hittites and the kings of Aram.

2¹Solomon resolved to build a house for the name of the LORD and a royal palace for himself.

²He engaged seventy thousand bearers and eighty thousand quarrymen, and three thousand six hundred men to superintend them.

³He sent this message to King Hiram of Tyre: You were so good as to send my father David cedar-wood to build his royal residence.

⁴Now I am about to build a house for the name of the LORD my God and to consecrate it to him, so that I may burn fragrant incense in it before him, and present the rows of the Bread of the Presence regularly, and whole-offerings morning and evening, on the sabbaths and at the new moons and appointed festivals of the LORD our God; for this is a duty laid on Israel for ever.

⁵The house I am about to build must be great, because our God is greater than all gods.

⁶But who is able to build a house for him when heaven itself, the highest heaven, cannot contain him? Who am I that I should build him a house, except to burn sacrifices before him?

⁷Send me now a skilled craftsman, one able to work in gold and silver, bronze,

and iron, and in purple, crimson, and violet yarn, one who is also an expert engraver and will work in Judah and in Jerusalem with my skilled workmen who were provided by David my father.

⁸Send me also cedar, pine, and algum timber from Lebanon, for I know that your men are expert at felling the trees of Lebanon; my men will work with yours

⁹to get an ample supply of timber ready for me, for the house which I shall build will be great and wonderful.

¹⁰I shall supply provisions for your servants, the woodmen who fell the trees: twenty thousand kor of wheat and twenty thousand kor of barley, with twenty thousand bath of wine and twenty thousand bath of oil.

¹¹King Hiram of Tyre sent this letter in reply: It is because of the love which the LORD has for his people that he has made you king over them.

¹²The letter continued, Blessed be the LORD the God of Israel, maker of heaven and earth, who has given to King David a wise son, endowed with insight and understanding, to build a house for the LORD and a royal palace for himself.

¹³I now send you my expert Hiram, a skilful and experienced craftsman.

¹⁴He is the son of a Danite woman and a Tyrian father; he is an experienced worker in gold and silver, bronze and iron, stone and wood, as well as in purple, violet, and crimson yarn, and in fine linen; he is also a trained engraver who will be able to work with your own skilled craftsmen and those of my lord David your father, to any design submitted to him.

¹⁵Now let my lord send his servants the wheat and the barley, the oil and the wine, which he promised;

¹⁶we shall fell all the timber in Lebanon that you need and float it as rafts to the roadstead at Joppa; you can convey it up to Jerusalem.

¹⁷Solomon took a census of all the aliens resident in Israel, similar to the census which David his father had taken; these were found to be a hundred and fifty-three thousand six hundred.

¹⁸He made seventy thousand of them bearers, and eighty thousand quarrymen, and three thousand six

hundred superintendents to make the people work.

3¹ Then Solomon began to build the house of the LORD in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the LORD had appeared to his father David; it was the site which David had prepared on the threshing-floor of Ornan the Jebusite.

² He began to build in the second month of the fourth year of his reign.

³ These are the foundations which Solomon laid for building the house of God: according to the old standard of measurement the length was sixty cubits and the breadth twenty.

⁴ The vestibule in front of the house was twenty cubits long, spanning the whole breadth of the house, and its height was twenty; on the inside he overlaid it with pure gold.

⁵ He panelled the large chamber with pine, covered it with fine gold, and carved on it palm trees and chain-work.

⁶ He adorned the house with precious stones for decoration and with gold from Parvaim.

⁷ He overlaid the whole house with gold, its rafters and frames, its walls and

doors; and he carved cherubim on the walls.

⁸He made the Most Holy Place twenty cubits long, corresponding to the breadth of the house, and twenty cubits broad. He overlaid it all with six hundred talents of fine gold,

⁹and the weight of the gold nails was fifty shekels. He also covered the upper chambers with gold.

¹⁰In the Most Holy Place he carved two images of cherubim and overlaid them with gold.

¹¹The total span of the wings of the cherubim was twenty cubits. A wing of one cherub extended five cubits to touch the wall of the house, while its other wing reached out five cubits to meet a wing of the other cherub.

¹²Similarly, a wing of the second cherub extended five cubits to touch the other wall of the house, while its other wing met a wing of the first cherub.

¹³The wings of these cherubim extended twenty cubits; they stood with their feet on the ground, facing the outer chamber.

¹⁴He made the veil of violet, purple, and crimson yarn, and fine linen, and embroidered cherubim on it.

¹⁵In front of the house he erected two pillars eighteen cubits high, with a capital five cubits high on top of each.

¹⁶He made chain-work like a necklace and set it round the tops of the pillars, and he carved a hundred pomegranates and set them in the chain-work.

¹⁷He erected the pillars in front of the temple, one on the right and one on the left; the one on the right he named Jachin and the one on the left Boaz.

4¹He made an altar of bronze, twenty cubits long, twenty cubits broad, and ten cubits high.

²He made the Sea of cast metal; it was round in shape, the diameter from rim to rim being ten cubits; it stood five cubits high, and it took a line thirty cubits long to go round it.

³Under the Sea, on every side, completely surrounding the thirty cubits of its circumference, were what looked like gourds, two rows of them, cast in one piece with the Sea itself.

⁴It was mounted on twelve oxen, three facing north, three west, three south, and three east, their hindquarters turned inwards; the Sea rested on top of them.

⁵Its thickness was a hand's breadth; its rim was made like that of a cup, shaped like the calyx of a lily; when full it held three thousand bath.

⁶He also made ten basins for washing, setting five on the left side and five on the right; in these they rinsed everything used for the whole-offering. The Sea was for the priests to wash in.

⁷He made ten gold lampstands in the prescribed manner and set them in the temple, five on the right side and five on the left.

⁸He also made ten tables and placed them in the temple, five on the right and five on the left; and he made a hundred gold tossing-bowls.

⁹He made the court of the priests and the great precinct and the doors for it, and overlaid the doors of both with copper;

¹⁰he put the Sea at the right side, at the south-east corner of the temple.

¹¹ Hiram made the pots, the shovels, and the tossing-bowls. With them he finished the work which he had undertaken for King Solomon on the house of God:

¹² the two pillars; the two bowl-shaped capitals on the tops of the pillars; the two ornamental networks to cover the two bowl-shaped capitals on the tops of the pillars;

¹³ the four hundred pomegranates for the two networks, two rows of pomegranates for each network, to cover the two bowl-shaped capitals on the two pillars;

¹⁴ the ten trolleys and the ten basins on the trolleys;

¹⁵ the one Sea and the twelve oxen which supported it;

¹⁶ the pots, the shovels, and the tossing-bowls -- all these objects Master Hiram made of burnished bronze for King Solomon for the house of the LORD.

¹⁷ The king cast them in the foundry between Succoth and Zeredah in the plain of Jordan.

¹⁸Solomon made great quantities of all these objects; the weight of the bronze used was beyond reckoning.

¹⁹Solomon made also all the furnishings for the house of God: the golden altar, the tables upon which was set the Bread of the Presence,

²⁰the lampstands of red gold whose lamps burned before the inner shrine in the prescribed manner,

²¹the flowers, lamps, and tongs of solid gold,

²²the snuffers, tossing-bowls, saucers, and firepans of red gold, and, at the entrance to the house, the inner doors leading to the Most Holy Place and those leading to the sanctuary, of gold.

5¹When all the work which Solomon did for the house of the LORD was completed, he brought in the treasures dedicated by his father David, the silver, the gold, and the vessels, and deposited them in the treasuries of the house of God.

²THEN Solomon summoned the elders of Israel, and all the heads of the tribes who were chiefs of families in Israel, to assemble in Jerusalem, in order to bring

up the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD from the City of David, which is called Zion.

³All the men of Israel were assembled in the king's presence at the pilgrim-feast in the seventh month.

⁴When the elders of Israel had all arrived, the Levites lifted the Ark

⁵and carried it up; the Tent of Meeting and all the sacred furnishings of the Tent were carried by the priests and the Levites.

⁶King Solomon and the whole congregation of Israel assembled with him before the Ark sacrificed sheep and oxen in numbers past counting or reckoning.

⁷The priests brought in the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD to its place, in the inner shrine of the house, the Most Holy Place, beneath the wings of the cherubim.

⁸The cherubim, whose wings were spread over the place of the Ark, formed a canopy above the Ark and its poles.

⁹The poles projected, and their ends were visible from the Holy Place immediately in front of the inner shrine,

but from nowhere else outside; they are there to this day.

¹⁰There was nothing inside the Ark but the two tablets which Moses had put there at Horeb, when the LORD made the covenant with the Israelites after they left Egypt.

¹¹When the priests came out of the Holy Place (for all the priests who were present had hallowed themselves without keeping to their divisions),

¹²all the levitical singers, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, their sons, and their kinsmen, attired in fine linen, stood with cymbals, lutes, and lyres to the east of the altar, together with a hundred and twenty priests who blew trumpets.

¹³Now the trumpeters and the singers joined in unison to sound forth praise and thanksgiving to the LORD, and the song was raised with trumpets, cymbals, and musical instruments, in praise of the LORD, because it is good, for his love endures for ever; and the house was filled with the cloud of the glory of the LORD.

¹⁴The priests could not continue to minister because of the cloud, for the

glory of the LORD filled the house of God.

6¹ Then Solomon said: The LORD has caused the sun to shine in the heavens; but he has said he would dwell in thick darkness.

² I have built you a lofty house, a dwelling-place for you to occupy for ever.

³ While the whole assembly of Israelites stood, the king turned and blessed them.

⁴ Blessed be the LORD the God of Israel who spoke directly to my father David and has himself fulfilled his promise. For he said,

⁵ From the day when I brought my people out of Egypt, I chose no city out of all the tribes of Israel where I should build a house for my name to be, nor did I choose any man to be prince over my people Israel.

⁶ But I chose Jerusalem where my name should be, and David to be over my people Israel.

⁷ My father David had it in mind to build a house for the name of the LORD the God of Israel,

⁸but the LORD said to him, You purposed to build a house for my name, and your purpose was good.

⁹Nevertheless you are not to build it; but the son who is to be born to you, he is to build the house for my name.

¹⁰The LORD has now fulfilled his promise: I have succeeded my father David and taken his place on the throne of Israel, as the LORD promised; and I have built the house for the name of the LORD the God of Israel.

¹¹I have installed there the Ark containing the covenant of the LORD, which he made with Israel.

¹²Standing in front of the altar of the LORD in the presence of the whole assembly of Israel, Solomon spread out his hands.

¹³He had made a bronze platform, five cubits long, five cubits broad, and three cubits high, and had placed it in the centre of the precinct. He mounted it and knelt down in the presence of the assembly and, spreading out his hands towards heaven,

¹⁴he said, LORD God of Israel, there is no God like you in heaven or on earth,

keeping covenant with your servants and showing them constant love while they continue faithful to you with all their heart.

¹⁵You have kept your promise to your servant David my father; by your deeds this day you have fulfilled what you said to him in words.

¹⁶Now, therefore, LORD God of Israel, keep this promise of yours to your servant David my father, when you said: You will never want for a man appointed by me to sit on the throne of Israel, if only your sons look to their ways and conform to my law, as you have walked before me.

¹⁷LORD God of Israel, let the promise which you made to your servant David be now confirmed.

¹⁸But can God indeed dwell with mortals on earth? Heaven itself, the highest heaven, cannot contain you; how much less this house that I have built!

¹⁹Yet attend, LORD my God, to the prayer and the supplication of your servant; listen to the cry and the prayer which your servant makes before you,

²⁰ that your eyes may ever be on this house day and night, this place where you said you would set your name. Hear your servant when he prays towards this place.

²¹ Hear the supplications of your servant and of your people Israel when they pray towards this place. Hear from heaven your dwelling and, when you hear, forgive.

²² Should anyone wrong a neighbour and be adjured to take an oath, and come to take the oath before your altar in this house,

²³ then hear from heaven and take action: be your servants judge, requiting the guilty person and bringing his deeds on his own head, acquitting the innocent and rewarding him as his innocence may deserve.

²⁴ Should your people Israel be defeated by an enemy because they have sinned against you, and then turn back to you, confessing your name and making their prayer and supplication before you in this house,

²⁵ hear from heaven; forgive the sin of your people Israel and restore them to

the land which you gave to them and to their forefathers.

²⁶Should the heavens be shut up and there be no rain, because your servant and your people Israel have sinned against you, and they then pray towards this place, confessing your name and forsaking their sin when they feel your punishment,

²⁷hear in heaven and forgive their sin; so teach them the good way which they are to follow, and grant rain on your land which you have given to your people as their own possession.

²⁸Should there be famine in the land, or pestilence, or black blight or red, or locusts developing or fully grown, or should their enemies besiege them in any of their cities, or plague or sickness befall them,

²⁹then hear the prayer or supplication of everyone among your people Israel, as each, prompted by his own suffering and misery, spreads out his hands towards this house;

³⁰hear it from heaven your dwelling-place and forgive. As you know a person's heart, reward him according to

his deeds, for you alone know the hearts of all;

³¹ and so they will fear and obey you throughout their lives in the land you gave to our forefathers.

³² The foreigner too, anyone who does not belong to your people Israel, but has come from a distant land because of your great fame and your strong hand and out-stretched arm, when such a one comes and prays towards this house,

³³ hear from heaven your dwelling-place and respond to the call which the foreigner makes to you, so that like your people Israel all the peoples of the earth may know your fame and fear you, and learn that this house which I have built bears your name.

³⁴ When your people go to war against their enemies, wherever you send them, and when they pray to you, turning towards this city which you have chosen and towards this house which I have built for your name,

³⁵ then hear from heaven their prayer and supplication, and maintain their cause.

³⁶Should they sin against you (and who is free from sin?) and should you in your anger give them over to an enemy who carries them captive to a land far or near;

³⁷and should they then in the land of their captivity have a change of heart and turn back and make supplication to you there and say, We have sinned and acted perversely and wickedly,

³⁸and turn back to you wholeheartedly in the land of their captivity to which they have been taken, and pray, turning towards their land which you gave to their forefathers and towards this city which you chose and this house which I have built for your name;

³⁹then from heaven your dwelling-place hear their prayer and supplications and maintain their cause. Forgive your people their sins against you.

⁴⁰Now, my God, let your eyes be open and your ears attentive to the prayer made in this place.

⁴¹Arise now, LORD God, and come to your resting-place, you and your powerful Ark. Let your priests, LORD

God, be clothed with salvation and your loyal servants rejoice in prosperity.

⁴²LORD God, do not reject your anointed one; remember the loyal service of David your servant.

7 ¹AS Solomon finished this prayer, fire came down from heaven and consumed the whole-offering and the sacrifices, while the glory of the LORD filled the house.

²The priests were unable to enter the house of the LORD because the glory of the LORD had filled it.

³All the Israelites witnessed the fire coming down with the glory of the LORD on the house, and where they were on the paved court they bowed low to the ground and worshipped and gave thanks to the LORD, because it is good, for his love endures for ever.

⁴The king and all the people offered sacrifice before the LORD;

⁵King Solomon offered a sacrifice of twenty-two thousand oxen and a hundred and twenty thousand sheep. Thus the king and all the people dedicated the house of God.

⁶The priests stood at their appointed posts; so too the Levites with their musical instruments for the LORD's service, which King David had made for giving thanks to the LORD -- for his love endures for ever -- whenever he rendered praise with their help; opposite them, the priests sounded their trumpets, while all the Israelites were standing.

⁷Then Solomon consecrated the centre of the court which lay in front of the house of the LORD; there he offered the whole-offerings and the fat portions of the shared-offerings, because the bronze altar which he had made could not accommodate the whole-offering, the grain-offering, and the fat portions.

⁸So Solomon and with him all Israel, a very great assembly from Lebo-hamath to the wadi of Egypt, celebrated the pilgrim-feast at that time for seven days.

⁹On the eighth day they held a closing ceremony; for they had celebrated the dedication of the altar for seven days, and the pilgrim-feast lasted seven days.

¹⁰On the twenty-third day of the seventh month he dismissed the people

to their homes, happy and glad at heart for all the prosperity granted by the LORD to David, to Solomon, and to his people Israel.

¹¹ When Solomon had completed the house of the LORD and the palace and had carried out successfully all that he had planned for the house of the LORD and the palace,

¹² the LORD appeared to him by night and said: I have heard your prayer and I have chosen this place to be my house of sacrifice.

¹³ When I shut up the heavens and there is no rain, or command the locusts to consume the land, or send a pestilence on my people,

¹⁴ and then my people whom I have named my own submit and pray to me and seek me and turn back from their evil ways, I shall hear from heaven and forgive their sins and restore their land.

¹⁵ Now my eyes will be open and my ears attentive to the prayers which are made in this place.

¹⁶ I have chosen and consecrated this house, so that my name may be there

for all time and my eyes and my heart may be fixed on it for ever.

¹⁷If you, for your part, live in my sight as your father David lived, doing all I command you, and observing my statutes and my judgements,

¹⁸then I shall establish the throne of your kingdom, as I promised by a covenant granted to your father David when I said, You will never want for a man to rule Israel.

¹⁹But if you turn away and forsake my statutes and my commandments which I have set before you, and if you go and serve other gods and bow down before them,

²⁰then I shall uproot you from my land which I gave you; I shall reject this house which I have consecrated to my name, and make it a byword and an object-lesson among all peoples.

²¹This house will become a ruin; every passer-by will be appalled at the sight of it, and they will ask, Why has the LORD so treated this land and this house?

²²The answer will be, Because they forsook the LORD the God of their forefathers, who brought them out of

Egypt, and they clung to other gods, bowing down before them and serving them; that is why the LORD has brought all this misfortune on them.

8¹ At the end of the twenty years Solomon had taken to build the house of the LORD and his own palace,² he rebuilt the towns which Hiram had given him and he settled Israelites in them.

³ He went to Hamath-zobah and seized it.

⁴ He strengthened Tadmor in the wilderness and all the store-cities which he had built in Hamath.

⁵ He also built Upper Beth-horon and Lower Beth-horon as fortified cities with walls and barred gates,

⁶ and Baalath, as well as all his store-cities, and all the towns where he quartered his chariots and horses. He carried out all his cherished plans for building in Jerusalem, in the Lebanon, and throughout his whole dominion.

⁷ All the survivors of the Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, who did not belong to Israel --

⁸ that is those of their descendants who survived in the land, wherever the Israelites had been unable to exterminate them -- all were employed by Solomon on forced labour, as they still are.

⁹ None of the Israelites were put to forced labour for his public works; they were his fighting men, his captains and lieutenants, and the commanders of his chariots and of his cavalry.

¹⁰ These were King Solomon's officers, two hundred and fifty of them, in charge of the foremen who superintended the people.

¹¹ Solomon brought Pharaoh's daughter up from the City of David to the house he had built for her, for he said, No wife of mine shall live in the house of King David of Israel, because this place which the Ark of the LORD has entered is holy.

¹² Then Solomon offered whole-offerings to the LORD on the altar which he had built to the east of the vestibule,

¹³ according to what was required for each day, making offerings according to the law of Moses for the sabbaths, the new moons, and the three annual

appointed feasts -- the pilgrim-feasts of Unleavened Bread, of Weeks, and of Booths.

¹⁴Following the practice of his father David, he drew up the roster of service for the priests and that for the Levites for leading the praise and for waiting upon the priests, as each day required, and that for the door-keepers at each gate; for such was the instruction which David the man of God had given.

¹⁵The instructions which David had given concerning the priests and the Levites and concerning the treasuries were never disregarded.

¹⁶By this time all Solomon's work was achieved, from the foundation of the house of the LORD to its completion; the house of the LORD was completed.

¹⁷Then Solomon went to Ezion-geber and to Eloth on the coast of Edom,

¹⁸and Hiram sent ships under the command of his own officers and manned by crews of experienced seamen; and these, in company with Solomon's servants, went to Ophir and brought back four hundred and fifty talents

of gold, which they delivered to King Solomon.

9¹ THE queen of Sheba heard of Solomon's fame and came to test him with enigmatic questions. She arrived in Jerusalem with a very large retinue, camels laden with spices, much gold, and precious stones. When she came to Solomon, she talked to him about everything she had on her mind.

² Solomon answered all her questions; not one of them was too hard for him to answer.

³ When the queen of Sheba observed the wisdom of Solomon, the palace he had built,

⁴ the food on his table, the courtiers sitting around him, his attendants and his cupbearers in their livery standing behind, and the stairs by which he went up to the house of the LORD, she was overcome with amazement.

⁵ She said to the king, The account which I heard in my own country about your achievements and your wisdom was true,

⁶ but I did not believe what they told me until I came and saw for myself. Indeed,

I was not told half of the greatness of your wisdom; you surpass all I had heard of you.

⁷Happy are your wives, happy these courtiers of yours who are in attendance on you every day and hear your wisdom!

⁸Blessed be the LORD your God who has delighted in you and has set you on his throne as his king; because in his love your God has elected Israel to make it endure for ever, he has made you king over it to maintain law and justice.

⁹She presented the king with a hundred and twenty talents of gold, spices in great abundance, and precious stones. There had never been any spices to equal those which the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon.

¹⁰Besides all this, the servants of Hiram and of Solomon, who had brought gold from Ophir, brought also cargoes of algum-wood and precious stones.

¹¹The king used the wood to make stands for the house of the LORD and for the palace, as well as lyres and lutes for the singers. The like of them had never before been seen in the land of Judah.

¹²King Solomon gave the queen of Sheba whatever she desired and asked for, in addition to his gifts in return for what she had brought him. Then she departed with her retinue and went back to her own land.

¹³The weight of gold which Solomon received in any one year was six hundred and sixty-six talents,

¹⁴in addition to the tolls levied on merchants and on traders who imported goods; all the kings of Arabia and the regional governors also brought gold and silver to the king.

¹⁵King Solomon made two hundred shields of beaten gold, and six hundred shekels of gold went to the making of each one;

¹⁶he also made three hundred bucklers of beaten gold, and three hundred shekels of gold went to the making of each buckler. The king put these into the House of the Forest of Lebanon.

¹⁷The king also made a great throne inlaid with ivory and overlaid with pure gold.

¹⁸Six steps and a footstool for the throne were all encased in gold. There

were armrests on each side of the seat, with a lion standing beside each of them, ¹⁹while twelve lions stood on the six steps, one at either end of each step. Nothing like it had ever been made for any monarch.

²⁰All Solomon's drinking vessels were of gold, and all the plate in the House of the Forest of Lebanon was of red gold; silver was reckoned of no value in the days of Solomon.

²¹The king had a fleet of ships plying to Tarshish with Hiram's men; once every three years this fleet of merchantmen came home, bringing gold and silver, ivory, apes, and monkeys.

²²Thus King Solomon outdid all the kings of the earth in wealth and wisdom, ²³and all the kings of the earth courted him, to hear the wisdom with which God had endowed his mind.

²⁴Each one brought his gift with him, vessels of silver and gold, garments, perfumes and spices, horses and mules in annual tribute.

²⁵Solomon had standing for four thousand horses and chariots, and twelve thousand cavalry horses; he

stationed some in the chariot-towns, while others he kept at hand in Jerusalem.

²⁶He ruled over all the kings from the Euphrates to the land of the Philistines and the border of Egypt.

²⁷He made silver as common in Jerusalem as stone, and cedar as plentiful as the sycomore-fig is in the Shephelah.

²⁸Horses were imported from Egypt and from all countries for Solomon.

²⁹The rest of the acts of Solomon's reign, from first to last, are recorded in the history of Nathan the prophet, in the prophecy of Ahijah of Shiloh, and in the visions of Iddo the seer concerning Jeroboam son of Nebat.

³⁰Solomon ruled in Jerusalem over the whole of Israel for forty years.

³¹Then he rested with his forefathers and was buried in the city of David his father; he was succeeded by his son Rehoboam.

10¹REHOBAM went to Shechem, for all Israel had gone there to make him king.

²When Jeroboam son of Nebat heard of it in Egypt, where he had taken refuge to escape Solomon, he returned from Egypt.

³The people now recalled him, and he and all Israel came to Rehoboam and said,

⁴Your father laid a harsh yoke upon us; but if you will now lighten the harsh labour he imposed and the heavy yoke he laid on us, we shall serve you.

⁵Give me three days, he said, and then come back. When the people had gone,

⁶King Rehoboam consulted the elders who had been in attendance during the lifetime of his father Solomon: What answer do you advise me to give to this people?

⁷They said, If you show yourself well-disposed to this people and gratify them by speaking kindly to them, they will be your servants ever after.

⁸But rejecting the advice given him by the elders he consulted the young men who had grown up with him and were now in attendance;

⁹he asked them, What answer do you advise me to give to this people's

request that I should lighten the yoke which my father laid on them?

¹⁰The young men replied, Give this answer to the people who say that your father made their yoke heavy and ask you to lighten it; tell them: My little finger is thicker than my father's loins.

¹¹My father laid a heavy yoke on you; but I shall make it heavier. My father whipped you; but I shall flay you.

¹²Jeroboam and the people all came to Rehoboam on the third day, as the king had ordered.

¹³The king gave them a harsh answer; he rejected the advice which the elders had given him

¹⁴and spoke to the people as the young men had advised: My father made your yoke heavy; but I shall make it heavier. My father whipped you; but I shall flay you.

¹⁵The king would not listen to the people, for the LORD had given this turn to the affair in order that the word he had spoken by Ahijah of Shiloh to Jeroboam son of Nebat might be fulfilled.

¹⁶When all Israel saw that the king would not listen to them, they answered:

What share have we in David? We have no lot in the son of Jesse. Away to your tents, Israel! Now see to your own house, David. With that all Israel went off to their homes.

¹⁷Rehoboam ruled only over those Israelites who lived in the cities and towns of Judah.

¹⁸King Rehoboam sent out Hadoram, the commander of the forced levies, but when the Israelites stoned him to death, the king hastily mounted his chariot and fled to Jerusalem.

¹⁹From that day to this Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David.

11 ¹When Rehoboam reached Jerusalem, he mustered the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, a hundred and eighty thousand chosen warriors, to fight against Israel and recover his kingdom.

²But this word of the LORD came to Shemaiah the man of God:

³Say to Rehoboam son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to all the Israelites in Judah and Benjamin,

⁴This is the word of the LORD: You are not to go up to make war on your kinsmen. Return to your homes, for this

is my doing. They listened to the word of the LORD and abandoned their campaign against Jeroboam.

⁵Rehoboam resided in Jerusalem and built up the defences of certain towns in Judah.

⁶The towns in Judah and Benjamin which he fortified were Bethlehem, Etam, Tekoa,

⁷Beth-zur, Soco, Adullam,

⁸Gath, Mareshah, Ziph,

⁹Adoraim, Lachish, Azekah,

¹⁰Zorah, Aijalon, and Hebron.

¹¹He strengthened the defences of these fortified towns, and put governors in them, as well as supplies of food, oil, and wine.

¹²Also he stored shields and spears in each of them, and made them very strong. Thus he retained possession of Judah and Benjamin.

¹³The priests and the Levites throughout the whole of Israel resorted to Rehoboam from all their territories;

¹⁴for the Levites had left all their common land and their own property and had gone to Judah and Jerusalem, because Jeroboam and his successors

rejected their services as priests of the LORD,

¹⁵ and he appointed his own priests for the shrines, for the demons, and for the calves which he had made.

¹⁶ Out of all the tribes of Israel, those who were resolved to seek the LORD the God of Israel followed the Levites to Jerusalem to sacrifice to the LORD the God of their fathers.

¹⁷ They strengthened the kingdom of Judah and for three years made Rehoboam son of Solomon secure, because he followed the example of David and Solomon during that time.

¹⁸ Rehoboam married Mahalath, whose father was Jerimoth son of David and whose mother was Abihail daughter of Eliab son of Jesse.

¹⁹ His sons by her were: Jeush, Shemariah, and Zaham.

²⁰ Next he married Maacah granddaughter of Absalom, who bore him Abijah, Attai, Ziza, and Shelomith.

²¹ Of all his wives and concubines, Rehoboam loved Maacah most; he had in all eighteen wives and sixty concubines

and became the father of twenty-eight sons and sixty daughters.

²²He appointed Abijah son of Maacah chief among his brothers, making him crown prince and planning to make him his successor on the throne.

²³He showed prudence in detailing his sons to take charge of all the fortified towns throughout the whole territory of Judah and Benjamin; he also made generous provision for them and obtained wives for them.

12¹When Rehoboam's kingdom was firmly established and he grew powerful, he along with all Israel forsook the law of the LORD.

²In the fifth year of Rehoboam's reign, because of this disloyalty to the LORD, King Shishak of Egypt attacked Jerusalem

³with twelve hundred chariots and sixty thousand horsemen; he also brought with him from Egypt an innumerable following of Libyans, Sukkites, and Cushites.

⁴He captured the fortified towns of Judah and reached Jerusalem.

⁵Then Shemaiah the prophet came to Rehoboam and the leading men of Judah, who had collected together at Jerusalem in the face of the advance of Shishak, and said, This is the word of the LORD: You have abandoned me; therefore I now abandon you to Shishak.

⁶The princes of Israel and the king submitted and said, The LORD is just.

⁷When the LORD saw that they had submitted, there came from him this word to Shemaiah: Because they have submitted I shall not destroy them; I shall grant them some measure of relief: my wrath will not be poured out on Jerusalem by means of Shishak,

⁸but they will become his servants; then they will know the difference between serving me and serving the rulers of other countries.

⁹King Shishak of Egypt in his attack on Jerusalem carried away the treasures of the house of the LORD and of the king's palace, and seized everything, including the gold shields made for Solomon.

¹⁰King Rehoboam replaced them with bronze shields and entrusted them to

the officers of the escort who guarded the entrance of the palace.

¹¹ Whenever the king entered the house of the LORD, the escort entered, carrying the shields; afterwards they returned them to the guardroom.

¹² Because Rehoboam submitted, the LORD's wrath was averted from him, and he was not utterly destroyed; Judah enjoyed prosperity.

¹³ King Rehoboam increased his power in Jerusalem. He was forty-one years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned for seventeen years in Jerusalem, the city which the LORD had chosen out of all the tribes of Israel as the place to receive his name. Rehoboam's mother was an Ammonite woman called Naamah.

¹⁴ He did what was wrong; he did not make a practice of seeking guidance of the LORD.

¹⁵ The events of Rehoboam's reign, from first to last, are recorded in the histories of Shemaiah the prophet and Iddo the seer. There was continual fighting between Rehoboam and Jeroboam.

¹⁶Rehoboam rested with his forefathers and was buried in the city of David. His son Abijah succeeded him.

13¹ IN the eighteenth year of King Jeroboam's reign Abijah became king of Judah.

²He reigned in Jerusalem for three years; his mother was Maacah daughter of Uriel of Gibeah. When war broke out between Abijah and Jeroboam,

³Abijah drew up his army of four hundred thousand picked troops in order of battle, while Jeroboam formed up against him with eight hundred thousand picked troops.

⁴Abijah stood up on the slopes of Mount Zemaraim in the hill-country of Ephraim and called out, Jeroboam and all Israel, hear me:

⁵Do you not know that the LORD the God of Israel gave the kingship over Israel to David and his descendants for ever by a covenant of salt?

⁶Yet Jeroboam son of Nebat, a servant of Solomon son of David, rose in rebellion against his lord,

⁷and certain worthless scoundrels gathered round him, who stubbornly

opposed Solomon's son Rehoboam when he was young and inexperienced, and he was no match for them.

⁸Now you propose to match yourselves against the kingdom of the LORD as ruled by David's sons, you with your mob of supporters and the golden calves which Jeroboam has made to be your gods.

⁹Have you not dismissed from office the Aaronites, priests of the LORD, and the Levites, and followed the practice of other lands in appointing your own priests? If any man comes for ordination with an offering of a young bull and seven rams, you accept him as a priest to a god who is no god.

¹⁰But as for us, the LORD is our God and we have not forsaken him. We have Aaronites as priests ministering to the LORD with the Levites, duly discharging their office.

¹¹Morning and evening, these burn whole-offerings and fragrant incense to the LORD and offer the Bread of the Presence arranged in rows on a table ritually clean; they also kindle the lamps on the gold lampstand every evening.

Thus we do indeed keep the charge of the LORD our God, whereas you have forsaken him.

¹²God is with us at our head, and his priests stand there with trumpets to signal the battle cry against you. Men of Israel, do not fight the LORD the God of your forefathers; you will have no success.

¹³Jeroboam sent a detachment of his troops to go round and lay an ambush in the rear, so that his main body faced Judah while the ambush lay behind them.

¹⁴The men of Judah turned to find that they were engaged front and rear. They cried to the LORD for help; the priests sounded their trumpets,

¹⁵and the men of Judah raised their battle cry; and when they shouted, God put Jeroboam and all Israel to rout before Abijah and Judah.

¹⁶The Israelites fled before the men of Judah, and God delivered them into their power.

¹⁷Abijah and his men defeated them with very heavy losses: five hundred

thousand picked men of Israel fell in the battle.

¹⁸On that occasion the Israelites had to submit; Judah prevailed because they relied on the LORD the God of their forefathers.

¹⁹Abijah pressed home his victory over Jeroboam by capturing from him the cities of Bethel, Jeshanah, and Ephron with their villages.

²⁰Jeroboam did not regain his power all the days of Abijah; finally the LORD struck him down and he died.

²¹But Abijah established his position; he married fourteen wives and became the father of twenty-two sons and sixteen daughters.

²²The other events of Abijah's reign, both what he said and what he did, are recorded in the discourse of the prophet Iddo.

14¹Abijah rested with his forefathers and was buried in the city of David. His son Asa succeeded him, and in his time the land had peace for ten years.

²Asa did what was good and right in the eyes of the LORD his God.

³He suppressed the foreign altars and the shrines, smashed the sacred pillars and hacked down the sacred poles,

⁴and ordered Judah to seek guidance of the LORD the God of their forefathers and to keep the law and the commandments.

⁵In all the towns he suppressed the shrines and the incense-altars, and the kingdom was at peace under him.

⁶He built fortified towns in Judah, for the land was at peace. He had no war on his hands during those years, because the LORD had given him security.

⁷Asa said to the men of Judah, Let us build these towns and fortify them, with walls round them, and towers and barred gates. The land still lies open before us. Because we have sought guidance of the LORD our God, he has sought us and given us security on every side. So they built and prospered.

⁸Asa had an army equipped with large shields and with spears; three hundred thousand men came from Judah, and two hundred and eighty thousand from Benjamin, archers carrying bucklers; all were valiant warriors.

⁹Zerah the Cushite marched out against them with an army a million strong and three hundred chariots. When he reached Mareshah,

¹⁰Asa came out to meet him and they took up position in the valley of Zephathah at Mareshah.

¹¹Asa called to the LORD his God and said, There is none like you, LORD, to help men, whether strong or weak; help us, LORD our God, for on you we rely and in your name we have come out against this horde. LORD, you are our God; no mere mortal can vie with you.

¹²The LORD gave Asa and Judah victory over the Cushites, who fled,

¹³with Asa and his men in pursuit as far as Gerar. The Cushites broke before the LORD and his army, and many of them fell mortally wounded. Judah carried off great loads of spoil.

¹⁴They destroyed all the towns around Gerar, for the LORD had struck the people with panic; and they plundered the towns, finding rich spoil in them all.

¹⁵They also killed the herdsman and seized many sheep and camels, and then they returned to Jerusalem.

15¹ The spirit of God came upon Azariah son of Oded.

² He went out to meet Asa and said, Hear me, Asa and all Judah and Benjamin. The LORD is with you when you are with him; if you seek him, he will let himself be found, but if you forsake him, he will forsake you.

³ For a long time Israel was without the true God, without a priest to interpret the law, and without law.

⁴ But when, in their distress, they turned to the LORD the God of Israel and sought him, he let himself be found by them.

⁵ At those times there was no safety for people as they went about their business; the inhabitants of every land had their fill of trouble;

⁶ there was ruin on every side, nation at odds with nation, city with city, for God harassed them with every kind of distress.

⁷ But now you must be strong and not let your courage fail; for your work will be rewarded.

⁸ When Asa heard these words, this prophecy of Oded the prophet, he

resolutely suppressed the loathsome idols in all Judah and Benjamin and in the towns which he had captured in the hill-country of Ephraim, and he repaired the altar of the LORD which stood before the vestibule of the LORD's house.

⁹Then he assembled all the people of Judah and Benjamin and all who had come from Ephraim, Manasseh, and Simeon to reside among them, for great numbers had come over to him from Israel, when they saw that the LORD his God was with him.

¹⁰They assembled at Jerusalem in the third month of the fifteenth year of Asa's reign,

¹¹and that day they sacrificed to the LORD seven hundred oxen and seven thousand sheep from the spoil which they had brought.

¹²They entered wholeheartedly into a covenant to seek guidance of the LORD the God of their fathers;

¹³all who would not seek the LORD the God of Israel were to be put to death, whether young or old, men and women alike.

¹⁴Then they bound themselves by an oath to the LORD, with loud shouts of acclamation while trumpets and horns sounded.

¹⁵All Judah rejoiced at the oath, because they had bound themselves with all their heart and had sought the LORD earnestly; he had let himself be found by them, and he gave them security on every side.

¹⁶King Asa even deprived Maacah his grandmother of her rank as queen mother because she had an obscene object made for the worship of Asherah; Asa cut it down, ground it to powder, and burnt it in the wadi of the Kidron.

¹⁷Although the shrines were allowed to remain in Israel, Asa himself remained faithful all his life.

¹⁸He brought into the house of God all his father's votive offerings and his own, gold and silver and sacred vessels.

¹⁹And there was no more war until the thirty-fifth year of Asa's reign.

16¹In the thirty-sixth year of the reign of Asa, King Baasha of Israel invaded Judah and fortified Ramah to

prevent anyone leaving or entering the kingdom of Asa of Judah.

²Asa brought out silver and gold from the treasuries of the house of the LORD and the king's palace, and sent them to Ben-hadad king of Aram, whose capital was Damascus, with this request:

³Let there be an alliance between us, as there was between our fathers. Herewith I send you silver and gold; break off your alliance with King Baasha of Israel, so that he may abandon his campaign against me.

⁴Ben-hadad listened with approval to King Asa; he ordered his army commanders to move against the towns of Israel, and they attacked Iyyon, Dan, Abel-mayim, and all the store-cities of Naphtali.

⁵When Baasha heard of it, he discontinued the fortifying of Ramah and stopped all work on it.

⁶Then King Asa took with him all the men of Judah and they removed the stones of Ramah and the timbers with which Baasha had fortified it, and he used them to fortify Geba and Mizpah.

⁷At that time the seer Hanani came to King Asa of Judah and said to him, Because you relied on the king of Aram and not on the LORD your God, the army of the king of Israel has escaped.

⁸Did not the Cushites and the Libyans have a great army with a vast number of chariots and horsemen? Yet, because you relied on the LORD, he delivered them into your power.

⁹The eyes of the LORD range through the whole world, to bring aid and comfort to those whose hearts are loyal to him. You have acted foolishly in this affair; you will have wars from now on.

¹⁰Asa was vexed with the seer and had him put in the stocks; for those words had made the king very indignant. At the same time he treated some of the people with great brutality.

¹¹The events of Asa's reign, from beginning to end, are recorded in the annals of the kings of Judah and Israel.

¹²In the thirty-ninth year of his reign Asa became gravely affected with disease in his feet; he did not seek guidance of the LORD but resorted to physicians.

¹³He rested with his forefathers, in the forty-first year of his reign,

¹⁴and was buried in the tomb which he had bought for himself in the city of David, being laid on a bier which had been heaped with all kinds of spices skilfully compounded; and a great fire was kindled in his honour.

17 ¹ASA was succeeded by his son Jehoshaphat, who strengthened his position against Israel,

²posting troops in all the fortified towns of Judah and stationing garrisons throughout Judah and in the towns of Ephraim which his father Asa had captured.

³The LORD was with Jehoshaphat, for he followed the example his father had set in his early years and did not resort to the baalim;

⁴he sought guidance of the God of his father and obeyed his commandments and did not follow the practices of Israel.

⁵The LORD established the kingdom under his control; all Judah brought him gifts, and his wealth and fame became very great.

⁶He took pride in the service of the LORD; he again suppressed the shrines and the sacred poles in Judah.

⁷In the third year of his reign he sent his officers Ben-hayil, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethanel, and Micaiah to teach in the towns of Judah,

⁸together with the Levites Shemaiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobiah, and Tob-adonijah, accompanied by the priests Elishama and Jehoram.

⁹They taught in Judah, having with them the scroll of the law of the LORD; they went round the towns of Judah teaching the people.

¹⁰The dread of the LORD fell upon all the rulers of the lands surrounding Judah, and they did not make war on Jehoshaphat.

¹¹Certain Philistines brought him a gift of a great quantity of silver; the Arabs too brought him seven thousand seven hundred rams and seven thousand seven hundred he-goats.

¹²Jehoshaphat grew ever more powerful. He built fortresses and store-towns in Judah,

¹³and was engaged on much work in her towns. He kept regular, seasoned troops in Jerusalem,

¹⁴enrolled according to their clans in this way: of Judah, the officers over units of a thousand: Adnah the commander, together with three hundred thousand seasoned troops;

¹⁵next to him the commander Johanan, with two hundred and eighty thousand;

¹⁶next to him Amasiah son of Zichri, who had volunteered for the service of the LORD, with two hundred thousand seasoned troops;

¹⁷and of Benjamin: an experienced soldier Eliada, with two hundred thousand men armed with bows and shields;

¹⁸next to him Jehozabad, with a hundred and eighty thousand fully armed men.

¹⁹These were the men who served the king, apart from those whom the king had posted in the fortified towns throughout Judah.

18¹When Jehoshaphat had become very wealthy and famous, he allied himself with Ahab by marriage.

²Some years afterwards he went down to Samaria to visit Ahab, who slaughtered many sheep and oxen for him and his retinue, and incited him to attack Ramoth-gilead.

³What King Ahab of Israel said to King Jehoshaphat of Judah was: Will you join me in attacking Ramoth-gilead? Jehoshaphat replied, What is mine is yours: myself and my people; I shall join you in the war,

⁴but he said to the king of Israel, First let us seek counsel from the LORD.

⁵The king of Israel assembled the prophets, some four hundred of them, and asked them, Shall we attack Ramoth-gilead or not? Attack, was the answer; God will deliver it into your majesty's hands.

⁶Jehoshaphat asked, Is there no other prophet of the LORD here through whom we may seek guidance?

⁷There is one more, the king of Israel answered, through whom we may seek guidance of the LORD, but I hate the man, because he never prophesies good for me, never anything but evil. His name is Micaiah son of Imla. Jehoshaphat

exclaimed, Let your majesty say no such thing!

⁸The king of Israel called one of his eunuchs and told him to fetch Micaiah son of Imla with all speed.

⁹The king of Israel and King Jehoshaphat of Judah, clothed in their royal robes and in shining armour, were seated on their thrones at the entrance to the gate of Samaria, and all the prophets were prophesying before them.

¹⁰One of them, Zedekiah son of Kenaanah, made himself iron horns and declared, This is the word of the LORD: With horns like these you will gore the Aramaeans and make an end of them.

¹¹In the same vein all the prophets prophesied, Attack Ramoth-gilead and win the day; the LORD will deliver it into your hands.

¹²The messenger sent to fetch Micaiah told him that the prophets had unanimously given the king a favourable answer. And mind you agree with them, he added.

¹³As the LORD lives, said Micaiah, I shall say only what my God tells me to say.

¹⁴When he came into the king's presence, the king asked him, Micaiah, shall we attack Ramoth-gilead or not? Attack and win the day, he replied; it will fall into your hands.

¹⁵How often must I adjure you, said the king, to tell me nothing but the truth in the name of the LORD?

¹⁶Then Micaiah said, I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, like sheep without a shepherd; and I heard the LORD say: They have no master; let them go home in peace.

¹⁷The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, Did I not tell you that he never prophesies good for me, never anything but evil?

¹⁸Micaiah went on, Listen now to the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD seated on his throne, with all the host of heaven in attendance on his right and on his left.

¹⁹The LORD said, Who will entice King Ahab of Israel to go up and attack Ramoth-gilead? One said one thing and one said another,

²⁰until a spirit came forward and, standing before the LORD, said, I shall entice him. How? said the LORD.

²¹ I shall go out, he answered, and be a lying spirit in the mouths of all his prophets. Entice him; you will succeed, said the LORD. Go and do it.

²² You see, then, how the LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouths of all these prophets of yours, because he has decreed disaster for you.

²³ At that Zedekiah son of Kenaanah came up to Micaiah and struck him in the face: And how did the spirit of the LORD pass from me to speak to you? he demanded.

²⁴ Micaiah retorted, That you will find out on the day when you run into an inner room to hide.

²⁵ The king of Israel ordered Micaiah to be arrested and committed to the custody of Amon the governor of the city and Joash the king's son.

²⁶ Throw this fellow into prison, he said, and put him on a prison diet of bread and water until I come home in safety.

²⁷ Micaiah declared, If you do return in safety, the LORD has not spoken by me.

²⁸ The king of Israel and King Jehoshaphat of Judah marched on Ramoth-gilead.

²⁹The king of Israel went into battle in disguise, for he had said to Jehoshaphat, I shall disguise myself to go into battle, but you must wear your royal robes.

³⁰The king of Aram had ordered the captains of his chariots not to engage all and sundry, but the king of Israel alone.

³¹When the captains saw Jehoshaphat, they thought he was the king of Israel and wheeled to attack him, but Jehoshaphat cried out, and the LORD came to his help; God drew them away from him.

³²When the captains saw that he was not the king of Israel, they broke off the attack on him.

³³One man, however, drew his bow at random and hit the king of Israel where the breastplate joins the plates of the armour. The king said to his driver, Turn about and take me out of the line; I am wounded.

³⁴When the day's fighting reached its height, the king of Israel was facing the Aramaeans, propped up in his chariot; he remained so till evening, and at sunset he died.

19¹ As King Jehoshaphat of Judah returned in safety to his palace in Jerusalem,

² Jehu son of Hanani, the seer, went out to meet him and said, Do you take delight in helping the wicked and befriending the enemies of the LORD? For this the LORD's wrath will strike you.

³ Yet there is some good in you, for you have swept away the sacred poles from the land and have made a practice of seeking guidance of God.

⁴ Jehoshaphat had his residence in Jerusalem, but he went out again among his people from Beersheba to the hill-country of Ephraim and brought them back to the LORD the God of their forefathers.

⁵ He appointed judges throughout the land, one in each of the fortified towns of Judah,

⁶ and said to them, Be careful what you do; you are there as judges, to please not man but the LORD, who is with you when you pass sentence.

⁷ Now let the dread of the LORD be on you; take care what you do, for the

LORD our God will not tolerate injustice, partiality, or bribery.

⁸In Jerusalem Jehoshaphat appointed some of the Levites and priests and some heads of Israelite families by paternal descent to administer the law of the LORD and to arbitrate in lawsuits among the inhabitants of the towns.

⁹He gave them these instructions: You must at all times act in the fear of the LORD, faithfully and with singleness of mind.

¹⁰In every suit which comes before you from your kinsmen, in whatever town they live, whether cases of bloodshed or offences against the law or the commandments, against statutes or regulations, you must warn them to commit no offence against the LORD; otherwise the LORD's wrath will strike you and your kinsmen. If you act thus, you will be free of all offence.

¹¹Your authority in all matters which concern the LORD is Amariah the chief priest, and in those which concern the king it is Zebadiah son of Ishmael, the prince of the house of Judah; the Levites are your officers. Be strong and resolute,

and may the LORD be on the side of the good!

20¹ It happened some time afterwards that the Moabites, the Ammonites, and some of the Meunites came to make war on Jehoshaphat.

² News was brought to him of an attack by a great horde from beyond the Dead Sea, from Edom; they were already at Hazazon-tamar, which is En-gedi.

³ Jehoshaphat in alarm resolved to seek guidance of the LORD, and proclaimed a fast for all Judah.

⁴ The Judahites gathered to ask counsel of the LORD, coming from every town in the land to consult him.

⁵ Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem in the house of the LORD in front of the new court,

⁶ and said, LORD God of our forefathers, are you not the God who is in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations; in your hand are strength and power, and there is none who can withstand you.

⁷ You, our God, dispossessed the inhabitants of this land in favour of your

people Israel, and gave it for ever to the descendants of your friend Abraham.

⁸They have lived in it and built a sanctuary in it for your name, saying,

⁹Should any disaster befall us, whether war or flood, pestilence or famine, we shall stand before this house and before you, for in this house is your name, and we shall cry to you in our distress, and you will hear and save.

¹⁰You did not allow the Israelites, when they came out of Egypt, to enter the land of the Ammonites, the Moabites, and the people of the hill-country of Seir, so they turned aside and left them alone and did not destroy them.

¹¹Now see how these people repay us: they are coming to drive us out of your possession which you gave to us.

¹²Judge them, God our God, for we have not the strength to face this great host which is invading our land; we do not know what we ought to do, but our eyes look to you.

¹³As all the men of Judah stood before the LORD, with their dependants, their wives, and their children,

¹⁴ there, in the midst of the assembly, the spirit of the LORD came upon Jahaziel son of Zechariah, son of Benaiah, son of Jeiel, son of Mattaniah, a Levite of the line of Asaph,

¹⁵ and he said, Pay attention, all Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem and King Jehoshaphat; this is the word of the LORD to you: Do not fear or be dismayed by this great horde, for the battle is in God's hands, not yours.

¹⁶ Go down to engage them tomorrow as they come up by the ascent of Ziz; you will find them at the end of the wadi, east of the wilderness of Jeruel.

¹⁷ It is not you who will fight this battle; stand firm and wait, and you will see the deliverance worked by the LORD for you, Judah and Jerusalem. Do not fear or be dismayed; go out tomorrow to face them, for the LORD is with you.

¹⁸ Jehoshaphat bowed low to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem fell down before the LORD in obeisance to him.

¹⁹ Then the Levites of the lines of Kohath and Korah stood up and praised

the LORD the God of Israel with mighty voice.

²⁰They rose early next morning to go out to the wilderness of Tekoa. As they were about to start, Jehoshaphat stood up and said, Hear me, Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem: hold firmly to your faith in the LORD your God and you will be upheld; have faith in his prophets and you will succeed.

²¹After consulting with the people, he appointed men to sing to the LORD and praise the splendour of his holiness as they marched out before the armed troops, singing: Give thanks to the LORD, for his love endures for ever.

²²As soon as their loud shouts of praise were heard, the LORD misled the Ammonites and Moabites and the men of the hill-country of Seir who were invading Judah, and they were defeated.

²³It turned out that the Ammonites and Moabites had taken up a position against the men of the hill-country of Seir, and set themselves to annihilate and destroy them; and when they had exterminated the men of Seir, they savagely attacked one another.

²⁴When Judah came to the watch-tower in the wilderness and looked towards the enemy host, there they were all lying dead on the ground; none had escaped.

²⁵Jehoshaphat and his men, coming to collect the booty, found many cattle and a large quantity of equipment, clothing, and articles of value, which they plundered until they could carry away no more. They spent three days gathering the booty, there was so much of it.

²⁶On the fourth day they assembled in the valley of Berakah, the name that it bears to this day because there they blessed the LORD.

²⁷Afterwards, with Jehoshaphat at their head, all the men of Judah and Jerusalem returned home to the city in triumph; for the LORD had given them cause to triumph over their enemies.

²⁸They entered Jerusalem with lutes, lyres, and trumpets playing, and went into the house of the LORD.

²⁹The dread of God fell upon the rulers of every country, when they heard that the LORD had fought against the enemies of Israel.

³⁰With God giving Jehoshaphat security on all sides, his realm enjoyed peace.

³¹Thus Jehoshaphat reigned over Judah. He was thirty-five years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for twenty-five years; his mother was Azubah daughter of Shilhi.

³²He followed in the footsteps of Asa his father and did not deviate from them; he did what was right in the eyes of the LORD.

³³But the shrines were allowed to remain, and the people did not set their hearts on the God of their forefathers.

³⁴The other events of Jehoshaphat's reign, from first to last, are recorded in the history of Jehu son of Hanani, which is included in the annals of the kings of Israel.

³⁵Later King Jehoshaphat of Judah allied himself with King Ahaziah of Israel: he did wrong

³⁶in joining with him to build ships for trade with Tarshish; these were built in Ezion-geber.

³⁷But Eliezer son of Dodavahu of Mareshah denounced Jehoshaphat with this prophecy: Because you have joined

with Ahaziah, the LORD will bring your work to nothing. So the ships were wrecked and could not make the voyage to Tarshish.

21 ¹JEHOSHAPHAT rested with his forefathers and was buried with them in the city of David. He was succeeded by his son Joram,

²whose brothers, sons of Jehoshaphat, were Azariah, Jehiel, Zechariah, Azariah, Michael, and Shephatiah. All of them were sons of King Jehoshaphat of Judah,

³and their father gave them many gifts, silver and gold and other costly things, as well as fortified towns in Judah; the kingship he gave to Joram because he was the eldest.

⁴When Joram was firmly established on his father's throne, he put to the sword all his brothers, as well as some of the leading figures in Israel.

⁵He was thirty-two years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for eight years.

⁶He followed the practices of the kings of Israel as the house of Ahab had done, for he had married Ahab's daughter; he

did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD.

⁷ Yet for the sake of the covenant which he had made with David, the LORD was unwilling to destroy the house of David, as he had promised to give him and his descendants a lamp for all time.

⁸ During Joram's reign Edom revolted against Judah and set up its own king.

⁹ Joram, with his commanders and all his chariots, pushed on into Edom. When the Edomites encircled him and his chariot-commanders he made a sortie by night and broke out.

¹⁰ To this day Edom has remained independent of Judah. Libnah revolted against him at the same time, because he had forsaken the LORD the God of his fathers,

¹¹ and because he had built shrines in the hill-country of Judah and had seduced the inhabitants of Jerusalem into idolatrous practices and corrupted Judah.

¹² A letter reached Joram from Elijah the prophet, which read: This is the word of the LORD the God of David your father: You have not followed in the

footsteps of Jehoshaphat your father and of King Asa of Judah,

¹³but have followed the kings of Israel and have led astray Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, as the house of Ahab did; and you have murdered your own brothers, sons of your father's house, men better than yourself.

¹⁴Because of all this, the LORD is about to strike a heavy blow at your people, your children, your wives, and all your possessions;

¹⁵you yourself will suffer from a chronic disease of the bowels, so that they prolapse and become severely ulcerated.

¹⁶The LORD aroused against Joram the hostility of the Philistines and of the Arabs who live near the Cushites,

¹⁷and they invaded Judah. Overrunning it, they carried off all the property which they found in the king's palace, as well as his sons and wives; not a son was left to him except the youngest, Jehoahaz.

¹⁸After this the LORD struck down the king with an incurable disease of the bowels.

¹⁹It continued for some time, and towards the end of the second year the

disease caused his bowels to prolapse, and the painful ulceration brought on his death. But his people kindled no fire in his honour as they had done for his fathers.

²⁰Joram was thirty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem for eight years. His passing went unsung, and he was buried in the city of David, but not in the burial-place of the kings.

22¹Then the inhabitants of Jerusalem made Ahaziah, his youngest son, king in his place, for the raiders who had joined the Arabs in the campaign had killed all the older sons. So Ahaziah son of Joram became king of Judah.

²He was twenty-two years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for one year; his mother was Athaliah granddaughter of Omri.

³He too followed the practices of the house of Ahab, for his mother was his counsellor in wickedness.

⁴He did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD like the house of Ahab, for

they had been his counsellors after his father's death, to his undoing.

⁵He followed their counsel also in the alliance he made with Jehoram son of Ahab king of Israel, to fight against King Hazael of Aram at Ramoth-gilead. But Jehoram was wounded by the Aramaeans,

⁶and retired to Jezreel to recover from the wounds inflicted on him at Ramoth in battle with King Hazael. Because of Jehoram's injury Ahaziah son of Joram king of Judah went down to Jezreel to visit him.

⁷It was God's will that the visit of Ahaziah to Jehoram should be the occasion of his downfall. During the visit he went out with Jehoram to meet Jehu son of Nimshi, whom the LORD had anointed to bring the house of Ahab to an end.

⁸So it came about that Jehu, who was then at variance with the house of Ahab, found the officers of Judah and the kinsmen of Ahaziah who were his attendants, and killed them.

⁹He then searched out Ahaziah himself, and his men captured him in Samaria,

where he had gone into hiding. They brought him to Jehu and put him to death; they gave him burial, for they said, He was descended from Jehoshaphat who sought the guidance of the LORD with his whole heart. There was no one left of the house of Ahaziah strong enough to rule.

¹⁰As soon as Athaliah mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she set out to get rid of the whole royal line of the house of Judah.

¹¹But Jehosheba the daughter of King Joram took Ahaziah's son Joash and stole him away from among the princes who were being murdered; she put him and his nurse in a bedchamber. Thus Jehosheba daughter of King Joram and wife of Jehoiada the priest, because she was Ahaziah's sister, hid Joash from Athaliah so that she did not put him to death.

¹²He remained concealed with them in the house of God for six years, while Athaliah ruled the country.

23¹In the seventh year Jehoiada felt himself strong enough to make an agreement with Azariah son of Jeroham,

Ishmael son of Jehohanan, Azariah son of Obed, Maaseiah son of Adaiah, and Elishaphat son of Zichri, all captains of units of a hundred.

²They went throughout Judah and gathered to Jerusalem the Levites from all the cities of Judah and the heads of clans in Israel, and they came to Jerusalem.

³The whole assembly made a compact with the king in the house of God, and Jehoiada said to them, Here is the king's son! He will be king, as the LORD promised that David's descendants should be.

⁴This is what you must do: one third of you, priests and Levites, as you come on duty on the sabbath, are to be on guard at the threshold gates,

⁵another third are to be in the royal palace, and another third are to be at the Foundation Gate, while all the people will be in the courts of the house of the LORD.

⁶No one must enter the house of the LORD except the priests and the attendant Levites; they may enter, for

they are holy, but all the people must continue to keep the LORD's charge.

⁷The Levites must mount guard round the king, each man holding his weapons, and anyone who tries to enter the house is to be put to death. They are to stay with the king wherever he goes.

⁸The Levites and all Judah carried out the orders of Jehoiada the priest to the letter: each captain took his men, both those who came on duty on the sabbath and those who went off, for Jehoiada the priest had not released the outgoing divisions.

⁹Jehoiada the priest handed out to the captains King David's spears, shields, and bucklers, which were kept in the house of God.

¹⁰He stationed all the troops round the king, each man holding his weapon, from corner to corner of the house to north and south.

¹¹Then they brought out the king's son, put the crown on his head, handed him the testimony, and proclaimed him king. When Jehoiada and his sons anointed him, a shout went up: Long live the king.

¹²When Athaliah heard the noise made by the people as they ran and cheered the king, she came into the house of the LORD where the people were,

¹³and found the king standing by the pillar at the entrance, amidst outbursts of song and fanfares of trumpets in his honour; all the populace were rejoicing and blowing trumpets, and singers with musical instruments were leading the celebrations. Athaliah tore her clothes and cried, Treason! Treason!

¹⁴Jehoiada the priest gave orders to the captains in command of the troops: Bring her outside the precincts and put to the sword anyone in attendance on her; for the priest said, Do not kill her in the house of the LORD.

¹⁵They took her and brought her to the royal palace and there at the passage to the Horse Gate they put her to death.

¹⁶Jehoiada made a covenant between the LORD on one side and the whole people and the king on the other, that they should be the LORD's people.

¹⁷The people all went to the temple of Baal and pulled it down; they smashed its altars and images, and they slew

Mattan the priest of Baal before the altars.

¹⁸Jehoiada committed the supervision of the house of the LORD to the charge of the priests and the Levites whom David had allocated to the house of the LORD, to offer whole-offerings to the LORD as prescribed in the law of Moses, with the singing and rejoicing as handed down from David.

¹⁹He stationed the door-keepers at the gates of the house of the LORD, to prevent anyone entering who was in any way unclean.

²⁰Then he took the captains of units of a hundred, the nobles, and the governors of the people, and all the people of the land, and they escorted the king from the house of the LORD through the Upper Gate to the palace, and seated him on the royal throne.

²¹The whole people rejoiced and the city had quiet. That is how Athaliah was put to the sword.

24¹ Joash was seven years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem for forty years; his mother was Zibiah from Beersheba.

² He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD as long as Jehoiada the priest was alive.

³ Jehoiada chose him two wives, and he had a family of sons and daughters.

⁴ Some time afterwards, Joash decided to renovate the house of the LORD.

⁵ He assembled the priests and Levites and said to them, Go through the cities and towns of Judah and collect without delay the annual tax from all the Israelites for the restoration of the house of your God. But the Levites did not act quickly.

⁶ The king summoned Jehoiada the chief priest and asked him, Why have you not required the Levites to bring in from Judah and Jerusalem the tax imposed by Moses the servant of the LORD and by the assembly of Israel for the Tent of the Testimony?

⁷ For the wicked Athaliah and her adherents had broken into the house of God and had even devoted all its holy things to the service of the baalim.

⁸ The king ordered a chest to be made and placed outside the gate of the house of the LORD;

⁹and proclamation was made throughout Judah and Jerusalem that the people should bring to the LORD the tax imposed on Israel in the wilderness by Moses the servant of God.

¹⁰All the leaders and the people gladly brought their taxes and dropped them into the chest until it was full.

¹¹Whenever the chest was brought by the Levites to the king's officers and they saw that it was well filled, the king's secretary and the chief priest's officer would come to empty it, after which it was returned to its place. This they did daily, and a large sum of money was collected.

¹²The king and Jehoiada handed it over to those responsible for carrying out the work in the house of the LORD, and they hired masons and carpenters to do the renovation, as well as craftsmen in iron and copper to restore the house.

¹³The workmen got on with their task and the work progressed under their hands; they restored the house of God according to its original design and strengthened it.

¹⁴When they had finished, they brought what was left of the money to the king and Jehoiada, and it was made into vessels for the house of the LORD, both for service and for sacrificing, saucers and other articles of gold and silver. During Jehoiada's lifetime whole-offerings were offered regularly in the house of the LORD.

¹⁵Jehoiada, now old and weighed down with years, died at the age of a hundred and thirty

¹⁶and was buried with the kings in the city of David, because he had done good in Israel in the service of God and of his house.

¹⁷After the death of Jehoiada the leading men of Judah came and made obeisance to the king. He listened to them,

¹⁸and they forsook the house of the LORD the God of their forefathers and worshipped sacred poles and idols. For this wickedness Judah and Jerusalem suffered.

¹⁹The LORD sent prophets to bring them back to himself, prophets who denounced them but were not heeded.

²⁰Then the spirit of God took possession of Zechariah son of Jehoiada the priest. Taking his stance looking down on the people he declared, This is the word of God: Why do you disobey the commands of the LORD and court disaster? Because you have forsaken the LORD, he has forsaken you.

²¹But they made common cause against him, and on orders from the king they stoned him to death in the court of the house of the LORD.

²²King Joash, forgetful of the loyalty of Zechariah's father Jehoiada, killed his son. As he was dying he said, May the LORD see this and exact the penalty.

²³At the turn of the year a force of Aramaeans advanced against Joash; they invaded Judah and Jerusalem and massacred all the officers of the army, so that it ceased to exist, and they sent all their spoil to the king of Damascus.

²⁴Although the Aramaeans had invaded with a small force, the LORD delivered a very great army into their power, because the people had forsaken the LORD the God of their forefathers; and Joash suffered just punishment.

²⁵When the Aramaeans had withdrawn, leaving the king severely wounded, his servants conspired against him to avenge the death of the son of Jehoiada the priest, and they murdered him on his bed. Thus he died and was buried in the city of David, but not in the burial-place of the kings.

²⁶The conspirators were Zabad son of Shimeath an Ammonite woman and Jehozabad son of Shimrith a Moabite woman.

²⁷His children, the many oracles about him, and his reconstruction of the house of God are all on record in the discourse given in the annals of the kings. His son Amaziah succeeded him.

25¹AMAZIAH was twenty-five years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for twenty-nine years; his mother was Jehoaddan from Jerusalem.

²He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, yet not wholeheartedly.

³As soon as the royal power was firmly in his grasp, he put to death those of his servants who had murdered the king his father;

⁴ but he spared their children, in obedience to the LORD's command written in the law of Moses: Parents are not to be put to death for their children, nor children for their parents; each one may be put to death only for his own sin.

⁵ Amaziah assembled the men of Judah and drew them up by families, and Benjamin as well as all Judah, under officers over units of a thousand and a hundred. He mustered those of twenty years old and upwards and found their number to be three hundred thousand, all picked troops ready for service, able to handle spear and shield.

⁶ He also hired a hundred thousand seasoned troops from Israel for a hundred talents of silver.

⁷ But a man of God came to him and said, My lord king, do not let the Israelite army march with you; the LORD is not with Israel -- all these Ephraimites!

⁸ For, if you make these people your allies in the war, God will overthrow you in battle, for God has the power to help or to overthrow.

⁹ Amaziah said to the man of God, What am I to do about the hundred talents

which I have spent on the Israelite army? The man answered, It is in the LORD's power to give you much more than that.

¹⁰Amaziah detached the troops which had come to him from Ephraim and sent them home; that made them furious against Judah and they went home in a rage.

¹¹Amaziah led his men with resolution to the valley of Salt and there killed ten thousand men of Seir.

¹²The men of Judah captured another ten thousand men alive, brought them to the top of a cliff, and hurled them over so that they were all dashed to pieces.

¹³Meanwhile the troops which Amaziah had sent home without allowing them to take part in the battle raided the towns of Judah from Samaria to Beth-horon, massacred three thousand people in them, and carried off rich spoil.

¹⁴After Amaziah had returned from the defeat of the Edomites, he brought the gods of the people of Seir and, setting them up as his own gods, worshipped them and burnt sacrifices to them.

¹⁵The LORD was angry with Amaziah for this and sent a prophet who said to

him, Why have you resorted to gods who could not save their own people from you?

¹⁶While he was speaking, the king said to him, Have we appointed you counsellor to the king? Stop! Why risk your life? The prophet did stop, but first he said, I know that God has determined to destroy you because you do this and do not listen to my counsel.

¹⁷King Amaziah of Judah, after consultation, sent envoys to Jehoash son of Jehoahaz son of Jehu, king of Israel, to propose a confrontation.

¹⁸King Jehoash of Israel sent back this answer to King Amaziah of Judah: A thistle in Lebanon sent to a cedar in Lebanon to say, Give your daughter in marriage to my son. But a wild beast in Lebanon, passing by, trampled on the thistle.

¹⁹You have defeated Edom, I see, but it has gone to your head. Stay at home and enjoy your triumph. Why should you involve yourself in disaster and bring yourself to the ground, and drag down Judah with you?

²⁰Amaziah, however, would not listen; and this was God's doing in order to give Judah into the power of Jehoash, because they had resorted to the gods of Edom.

²¹So King Jehoash of Israel marched out, and he and King Amaziah of Judah clashed at Beth-shemesh in Judah.

²²The men of Judah were routed by Israel and fled to their homes.

²³King Jehoash of Israel captured Amaziah king of Judah, son of Joash, son of Jehoahaz, at Beth-shemesh. He brought him to Jerusalem, where he broke down the city wall from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate, a distance of four hundred cubits.

²⁴He took all the gold and silver and all the vessels found in the house of God, in the care of Obed-edom, and the treasures of the palace, as well as hostages, and then returned to Samaria.

²⁵Amaziah son of Joash, king of Judah, outlived Jehoash son of Jehoahaz, king of Israel, by fifteen years.

²⁶The other events of Amaziah's reign, from first to last, are recorded in the annals of the kings of Judah and Israel.

²⁷ From the time when he turned away from the LORD, a conspiracy was formed against him in Jerusalem, and he fled to Lachish; the conspirators sent after him to Lachish and put him to death there.

²⁸ His body was conveyed on horseback to Jerusalem, and there he was buried with his forefathers in the city of David.

26 ¹ The people of Judah, acting together, took Uzziah, now sixteen years old, and made him king in succession to his father Amaziah.

² It was he who built Eloth and restored it to Judah after the king rested with his forefathers.

³ Uzziah was sixteen years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for fifty-two years; his mother was Jecoliah from Jerusalem.

⁴ He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, as Amaziah his father had done.

⁵ He set himself to seek the guidance of God in the days of Zechariah, who instructed him in the fear of God; as long as he sought guidance from the LORD, God caused him to prosper.

⁶He took the field against the Philistines. He broke down the walls of Gath, Jabneh, and Ashdod, and built towns in the territory of Ashdod and among the Philistines.

⁷God aided him against them, as well as against the Arabs who lived in Gur-baal, and against the Meunites.

⁸The Ammonites brought tribute to Uzziah and his fame spread to the borders of Egypt, for he had become very powerful.

⁹He erected towers in Jerusalem at the Corner Gate, at the Valley Gate, and at the escarpment, and fortified them.

¹⁰He erected other towers in the wilderness and dug many cisterns, for he had large herds of cattle both in the Shephelah and in the plain. He also had farmers and vine-dressers in the hill-country and in the fertile lands, for he loved the soil.

¹¹Uzziah had an army of soldiers trained and ready for service, mustered in divisions according to the numbering made by Jeiel the adjutant-general and Maaseiah the clerk, under the

direction of Hananiah, one of the king's commanders.

¹²The total number of heads of families which supplied seasoned warriors was two thousand six hundred.

¹³Under their command was an army of three hundred and seven thousand five hundred, a powerful fighting force to aid the king against his enemies.

¹⁴Uzziah provided for the whole army shields, spears, helmets, coats of armour, bows, and sling-stones.

¹⁵In Jerusalem he had machines designed by engineers for use on towers and battlements to discharge arrows and large stones. His fame spread far and wide, for he was so wonderfully gifted that he became very powerful.

¹⁶But when he grew powerful his pride became great and led to his own undoing: he offended against the LORD his God by entering the temple of the LORD to burn incense on the incense-altar.

¹⁷Azariah the priest and eighty others of the LORD's priests, courageous men, went in after King Uzziah,

¹⁸ confronted him, and said, It is not for you, Uzziah, to burn incense to the LORD, but for the Aaronite priests who have been consecrated for that office. Leave the sanctuary; for you have offended, and that will certainly bring you no honour from the LORD God.

¹⁹ The king, who had a censer in his hand ready to burn incense, was enraged; but while he was raging at the priests, leprosy broke out on his forehead in the presence of the priests, there in the house of the LORD, beside the altar of incense.

²⁰ When Azariah the chief priest and the other priests looked towards him, they saw that his forehead was leprous. They hurried him out of the temple, and indeed he himself hastened to leave, because the LORD had struck him with the disease.

²¹ King Uzziah remained a leper till the day of his death; he lived in his palace as a leper, relieved of all duties and excluded from the house of the LORD, while his son Jotham was comptroller of the household and regent over the country.

²²The other events of Uzziah's reign, from first to last, are recorded by the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz.

²³He rested with his forefathers and was buried with them, but in the field adjoining the royal tombs, for they said, He is a leper. His son Jotham succeeded him.

27 ¹Jotham was twenty-five years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for sixteen years; his mother was Jerushah daughter of Zadok.

²He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, as his father Uzziah had done, but unlike him he did not enter the temple of the LORD; the people, however, continued their corrupt practices.

³He constructed the Upper Gate of the house of the LORD and built extensions on the wall at Ophel.

⁴He built towns in the hill-country of Judah, and forts and towers on the wooded hills.

⁵He made war on the king of the Ammonites and defeated him; and that year the Ammonites delivered to him a

hundred talents of silver, ten thousand kor of wheat, and ten thousand of barley. They paid him the same tribute in the second and third years.

⁶Jotham became very powerful because he maintained a steady course of obedience to the LORD his God.

⁷The other events of Jotham's reign, all that he did in war and in peace, are recorded in the annals of the kings of Israel and Judah.

⁸He was twenty-five years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for sixteen years.

⁹He rested with his forefathers and was buried in the city of David. His son Ahaz succeeded him.

28¹AHAZ was twenty years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for sixteen years. He did not do what was right in the eyes of the LORD like his forefather David,

²but followed in the footsteps of the kings of Israel, and cast metal images for the baalim.

³He also burnt sacrifices in the valley of Ben-hinnom; he even burnt his sons

in the fire according to the abominable practice of the nations whom the LORD had dispossessed in favour of the Israelites.

⁴He sacrificed and burned offerings at the shrines and on the hilltops and under every spreading tree.

⁵The LORD his God let Ahaz suffer at the hands of the king of Aram: the Aramaeans defeated him, took many captives, and brought them to Damascus. He was also made to suffer at the hands of the king of Israel, who inflicted a severe defeat on him.

⁶This was Pekah son of Remaliah, who killed in one day a hundred and twenty thousand men of Judah, seasoned troops, for they had forsaken the LORD the God of their forefathers.

⁷Zichri, an Ephraimite hero, killed Maaseiah the king's son and Azrikam the comptroller of the household and Elkanah the king's chief minister.

⁸The Israelites took captive from their kinsmen two hundred thousand women and children; they also removed a large amount of booty and brought it to Samaria.

⁹A prophet of the LORD was there, Oded by name; he went out to meet the army as it returned to Samaria and said to them, It is because the LORD the God of your forefathers is angry with Judah that he has given them into your power. But you have massacred them in a rage that has towered up to heaven.

¹⁰You now propose to force the people of Judah and Jerusalem, male and female, into slavery. Are you not also guilty men before the LORD your God?

¹¹Now listen to me. Send back those you have taken captive from your kinsmen, for the anger of the LORD is roused against you.

¹²Next, some Ephraimite chiefs, Azariah son of Jehohanan, Berechiah son of Meshillemoth, Hezekiah son of Shallum, and Amasa son of Hadlai, met those who were returning from the war

¹³and said to them, You must not bring these captives into our country; what you are proposing would make us guilty before the LORD and add to our sins and transgressions. We are guilty enough already, and there is fierce anger against Israel.

¹⁴ So the armed men left the captives and the spoil with the officers and the assembled people.

¹⁵ The captives were put in the charge of men nominated for this duty, who found clothes from the spoil for all who were naked; they clothed and shod them, gave them food and drink, and anointed them. All who were tottering on their last legs they mounted on donkeys, and took them to their kinsmen in Jericho, the city of palm trees. Then they themselves returned to Samaria.

¹⁶ At that time King Ahaz sent to the king of Assyria for help.

¹⁷ The Edomites had invaded again and defeated Judah and carried away prisoners,

¹⁸ while the Philistines had raided towns of the Shephelah and of the Negeb of Judah; they had captured and occupied Beth-shemesh, Aijalon, and Gederoth, as well as Soco, Timnah, and Gimzo with their villages.

¹⁹ The LORD had reduced Judah to submission because of Ahaz king of Judah; for his actions in Judah had

been unbridled and he had been grossly unfaithful to the LORD.

²⁰Then King Tiglath-pileser of Assyria came to him and, far from assisting him, pressed him hard.

²¹Ahaz stripped the house of the LORD, the king's palace, and the houses of his officers, and gave the plunder to the king of Assyria; but all to no purpose.

²²This king, Ahaz, when hard pressed, became more and more unfaithful to the LORD;

²³he sacrificed to the gods of Damascus who had defeated him, for he said, The gods of the kings of Aram helped them; I shall sacrifice to them so that they may help me. But in fact they caused his downfall and that of all Israel.

²⁴Then Ahaz gathered together the vessels of the house of God and broke them up, and shut up the doors of the house of the LORD; he made himself altars at every corner in Jerusalem,

²⁵and at every town of Judah he made shrines to burn sacrifices to other gods and provoked the anger of the LORD the God of his forefathers.

²⁶The other acts and all the events of his reign, from first to last, are recorded in the annals of the kings of Judah and Israel.

²⁷Ahaz rested with his forefathers and was buried in the city of Jerusalem, but he was not given burial with the kings of Judah. His son Hezekiah succeeded him.

29¹ HEZEKIAH was twenty-five years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for twenty-nine years; his mother was Abijah daughter of Zechariah.

²He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, as his ancestor David had done.

³In the first year of his reign, in the first month, he opened and repaired the doors of the house of the LORD.

⁴He brought in the priests and Levites and, assembling them in the square on the east side,

⁵said to them, Levites, listen to me. Hallow yourselves now, hallow the house of the LORD the God of your forefathers, and remove all defilement from the sanctuary.

⁶For our forefathers were unfaithful and did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD our God: they forsook him, they faced about, and they turned their backs on his dwelling-place.

⁷They shut the doors of the porch and extinguished the lamps; they ceased to burn incense and offer whole-offerings in the sanctuary to the God of Israel.

⁸Therefore the anger of the LORD fell on Judah and Jerusalem and he made them repugnant, an object of horror and derision, as you see for yourselves.

⁹That is why our fathers fell by the sword, why our sons and daughters and our wives are in captivity.

¹⁰Now I intend that we should pledge ourselves to the LORD the God of Israel, in order that his anger may be averted from us.

¹¹My sons, let no time be lost; for the LORD has chosen you to serve him and to minister to him, to be his ministers and to burn sacrifices.

¹²The Levites set to work; they were Mahath son of Amasai and Joel son of Azariah of the family of Kohath; of the family of Merari, Kish son of Abdi and

Azariah son of Jehallelel; of the family of Gershon, Joah son of Zimmah and Eden son of Joah;

¹³of the family of Elizaphan, Shimri and Jeiel; of the family of Asaph, Zechariah and Mattaniah;

¹⁴of the family of Heman, Jehiel and Shimei; and of the family of Jeduthun, Shemaiah and Uzziel.

¹⁵They assembled their kinsmen and hallowed themselves, and then went in, as at the LORD's command the king had instructed them, to purify the house of the LORD.

¹⁶The priests went inside to purify the house of the LORD; they removed all defilement they found in the temple into the court of the house of the LORD, where the Levites received it and carried it outside to the wadi of the Kidron.

¹⁷They began the rites on the first day of the first month, and on the eighth day they reached the porch; then for eight days they consecrated the house of the LORD, and on the sixteenth day of the first month they finished.

¹⁸When they went into the palace they reported to King Hezekiah, We have

purified the whole of the house of the LORD, the altar of whole-offering with all its vessels, and the table of the Bread of the Presence arranged in rows with all its vessels.

¹⁹We have also put in order and consecrated all the vessels which King Ahaz cast aside during his reign, when he was unfaithful. They are now in place before the altar of the LORD.

²⁰Early next morning King Hezekiah assembled the officers of the city and went up to the house of the LORD.

²¹They brought seven bulls, seven rams, and seven lambs for the whole-offering, and seven he-goats as a purification-offering for the kingdom, for the sanctuary, and for Judah; these he commanded the priests of Aaron's line to offer on the altar of the LORD.

²²When the bulls were slaughtered, the priests took the blood and flung it against the altar; the rams were slaughtered, and their blood was flung against the altar; the lambs were slaughtered, and their blood was flung against the altar.

²³The he-goats for the purification-offering were brought before the king

and the assembly, who laid their hands on them;

²⁴ and the priests slaughtered them and used their blood as a purification-offering on the altar to make expiation for all Israel. For the king had commanded that the whole-offering and the purification-offering should be made for all Israel.

²⁵ He stationed the Levites in the house of the LORD with cymbals, lutes, and lyres, according to the rule prescribed by David, by Gad the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet; for this rule had come from the LORD through his prophets.

²⁶ The Levites stood ready with the instruments of David, and the priests with the trumpets.

²⁷ Hezekiah gave the order that the whole-offering should be offered on the altar. At the moment when the whole-offering began, the song to the LORD began too, with the trumpets, led by the instruments of David king of Israel.

²⁸ The whole assembly prostrated themselves, the singers sang, and the

trumpeters sounded; all this continued until the whole-offering was complete.

²⁹When the offering was complete, the king and all his company bowed down and prostrated themselves.

³⁰King Hezekiah and his officers commanded the Levites to praise the LORD in the words of David and of Asaph the seer. They praised him most joyfully and bowed down and prostrated themselves.

³¹Hezekiah said, Now that you are consecrated to the LORD, approach with your sacrifices and thank-offerings for the house of the LORD. So the assembly brought sacrifices and thank-offerings; and everyone of willing spirit brought whole-offerings.

³²The number of whole-offerings which the assembly brought was seventy bulls, a hundred rams, and two hundred lambs; all these made a whole-offering to the LORD.

³³The consecrated offerings were six hundred bulls and three thousand sheep.

³⁴But the priests were too few and could not flay all the whole-offerings; so their colleagues the Levites helped them

until the work was completed and all the priests had hallowed themselves -- for the Levites had been more scrupulous than the priests in hallowing themselves.

³⁵There were indeed whole-offerings in abundance, besides the fat of the shared-offerings and the drink-offerings for the whole-offerings. In this way the service of the house of the LORD was restored;

³⁶and Hezekiah and all the people rejoiced over what God had done for the people and because it had come about so speedily.

30¹Hezekiah sent word to all Israel and Judah, and also wrote letters to Ephraim and Manasseh, inviting them to come to the house of the LORD in Jerusalem to keep the Passover of the LORD the God of Israel.

²The king and his officers and all the assembly in Jerusalem had agreed to keep the Passover in the second month,

³but they had not been able to keep it at that time, because not enough priests had hallowed themselves and the people had not assembled in Jerusalem.

⁴The proposal being acceptable to the king and the whole assembly,

⁵they resolved to make a proclamation throughout all Israel, from Beersheba to Dan, that the people should come to Jerusalem to keep the Passover of the LORD the God of Israel. Never before had so many kept it according to the prescribed form.

⁶Couriers went throughout all Israel and Judah with letters from the king and his officers, proclaiming the royal command: Turn back, you Israelites, to the LORD the God of your forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, so that he may turn back to those of you who escaped capture by the kings of Assyria.

⁷Do not be like your forefathers and your kinsmen, who were unfaithful to the LORD the God of their fathers, so that he made them an object of horror, as you yourselves saw.

⁸Do not be stubborn as your forefathers were; submit yourselves to the LORD and enter his sanctuary which he has sanctified for ever, and worship the LORD your God, so that his anger may be averted from you.

⁹For when you turn back to the LORD, your kinsmen and your children will win compassion from their captors and return to this land. The LORD your God is gracious and compassionate, and he will not turn away from you if you turn back to him.

¹⁰As the couriers passed from town to town throughout the land of Ephraim and Manasseh and as far as Zebulun, they were treated with scorn and ridicule.

¹¹However, a few people from Asher, Manasseh, and Zebulun submitted and came to Jerusalem.

¹²Further, the hand of God moved the people in Judah with one accord to carry out what the king and his officers had ordered at the LORD's command.

¹³It was a very large assembly that gathered in Jerusalem to keep the pilgrim-feast of Unleavened Bread in the second month.

¹⁴They began by removing the altars in Jerusalem, and the incense-altars they removed and threw into the wadi of the Kidron.

¹⁵They killed the Passover lamb on the fourteenth day of the second month.

The priests and the Levites were bitterly ashamed, and they hallowed themselves and brought whole-offerings to the house of the LORD.

¹⁶They took their accustomed places, according to the direction laid down for them in the law of Moses the man of God, and the priests flung against the altar the blood which they received from the Levites.

¹⁷Because many in the assembly had not hallowed themselves, the Levites had to kill Passover lambs for all who were unclean, in order to hallow them to the LORD.

¹⁸For a majority of the people, many from Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, had not kept themselves ritually clean, and therefore kept the Passover irregularly. But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, May the good LORD grant pardon to everyone

¹⁹who makes a practice of seeking guidance of God, the LORD the God of his forefathers, even if he has not observed the rules of purification for the sanctuary.

²⁰The LORD heard Hezekiah and healed the people.

²¹The Israelites who were present in Jerusalem kept the feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days with great rejoicing, and the Levites and the priests praised the LORD every day with unrestrained fervour.

²²Hezekiah spoke encouragingly to all the Levites who had shown true insight in the service of the LORD. The seven days of the festival they spent sacrificing shared-offerings and making confession to the LORD the God of their forefathers.

²³The whole assembly agreed to keep the feast for another seven days, and they kept it with general rejoicing.

²⁴For Hezekiah king of Judah set aside for the assembly a thousand bulls and seven thousand sheep, and his officers set aside for the assembly a thousand bulls and ten thousand sheep; and priests hallowed themselves in great numbers.

²⁵The whole assembly of Judah, including the priests and the Levites, rejoiced along with all who had assembled from Israel, and the resident

aliens from Israel as well as those who lived in Judah.

²⁶There was great rejoicing in Jerusalem, the like of which had not been known there since the days of Solomon son of David king of Israel.

²⁷The priests and the Levites stood to bless the people, and their voice was heard when their prayer reached God's holy dwelling-place in heaven.

31 ¹When this was over, all the Israelites present went out into the towns and cities of Judah and smashed the sacred pillars, hacked down the sacred poles, and demolished the shrines and the altars throughout Judah and Benjamin, and in Ephraim and Manasseh, until they had made an end of them all. That done, the Israelites returned, each to his own holding in his own town.

²Hezekiah installed the priests and the Levites in office, division by division, allotting to each priest and each Levite his own particular duty, for whole-offerings or shared-offerings, to serve, to give thanks, and to sing praise

at the gates of the several quarters in the LORD's house.

³The king provided from his own resources, as the share due from him, the whole-offerings for both morning and evening, and for sabbaths, new moons, and appointed seasons, as prescribed in the law of the LORD.

⁴He ordered the people living in Jerusalem to provide the share due to the priests and the Levites, so that these might devote themselves entirely to the law of the LORD.

⁵As soon as the king's order was issued to the Israelites, they gave generously from the firstfruits of their grain, new wine, oil, and honey, all the produce of their land; they brought a full tithe of everything.

⁶The Israelites and Judaeans living in the towns of Judah also brought a tithe of cattle and sheep, and a tithe of all produce as offerings dedicated to the LORD their God, and they stacked the produce in heaps.

⁷They began to deposit the heaps in the third month and completed them in the seventh.

⁸When Hezekiah and his officers came and saw the heaps, they praised the LORD and his people Israel.

⁹Hezekiah consulted the priests and the Levites about these heaps,

¹⁰and Azariah the chief priest, who was of the line of Zadok, answered, From the time when the people began to bring their contribution into the house of the LORD, they have had enough to eat, enough and to spare; indeed, the LORD has so greatly blessed them that they have this great store left over.

¹¹Hezekiah gave orders for storerooms to be prepared in the house of the LORD, and when this was done

¹²the people faithfully brought in their contributions, the tithe, and their dedicated gifts. The overseer in charge of them was Conaniah the Levite, with Shimei his brother as his deputy;

¹³Jehiel, Azaziah, Nahath, Asahel, Jerimoth, Jozabad, Eliel, Ismachiah, Mahath, and Benaiah were appointed by King Hezekiah and Azariah, the chief overseer of the house of God, to assist Conaniah and Shimei his brother.

¹⁴Kore son of Imnah the Levite, keeper of the East Gate, was in charge of the freewill-offerings to God, to apportion the contributions made to the LORD and the most sacred offerings.

¹⁵Eden, Miniamin, Jeshua, Shemaiah, Amariah, and Shecaniah in the priestly cities and towns assisted him in the fair distribution of portions to their kinsmen, young and old alike, by divisions.

¹⁶Irrespective of their registration, shares were distributed to all males three years of age and upwards who would enter the house of the LORD to take their daily part in the service, according to their divisions, as their office demanded.

¹⁷The priests were registered by families, the Levites of twenty years of age and upwards by their offices in their divisions.

¹⁸They were registered with all their dependants, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, the whole company of them, because in virtue of their permanent standing they had to keep themselves duly hallowed.

¹⁹As for the priests of Aaron's line in the common lands attached to their cities and towns, in every place men were nominated to distribute portions to every male among the priests and to everyone among the Levites who was on the register.

²⁰Such was the action taken by Hezekiah throughout Judah; he did what was good and right and loyal in the sight of the LORD his God.

²¹Whatever he undertook in the service of the house of God and in obedience to the law and the commandment to seek guidance of his God, he did with all his heart, and he prospered.

32¹It was after these events and this example of loyal conduct that King Sennacherib of Assyria invaded Judah and encamped against the fortified towns, believing that he could gain entry and secure them for himself.

²When Hezekiah saw that he had come determined to attack Jerusalem,

³he consulted his civil and military officers about blocking up the springs outside the city; and they supported him.

⁴They brought together a large number of people to block up all the springs and the stream which flowed through the land. Why should Assyrian kings come here and find plenty of water? they said.

⁵Acting with resolution the king made good every breach in the city wall, erecting towers on it and building another wall outside it. He strengthened the Millo of the city of David, and got together a large quantity of weapons and shields.

⁶He appointed military commanders over the people and, assembling them in the public square by the city gate, he spoke these words of encouragement:

⁷Be strong; be brave. Do not let the king of Assyria or the rabble he has brought with him strike terror or panic into your hearts, for we have more on our side than he has.

⁸He has human strength; but we have the LORD our God to help us and to fight our battles. The people were buoyed up by the speech of King Hezekiah.

⁹After this, while King Sennacherib of Assyria and his high command were at Lachish, he sent envoys to Jerusalem to

deliver this message to King Hezekiah of Judah and to all the Judaeans in Jerusalem:

¹⁰King Sennacherib of Assyria says, What gives you the confidence to stay in Jerusalem under siege?

¹¹Hezekiah is deluding you into risking death by famine or thirst where you are, when he tells you that the LORD your God will save you from the clutches of the Assyrian king.

¹²Was it not Hezekiah himself who suppressed the LORD's shrines and altars and told the people of Judah and Jerusalem that they must worship at one altar only and burn sacrifices there?

¹³You know very well what I and my forefathers have done to all the peoples of other lands. Were the gods of these nations able to save their lands from me?

¹⁴Not one of the gods of these nations, which my predecessors exterminated, was able to save his people from me. Much less will your God save you!

¹⁵Now, can you let Hezekiah deceive and delude you like this? Can you put any trust in him, for no god of any nation

or kingdom has been able to save his people from me or my forefathers? Much less will your gods save you!

¹⁶Sennacherib's envoys spoke still more against the LORD God and against his servant Hezekiah.

¹⁷The king also wrote a letter insulting the LORD the God of Israel in these terms: Just as the gods of other nations could not save their people from me, so Hezekiah's God cannot save his people from me.

¹⁸Then they shouted in Hebrew at the tops of their voices at the people of Jerusalem on the wall, to strike them with fear and terror, hoping thus to capture the city.

¹⁹They described the God of Jerusalem as being like the gods of the other peoples of the earth -- things made by the hands of men.

²⁰In this plight King Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz cried to heaven in prayer.

²¹So the LORD sent an angel who cut down every fighting man, leader, and commander in the camp of the king of Assyria, so that he withdrew disgraced

to his own land. When he entered the temple of his god, certain of his own sons put him to the sword.

²²Thus the LORD saved Hezekiah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem from King Sennacherib of Assyria and from all their enemies; he gave them respite on every side.

²³Many people brought to Jerusalem offerings for the LORD and costly gifts for King Hezekiah of Judah. From then on he was held in high honour by all the nations.

²⁴In those days Hezekiah fell dangerously ill and prayed to the LORD, who said, I shall heal you, and granted him a sign.

²⁵But, being a proud man, he was not grateful for the good done to him, and the LORD's wrath fell on him and on Judah and Jerusalem.

²⁶Then, proud though he was, Hezekiah submitted, and the people of Jerusalem with him, and the LORD's anger did not fall on them again in Hezekiah's time.

²⁷Hezekiah enjoyed great wealth and fame. He built treasuries for silver, gold,

precious stones, spices, shields, and other costly things;

²⁸and barns for the harvests of grain, new wine, and oil; and stalls for various kinds of cattle, as well as sheepfolds.

²⁹He amassed a great many flocks and herds; God had indeed given him vast riches.

³⁰It was this same Hezekiah who blocked the upper outflow of the waters of Gihon and directed them downwards and westwards to the city of David. In fact, Hezekiah was successful in everything he attempted,

³¹even in the affair of the envoys sent by the king of Babylon, the envoys who came to enquire about the portent which had been seen in the land at the time when God left him to himself, in order to test him and to discover all that was in his mind.

³²The other events of Hezekiah's reign, and his works of piety, are recorded in the vision of the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz and in the annals of the kings of Judah and Israel.

³³Hezekiah rested with his forefathers and was buried in the upper part of

the graves of David's sons; all Judah and the people of Jerusalem paid him honour when he died. His son Manasseh succeeded him.

33¹ MANASSEH was twelve years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for fifty-five years.

²He did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD, in following the abominable practices of the nations which the LORD had dispossessed in favour of the Israelites.

³He rebuilt the shrines which his father Hezekiah had demolished, he erected altars to the baalim, made sacred poles, and prostrated himself before all the host of heaven and served them.

⁴He built altars in the house of the LORD, that house of which the LORD had said, In Jerusalem my name will be for ever.

⁵He built altars for all the host of heaven in the two courts of the house of the LORD;

⁶he made his sons pass through the fire in the valley of Ben-hinnom, he practised soothsaying, divination, and sorcery,

and dealt with ghosts and spirits. He did much wrong in the eyes of the LORD and provoked his anger.

⁷The image that he had had carved in relief he set up in the house of God, of which God had said to David and Solomon his son, In this house and Jerusalem, which I chose out of all the tribes of Israel, I shall establish my name for all time.

⁸I shall not again displace Israel from the land which I assigned to their forefathers, if only they are careful to observe all that I commanded them through Moses, all the law, the statutes, and the rules.

⁹But Manasseh led Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem astray into wickedness far worse than that of the nations which the LORD had exterminated in favour of the Israelites.

¹⁰The LORD spoke to Manasseh and his people, but when they paid no heed,

¹¹he brought against them the commanders of the army of the king of Assyria; they captured Manasseh with spiked weapons, put him in bronze fetters, and brought him to Babylon.

¹²In his distress he prayed to the LORD his God and sought to placate him, and made his humble submission before the God of his forefathers.

¹³When he prayed, God accepted his petition and heard his supplication; he brought him back to Jerusalem and restored him to the throne. Thus Manasseh learnt that the LORD was God.

¹⁴After this he built an outer wall for the city of David, west of Gihon in the valley, and extended it to the entrance by the Fish Gate, enclosing Ophel; and he raised it to a great height. He also stationed military commanders in all the fortified towns of Judah.

¹⁵He removed the foreign gods and the carved image from the house of the LORD as well as all the altars which he had erected on the temple mount and in Jerusalem, and threw them out of the city.

¹⁶He repaired the altar of the LORD and sacrificed at it shared-offerings and thank-offerings, and commanded Judah to serve the LORD the God of Israel.

¹⁷ But the people still continued to sacrifice at the shrines, though only to the LORD their God.

¹⁸ The rest of the acts of Manasseh, his prayer to his God, and the discourses of the seers who spoke to him in the name of the LORD the God of Israel, are recorded in the chronicles of the kings of Israel.

¹⁹ His prayer and the answer to it he received, all his sin and unfaithfulness, and the places where he built shrines and set up sacred poles and carved idols before he submitted, are recorded in the chronicles of the seers.

²⁰ Manasseh rested with his forefathers and was buried in the garden-tomb of his family. His son Amon succeeded him.

²¹ Amon was twenty-two years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for two years.

²² He did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD as his father Manasseh had done. He sacrificed to all the images that his father Manasseh had made, and worshipped them.

²³ He was not submissive before the LORD like his father Manasseh; his guilt was much greater.

²⁴ His courtiers conspired against him and assassinated him in the palace;

²⁵ but the people of the land killed all the conspirators and made his son Josiah king in his place.

34¹ JOSIAH was eight years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for thirty-one years.

² He did what was right in the eyes of the LORD, following in the footsteps of his forefather David, and deviating neither to the right nor to the left.

³ In the eighth year of his reign, when he was still a youth, he began to seek guidance of the God of his forefather David; and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the shrines and the sacred poles, and the carved idols and the metal images.

⁴ He saw to it that the altars for the baalim were destroyed and he hacked down the incense-altars which stood above them; he broke in pieces the sacred poles and the carved and metal

images, grinding them to powder and scattering it on the graves of those who had sacrificed to them.

⁵He burnt the bones of the priests on their altars and purged Judah and Jerusalem.

⁶In the towns of Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon, and as far as Naphtali, he burnt down their houses wherever he found them;

⁷he destroyed the altars and the sacred poles, ground the idols to powder, and hacked down the incense-altars throughout the land of Israel. Then he returned to Jerusalem.

⁸In the eighteenth year of his reign, after he had purified the land and the house of the LORD, Josiah sent Shaphan son of Azaliah and Maaseiah the governor of the city and Joah son of Joahaz the secretary of state to repair the house of the LORD his God.

⁹They came to Hilkiah the high priest and delivered to him the silver that had been brought to the house of God, the silver which the Levites, on duty at the threshold, had received from Manasseh, Ephraim, and all the rest of Israel, as

well as from Judah and Benjamin and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

¹⁰It was then handed over to those supervising the work in the house of the LORD, and these men, working in the house, used it for repairing and strengthening the fabric;

¹¹they gave it also to the carpenters and builders to purchase hewn stone, and timber for rafters and beams, for the buildings which the kings of Judah had allowed to fall into disrepair.

¹²The men did their work faithfully under the supervision of Jahath and Obadiah, Levites of the line of Merari, and Zechariah and Meshullam, members of the family of Kohath. These also had control of the bearers and directed the workmen of every trade. The Levites were all skilled musicians, and some of them were secretaries, clerks, or door-keepers.

¹³(34: 12)

¹⁴When they were fetching out the silver which had been brought to the house of the LORD, the priest Hilkiah discovered the scroll of the law of the

LORD which had been given through Moses.

¹⁵ Hilkiyah told Shaphan the adjutant-general that he had discovered the scroll of the law in the house of the LORD;

¹⁶ he gave the scroll to Shaphan, who brought it to the king and reported to him: Your servants are doing all that was entrusted to them.

¹⁷ They have melted down the silver in the house of the LORD and have handed it over to the supervisors of the work and the workmen.

¹⁸ Shaphan the adjutant-general also told the king of the scroll that the priest Hilkiyah had given him; and he read from it in the king's presence.

¹⁹ When the king heard what was written in the scroll of the law, he tore his clothes.

²⁰ He ordered Hilkiyah, Ahikam son of Shaphan, Abdon son of Micah, Shaphan the adjutant-general, and Asaiah the king's attendant

²¹ to go and seek guidance of the LORD for himself and for all who still remained in Israel and Judah, about the contents of the scroll that had been discovered.

Great must be the wrath of the LORD, he said, and it has been poured out on us, because our forefathers did not observe the LORD's command and do all that is written in this scroll.

²²Hilkiah and those whom the king had instructed went to Huldah the prophetess, wife of Shallum son of Tikvah, son of Hasrah, the keeper of the wardrobe, and consulted her at her home in the Second Quarter of Jerusalem.

²³This is the word of the LORD the God of Israel, she answered: Tell the man who sent you to me

²⁴that this is what the LORD says: I am about to bring disaster on this place and its inhabitants, fulfilling all the imprecations recorded in the scroll which was read in the presence of the king of Judah,

²⁵because they have forsaken me and burnt sacrifices to other gods, provoking my anger with all the idols they have made with their own hands; for this my wrath will be poured out on this place and will not be quenched.

²⁶Tell the king of Judah who sent you to seek guidance of the LORD that this

is what the LORD the God of Israel says:
You have listened to my words

²⁷ and shown a willing heart and humbled yourself before God when you heard what I said about this place and its inhabitants; you humbled yourself and tore your clothes and wept before me. Because of this, I for my part have listened to you. This is the word of the LORD.

²⁸ Therefore I shall gather you to your forefathers, and you will be gathered to your grave in peace; you will not live to see all the disaster which I am bringing on this place and its inhabitants. They brought back this answer to the king.

²⁹ At the king's summons all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem were assembled,

³⁰ and he went up to the house of the LORD, taking with him all the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the priests, and the Levites, the entire population, high and low. There he read out to them the whole scroll of the covenant which had been discovered in the house of the LORD.

³¹ Then, standing by the pillar, the king entered into a covenant before

the LORD to obey him and keep his commandments, his testimonies, and his statutes with all his heart and soul, and so carry out the terms of the covenant written in the scroll.

³²Then he took an oath, swearing with all who were present in Jerusalem to keep the covenant. Thereafter the inhabitants of Jerusalem did obey the covenant of God, the God of their forefathers.

³³Josiah removed all the abominable idols from the whole territory of the Israelites, so that everyone living in Israel might serve the LORD his God. As long as he lived they did not fail in their allegiance to the LORD the God of their forefathers.

35¹ Josiah kept a Passover to the LORD in Jerusalem, the Passover lamb being killed on the fourteenth day of the first month.

²He appointed the priests to their offices and encouraged them in the service of the house of the LORD.

³He said to the Levites, who instructed Israel and were dedicated to the LORD, Put the sacred Ark in the house which

Solomon son of David king of Israel built. As it is not to be carried about on your shoulders, you are now to serve the LORD your God and his people Israel:

⁴prepare yourselves by families according to your divisions, following the written instructions of David king of Israel and those of Solomon his son.

⁵Stand in the Holy Place as representatives of the family groups of the lay people, your brothers, one division of Levites to each family group.

⁶Kill the Passover lamb and hallow yourselves, and prepare for your brothers to fulfil the word of the LORD given through Moses.

⁷Josiah contributed on behalf of all the lay people present thirty thousand small livestock, that is young rams and goats, for the Passover, in addition to three thousand bulls; all these were from the king's own resources.

⁸His officers contributed willingly for the people, the priests, and the Levites. Hilkiyah, Zechariah, and Jehiel, the chief officers of the house of God, gave on behalf of the priests two thousand six

hundred small livestock for the Passover, in addition to three hundred bulls.

⁹Conaniah, Shemaiah and Nethanel his brothers, and Hashabiah, Jeiel, and Jozabad, the chiefs of the Levites, gave on behalf of the Levites for the Passover five thousand small livestock in addition to five hundred bulls.

¹⁰When the service had been arranged, the priests stood in their places and the Levites in their divisions according to the king's command.

¹¹The Levites killed the Passover victims, and the priests flung the blood against the altar, while the Levites flayed the animals.

¹²Then they removed the fat flesh, which they allocated to the people by groups of families for them to offer to the LORD, as prescribed in the book of Moses; and so with the bulls.

¹³They cooked the Passover victims over the fire according to custom, and boiled the holy offerings in pots, cauldrons, and pans, and served them quickly to all the people.

¹⁴After that they made the necessary preparations for themselves and the

priests, because the priests of Aaron's line were engaged till nightfall in offering whole-offerings and the fat portions; so the Levites made the necessary preparations for themselves and for the priests of Aaron's line.

¹⁵The Asaphite singers were in their places according to the rules laid down by David and by Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, the king's seers. The door-keepers stood, each at his gate; there was no need for them to leave their posts, because their kinsmen the Levites had made the preparations for them.

¹⁶In this manner all the service of the LORD was arranged that day, to keep the Passover and to offer whole-offerings on the altar of the LORD, according to the command of King Josiah.

¹⁷The people of Israel who were present kept the Passover at that time and the pilgrim-feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days.

¹⁸No Passover like it had been kept in Israel since the days of the prophet Samuel; none of the kings of Israel had ever kept such a Passover as Josiah

kept, with the priests and Levites and all Judah and Israel who were present and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

¹⁹This Passover was kept in the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign.

²⁰Some time after Josiah had thus organized the entire service of the house of the LORD, King Necho marched up from Egypt to attack Carchemish on the Euphrates; Josiah went out to confront him.

²¹Necho sent envoys, saying, King of Judah, what do you want with me? I have no quarrel with you today, only with those with whom I am at war. God has purposed, to speed me on my way, and God is on my side. Do not stand in his way, or he will destroy you.

²²Josiah would not be deflected from his purpose but determined to fight; he refused to listen to Necho's words spoken at God's command, and he sallied out to join battle in the vale of Megiddo.

²³The archers shot at him; he was severely wounded and told his bodyguard to take him away.

²⁴ They lifted him out of his chariot and conveyed him in his viceroy's chariot to Jerusalem. There he died and was buried among the tombs of his ancestors, and all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for him.

²⁵ Jeremiah also made a lament for Josiah; and to this day the minstrels, both men and women, commemorate Josiah in their lamentations. Such laments have become traditional in Israel, and they are found in the written collections.

²⁶ The other events of Josiah's reign, and his works of piety, all performed in accordance with what is laid down in the law of the LORD,

²⁷ and his acts from first to last are recorded in the annals of the kings of Israel and Judah.

36¹ THE people of the land took Josiah's son Jehoahaz and made him king at Jerusalem in place of his father.

² He was twenty-three years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for three months.

³Then Necho king of Egypt removed him from the throne in Jerusalem and imposed on the land an indemnity of a hundred talents of silver and one talent of gold.

⁴He made Jehoahaz's brother Eliakim king over Judah and Jerusalem in his place, and changed his name to Jehoiakim. He carried away his brother Jehoahaz to Egypt.

⁵Jehoiakim was twenty-five years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for eleven years. He did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD his God.

⁶King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon launched an attack against him, put him in bronze fetters, and took him to Babylon.

⁷Nebuchadnezzar also removed to Babylon some of the vessels of the house of the LORD and put them into his own palace there.

⁸The other events of Jehoiakim's reign, including the abominations he committed, and everything of which he was held guilty, are recorded in the

annals of the kings of Israel and Judah. His son Jehoiachin succeeded him.

⁹Jehoiachin was eight years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for three months and ten days. He did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD.

¹⁰At the turn of the year King Nebuchadnezzar sent and brought him to Babylon, together with the choicest vessels of the house of the LORD, and made his father's brother Zedekiah king over Judah and Jerusalem.

¹¹Zedekiah was twenty-one years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for eleven years.

¹²He did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD his God; he did not defer to the guidance of the prophet Jeremiah, the spokesman of the LORD.

¹³He also rebelled against King Nebuchadnezzar, who had laid on him a solemn oath of allegiance. He was stubborn and obstinate and refused to return to the LORD the God of Israel.

¹⁴All the chiefs of Judah and the priests and the people became more and more unfaithful, following all the abominable

practices of the other nations; and they defiled the house of the LORD which he had hallowed in Jerusalem.

¹⁵The LORD God of their forefathers had warned them time and again through his messengers, for he took pity on his people and on his dwelling-place;

¹⁶but they never ceased to deride his messengers, scorn his words, and scoff at his prophets, until the anger of the LORD burst out against his people and could not be appeased.

¹⁷He brought against them the king of the Chaldaeans, who put their young men to the sword in the sanctuary and spared neither young man nor maiden, neither the old nor the weak; God gave them all into his power.

¹⁸Nebuchadnezzar took all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the LORD and of the king and his officers -- all these he took to Babylon.

¹⁹They set fire to the house of God, razed to the ground the city wall of Jerusalem, and burnt down all its stately mansions and all the cherished

possessions in them until everything was destroyed.

²⁰Those who escaped the sword he carried captive to Babylon, and they became slaves to him and his sons until the sovereignty passed to the Persians,

²¹while the land of Israel ran the full term of its sabbaths. All the time that it lay desolate it kept the sabbath rest, to complete seventy years in fulfilment of the word of the LORD by the prophet Jeremiah.

²²In the first year of King Cyrus of Persia, the LORD, to fulfil his word spoken through Jeremiah, inspired the king to issue throughout his kingdom the following proclamation, which he also put in writing:

²³The decree of King Cyrus of Persia: The LORD the God of heaven has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he himself has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem in Judah. Whoever among you belongs to his people, may the LORD his God be with him, and let him go up.

Ezra

1 ¹IN the first year of King Cyrus of Persia the LORD, to fulfil his word spoken through Jeremiah, inspired the king to issue throughout his kingdom the following proclamation, which he also put in writing:

²The decree of King Cyrus of Persia. The LORD the God of the heavens has given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and he himself has charged me to build him a house at Jerusalem in Judah.

³Whoever among you belongs to his people, may his God be with him; and let him go up to Jerusalem in Judah, and build the house of the LORD the God of Israel, the God who is in Jerusalem.

⁴Let every Jew left among us, wherever he is settled throughout the country, be helped by his neighbours with silver and gold, goods and livestock, in addition to the voluntary offerings for the house of God in Jerusalem.

⁵Thereupon the heads of families of Judah and Benjamin came forward,

along with the priests and the Levites, all whom God had moved to go up and rebuild the house of the LORD in Jerusalem.

⁶Their neighbours all supported them with gifts of every kind, silver and gold, goods and livestock and valuable gifts in abundance, in addition to everything given as a freewill-offering.

⁷Moreover, King Cyrus brought out the vessels of the house of the LORD which Nebuchadnezzar had removed from Jerusalem and placed in the temple of his gods.

⁸When King Cyrus of Persia brought them out he gave them into the charge of Mithredath the treasurer, who made an inventory of them for Sheshbazzar the ruler of Judah.

⁹The list was as follows: thirty gold basins, a thousand silver basins, twenty-nine vessels of various kinds,

¹⁰thirty gold dishes, four hundred and ten silver dishes of various types, and a thousand other vessels.

¹¹In all there were five thousand four hundred gold and silver vessels; and Sheshbazzar took them all up to

Jerusalem, when the exiles were brought back there from Babylon.

2¹ Of the captives whom King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had taken into exile in Babylon, these were the people of the province who returned to Jerusalem and Judah, each to his own town.

² They were led by Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum, and Baanah. The number of the men of the Israelite nation:

³ the line of Parosh two thousand one hundred and seventy-two;

⁴ the line of Shephatiah three hundred and seventy-two;

⁵ the line of Arah seven hundred and seventy-five;

⁶ the line of Pahath-moab, namely the lines of Jeshua and Joab, two thousand eight hundred and twelve;

⁷ the line of Elam one thousand two hundred and fifty-four;

⁸ the line of Zattu nine hundred and forty-five;

⁹ the line of Zaccai seven hundred and sixty;

¹⁰ the line of Bani six hundred and forty-two;

¹¹ the line of Bebai six hundred and twenty-three;

¹² the line of Azgad one thousand two hundred and twenty-two;

¹³ the line of Adonikam six hundred and sixty-six;

¹⁴ the line of Bigvai two thousand and fifty-six;

¹⁵ the line of Adin four hundred and fifty-four;

¹⁶ the line of Ater, namely that of Hezekiah, ninety-eight;

¹⁷ the line of Bezai three hundred and twenty-three;

¹⁸ the line of Jorah one hundred and twelve;

¹⁹ the line of Hashum two hundred and twenty-three;

²⁰ the line of Gibbar ninety-five.

²¹ The men of Bethlehem one hundred and twenty-three;

²² the men of Netophah fifty-six;

²³ the men of Anathoth one hundred and twenty-eight;

²⁴ the men of Beth-azmoth forty-two;

²⁵ the men of Kiriath-jearim, Kephirah, and Beeroth seven hundred and forty-three;

²⁶ the men of Ramah and Geba six hundred and twenty-one;

²⁷ the men of Michmas one hundred and twenty-two;

²⁸ the men of Bethel and Ai two hundred and twenty-three;

²⁹ the men of Nebo fifty-two;

³⁰ the men of Magbish one hundred and fifty-six;

³¹ the men of the other Elam one thousand two hundred and fifty-four;

³² the men of Harim three hundred and twenty;

³³ the men of Lod, Hadid, and Ono seven hundred and twenty-five;

³⁴ the men of Jericho three hundred and forty-five;

³⁵ the men of Senaah three thousand six hundred and thirty.

³⁶ The priests: the line of Jedaiah, of the house of Jeshua, nine hundred and seventy-three;

³⁷ the line of Immer one thousand and fifty-two;

³⁸ the line of Pashhur one thousand two hundred and forty-seven;

³⁹ the line of Harim one thousand and seventeen.

⁴⁰ The Levites: the lines of Jeshua and Kadmiel, of the house of Hodaviah, seventy-four.

⁴¹ The singers: the line of Asaph one hundred and twenty-eight.

⁴² The guild of door-keepers: the line of Shallum, the line of Ater, the line of Talmon, the line of Akkub, the line of Hatita, and the line of Shobai, one hundred and thirty-nine in all.

⁴³ The temple servitors: the line of Ziha, the line of Hasupha, the line of Tabbaoth,

⁴⁴ the line of Keros, the line of Siaha, the line of Padon,

⁴⁵ the line of Lebanah, the line of Hagabah, the line of Akkub,

⁴⁶ the line of Hagab, the line of Shamlai, the line of Hanan,

⁴⁷ the line of Giddel, the line of Gahar, the line of Reaiah,

⁴⁸ the line of Rezin, the line of Nekoda, the line of Gazzam,

⁴⁹ the line of Uzza, the line of Paseah, the line of Besai,

⁵⁰ the line of Asnah, the line of the Meunim, the line of the Nephusim,

⁵¹ the line of Bakbuk, the line of Hakupha, the line of Harhur,

⁵² the line of Bazluth, the line of Mehida, the line of Harsha,

⁵³ the line of Barkos, the line of Sisera, the line of Temah,

⁵⁴ the line of Neziah, and the line of Hatipha.

⁵⁵ The descendants of Solomon's servants: the line of Sotai, the line of Hassophereth, the line of Peruda,

⁵⁶ the line of Jaalah, the line of Darkon, the line of Giddel,

⁵⁷ the line of Shephatiah, the line of Hattil, the line of Pochereth-hazzebaim, and the line of Ami.

⁵⁸ The temple servitors and the descendants of Solomon's servants amounted to three hundred and ninety-two in all.

⁵⁹ The following returned from Tel-melah, Tel-harsha, Kerub, Addan, and Immer, but could not prove by their father's line or their descent that they were Israelites:

⁶⁰ the line of Delaiah, the line of Tobiah, and the line of Nekoda, six hundred and fifty-two.

⁶¹ Also of the priests: the line of Hobaiah, the line of Hakkoz, and the line of Barzillai who had married a daughter of Barzillai the Gileadite and went by his name.

⁶² When these searched for their names among those enrolled in the genealogies, they could not be traced, and so they were deemed disqualified and debarred from officiating.

⁶³ The governor forbade them to partake of the most sacred food until there should be a priest able to consult the Urim and Thummim.

⁶⁴ The whole assembled people numbered forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty,

⁶⁵ apart from their slaves, male and female, of whom there were seven thousand three hundred and thirty-seven; and they had two hundred male and female singers.

⁶⁶ Their horses numbered seven hundred and thirty-six, their mules two hundred and forty-five,

⁶⁷ their camels four hundred and thirty-five, and their donkeys six thousand seven hundred and twenty.

⁶⁸ On their arrival at the house of the LORD in Jerusalem, certain of the heads of families offered to rebuild the house of God on its original site.

⁶⁹ According to their ability they gave to the treasury for the fabric a total of sixty-one thousand drachmas of gold, five thousand minas of silver, and one hundred priestly vestments.

⁷⁰ The priests, the Levites, and some of the people stayed in Jerusalem and the neighbourhood; the singers, the door-keepers and the temple servitors, and all the rest of the Israelites, lived in their own towns.

3¹ WHEN the seventh month came, the Israelites now being settled in their towns, the people came together with one accord to Jerusalem,

² and Jeshua son of Jozadak along with his fellow-priests, and Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, with his colleagues, set to work to build the altar of the God of Israel, in order to offer on it whole-offerings as

prescribed in the law of Moses, the man of God.

³They put the altar in place first, because they lived in fear of the foreign population; and they offered on it whole-offerings to the LORD, both morning and evening offerings.

⁴They kept the pilgrim-feast of Booths as decreed, and offered whole-offerings every day in the number prescribed for each day;

⁵in addition to these, they made the regular whole-offerings and the offerings for sabbaths, for new moons, and for all the sacred seasons appointed by the LORD, and all voluntary offerings made to the LORD.

⁶The presentation of whole-offerings began from the first day of the seventh month, although the foundations of the temple of the LORD had not yet been laid.

⁷Money was contributed for the masons and carpenters; the Sidonians and the Tyrians were supplied with food and drink and oil for bringing cedar trees from the Lebanon to the roadstead at

Joppa. This was done by authority of King Cyrus of Persia.

⁸In the second month of the second year, after they came to the house of God in Jerusalem, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Jeshua son of Jozadak began the work. They were aided by all their fellow-Israelites, the priests and the Levites and all who had returned to Jerusalem from captivity. Levites who were aged twenty years and upwards were appointed to supervise the work of the house of the LORD.

⁹Jeshua, with his sons and his kinsmen Kadmiel, Binnui, and Hodaviah, together assumed control of those doing the work on the house of God.

¹⁰When the builders had laid the foundation of the temple of the LORD, the priests in their robes took their places with their trumpets, and the Levites, the sons of Asaph, with cymbals, to praise the LORD in the manner prescribed by King David of Israel.

¹¹They chanted praises and thanksgiving to the LORD, singing, It is good to give thanks to the LORD, for his love towards Israel endures for

ever. The whole people raised a great shout of praise to the LORD because the foundation of the LORD's house had been laid.

¹²Many of the priests and Levites and heads of families, who were old enough to have seen the former house, wept and wailed aloud when they saw the foundation of this house laid, while many others shouted for joy at the tops of their voices.

¹³The people could not distinguish the sound of the shout of joy from that of the weeping and wailing, so great was the shout which the people were raising, and the sound could be heard a long way off.

4¹When those who were hostile to Judah and Benjamin heard that the returned exiles were building a temple to the LORD the God of Israel,

²they approached Zerubbabel and Jeshua and the heads of families. Let us build with you, they said, for like you we seek your God, and have sacrificed to him ever since the days of King Esarhaddon of Assyria who brought us here.

³But Zerubbabel and Jeshua and the rest of the heads of the Israelite families replied, It is not for you to share in building the house for our God; we alone are to build it for the LORD the God of Israel, as his majesty King Cyrus of Persia commanded us.

⁴Then the people of the land caused the Jews to lose heart and made them afraid to continue building;

⁵and, in order to thwart the purpose of the Jews, those people bribed officials at court to act against them. This continued throughout the lifetime of King Cyrus of Persia and into the reign of King Darius.

⁶At the beginning of the reign of Ahasuerus, the people of the land brought a charge in writing against the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem.

⁷In the days of King Artaxerxes of Persia, Tabeel and all his colleagues, with the agreement of Mithredath, wrote to the king; the letter was written in Aramaic and translated. (The following text is in Aramaic.)

⁸Rehum the high commissioner and Shimshai the secretary wrote a letter to

King Artaxerxes concerning Jerusalem as follows:

⁹From Rehum the High Commissioner, Shimshai the Secretary, and all their colleagues, the judges, the commissioners, the overseers and chief officers, the men of Erech and Babylon, and the Elamites in Susa,

¹⁰and the other peoples whom the great and renowned Asnappar deported and settled in the city of Samaria and in the rest of the province of Beyond-Euphrates.

¹¹Here follows a copy of their letter: To King Artaxerxes from his servants, the men of the province of Beyond-Euphrates.

¹²Be it known to your majesty that the Jews who left you to come here have arrived in Jerusalem. They are rebuilding that rebellious and wicked city; they are restoring the walls and repairing the foundations of the temple.

¹³Be it known to your majesty that, if their city is rebuilt and the walls are completed, they will pay neither general levy, nor poll tax, nor land tax, and in the end your royal house will suffer harm.

¹⁴Now, because we eat the king's salt and it is not right that we should witness the king's dishonour, therefore we have sent to bring it to your majesty's notice,

¹⁵in order that search may be made in the records left by your predecessors. You will discover by searching the records that this has been a rebellious city, harmful to the royal house and to the provinces, and that from earliest times sedition has been rife within its walls. For that reason it was laid in ruins.

¹⁶We submit to your majesty that, if this city is rebuilt and its walls are completed, the result will be that you will be denied a footing in the province of Beyond-Euphrates.

¹⁷The king sent this reply: To Rehum the High Commissioner, Shimshai the Secretary, and all your colleagues resident in Samaria and in the rest of the province of Beyond-Euphrates. Greeting.

¹⁸The letter which you sent to me has now been translated and read in my presence.

¹⁹I ordered search to be made and that city, it was discovered, has a long history of opposition to the royal house, and

rebellion and sedition have been rife in it.

²⁰There have been powerful kings ruling in Jerusalem and exercising authority over the whole province of Beyond-Euphrates; and general levy, poll tax, and land tax have been paid to them.

²¹Therefore, issue orders that these men must desist; this city is not to be rebuilt until a decree to that effect is issued by me.

²²See that you do not neglect your duty in this matter, lest more damage and harm result to the royal house.

²³When the copy of the letter from King Artaxerxes was read before Rehum the high commissioner, Shimshai the secretary, and their colleagues, they went at once to Jerusalem and forcibly compelled the Jews to stop work.

²⁴From then onwards the work on the house of God in Jerusalem ceased; it remained at a standstill till the second year of the reign of King Darius of Persia.

5¹The prophets Haggai and Zechariah son of Iddo prophesied to the Jews in

Judah and Jerusalem, rebuking them in the name of the God of Israel.

²Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel and Jeshua son of Jozadak, with the prophets of God at their side to help them, began at once to rebuild the house of God in Jerusalem.

³Immediately Tattenai, governor of the province of Beyond-Euphrates, Shethar-bozenai, and their colleagues came to them and asked, Who has given you authority to rebuild this house and complete its furnishings?

⁴They also asked for the names of the men engaged in the building.

⁵But the elders of the Jews were under God's watchful eye, and they were not prevented from continuing the work, until such time as a report should reach Darius and an official reply should be received.

⁶Here follows a copy of the letter to King Darius sent by Tattenai, governor of the province of Beyond-Euphrates, Shethar-bozenai, and his colleagues, the inspectors in the province of Beyond-Euphrates.

⁷This is the written report that they sent: To King Darius. All greetings.

⁸Be it known to your majesty that we went to the province of Judah and found the house of the great God being rebuilt, with massive stones and beams set in the walls. The work was being done energetically and was making rapid headway under the direction of the elders.

⁹We then enquired of them by whose authority they were building this house and completing the furnishings.

¹⁰We also asked them for their names, so that we might provide for your information a list of those in charge.

¹¹Their reply was as follows: We are servants of the God of heaven and earth, and we are rebuilding the house first erected many years ago; it was built and completed by a great king of Israel.

¹²But because our forefathers provoked the anger of the God of heaven, he delivered them into the power of the Chaldaean, King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. The house was demolished and the people carried away captive to Babylon.

¹³But King Cyrus of Babylon in the first year of his reign issued a decree that this house of God should be rebuilt.

¹⁴He brought out from the temple in Babylon the gold and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple in Jerusalem and put in the temple in Babylon, and he delivered them to a man named Sheshbazzar, whom he had appointed governor.

¹⁵He said to him, Take these vessels; go and restore them to the temple in Jerusalem, and let the house of God be rebuilt on its original site.

¹⁶Then this Sheshbazzar came and laid the foundations of the house of God in Jerusalem; and from that time until now the rebuilding has continued, and is still not completed.

¹⁷Now, therefore, if it please your majesty, let search be made in the royal treasury in Babylon, to discover whether a decree was issued by King Cyrus for the rebuilding of the house of God in Jerusalem, and let the king convey to us his wishes in the matter.

6¹ King Darius ordered search to be made in the archives where treasures were deposited in Babylon,

²and there was found in Ecbatana, in the royal residence in the province of Media, a scroll on which was written the following memorandum:

³In the first year of his reign King Cyrus issued this decree concerning the house of God in Jerusalem: Let the house be rebuilt as a place where sacrifices are offered and fire-offerings brought. Its height is to be sixty cubits and its breadth sixty cubits,

⁴with three courses of massive stones to one course of timber, the cost to be defrayed from the royal treasury.

⁵Also the gold and silver vessels of the house of God, which Nebuchadnezzar carried away from the temple in Jerusalem and brought to Babylon, are to be returned; they are all to be taken back to the temple in Jerusalem, and restored each to its place in the house of God.

⁶Then King Darius issued this instruction: Now, Tattenai, governor of the province of Beyond-Euphrates,

Shethar-bozenai, and your colleagues, the inspectors in the province of Beyond-Euphrates, you are to keep away from the place,

⁷ and to leave the governor of the Jews and their elders free to rebuild this house of God; let them rebuild it on its original site.

⁸ I also issue an order prescribing what you are to do for these elders of the Jews, so that the said house of God may be rebuilt. Their expenses are to be defrayed in full from the royal funds accruing from the taxes of the province of Beyond-Euphrates, so that the work may not be brought to a standstill.

⁹ Let there be provided for them daily without fail whatever they need, young bulls, rams, and lambs as whole-offerings for the God of heaven, and wheat, salt, wine, and oil, as the priests in Jerusalem require,

¹⁰ so that they may offer soothing sacrifices to the God of heaven, and pray for the life of the king and his sons.

¹¹ Furthermore, I decree that whoever tampers with this edict will have a beam torn out of his house, and he will be

fastened erect to it and flogged; in addition, his house is to be razed to the ground.

¹²May the God who made that place a dwelling for his name overthrow any king or people that presumes to tamper with this edict or to destroy this house of God in Jerusalem. I Darius have decreed it; let it be strictly obeyed.

¹³Then Tattenai, governor of the province of Beyond-Euphrates, Shethar-bozenai, and their colleagues carried out to the letter the instructions which King Darius had sent them,

¹⁴and the elders of the Jews went on with the rebuilding. Good progress was made with the sacred works, as the result of the prophecies of Haggai and Zechariah son of Iddo, and they finished the rebuilding as commanded by the God of Israel and according to the decrees of Cyrus and Darius and King Artaxerxes of Persia.

¹⁵The house was completed on the third day of the month of Adar, in the sixth year of the reign of King Darius.

¹⁶Then the Israelites, priests, Levites, and all the other exiles who had

returned, celebrated the rededication of this house of God with great rejoicing.

¹⁷At its rededication they offered one hundred bulls, two hundred rams, and four hundred lambs, and as a purification-offering for all Israel twelve he-goats, corresponding to the number of the tribes of Israel.

¹⁸They re-established the priests in their groups and the Levites in their divisions for the service of God in Jerusalem, as prescribed in the book of Moses.

¹⁹On the fourteenth day of the first month the returned exiles observed the Passover.

²⁰The priests and the Levites, one and all, had purified themselves; all of them were ritually clean, and they killed the Passover lamb for all the exiles who had returned, for their fellow-priests, and for themselves.

²¹It was eaten by the Israelites who had returned from exile and by all who had held aloof from the peoples of the land and their uncleanness, and had sought the LORD the God of Israel.

²²They observed the pilgrim-feast of Unleavened Bread for seven days with rejoicing; for the LORD had given them cause for joy by changing the disposition of the Assyrian king towards them, so that he supported them in the work of the house of God, the God of Israel.

7¹IT was after these events, in the reign of King Artaxerxes of Persia, that Ezra came. He was the son of Seraiah son of Azariah, son of Hilkiah,

²son of Shallum, son of Zadok, son of Ahitub,

³son of Amariah, son of Azariah, son of Meraioth,

⁴son of Zerariah, son of Uzzi, son of Bukki,

⁵son of Abishua, son of Phinehas, son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the chief priest.

⁶Ezra had come up from Babylon; he was a scribe, expert in the law of Moses which the LORD the God of Israel had given them. The king granted him everything he requested, for the favour of the LORD his God was with him.

⁷He was accompanied to Jerusalem by some Israelites, priests, Levites, temple singers, door-keepers, and temple

servitors in the seventh year of King Artaxerxes.

⁸They reached Jerusalem in the fifth month, in the seventh year of the king.

⁹On the first day of the first month Ezra fixed the day for departure from Babylon, and on the first day of the fifth month he arrived at Jerusalem; the favour of God was with him,

¹⁰for he had devoted himself to the study and observance of the law of the LORD and to teaching statute and ordinance in Israel.

¹¹This is a copy of the letter which King Artaxerxes had given to Ezra the priest and scribe, a scribe versed in questions concerning the commandments and the statutes of the LORD laid upon Israel:

¹²Artaxerxes, King of Kings, to Ezra the priest and scribe learned in the law of the God of heaven. This is my decision.

¹³I hereby issue a decree that any of the people of Israel or of its priests or Levites in my kingdom who volunteer to go to Jerusalem may go with you.

¹⁴You are sent by the king and his seven counsellors to consider the situation in Judah and Jerusalem with

regard to the law of your God with which you are entrusted.

¹⁵You are also to convey the silver and gold which the king and his counsellors have freely offered to the God of Israel whose dwelling is in Jerusalem,

¹⁶together with any silver and gold that you may find throughout the province of Babylon, and the voluntary offerings of the people and of the priests which they freely offer for the house of their God in Jerusalem.

¹⁷In pursuance of this decree you are to expend the money solely on the purchase of bulls, rams, and lambs, and the proper grain-offerings and drink-offerings, to be offered on the altar in the house of your God in Jerusalem.

¹⁸Further, should any silver and gold be left over, it may be put to such use as you and your colleagues think fit, according to the will of your God.

¹⁹In the presence of the God of Jerusalem you are to hand over the vessels which have been given you for the service of the house of your God.

²⁰Any other expenses you may incur for the needs of the house of your God will be defrayed from the royal treasury.

²¹I, King Artaxerxes, hereby issue an order to all treasurers in the province of Beyond-Euphrates, to supply exactly to Ezra the priest, a scribe learned in the law of the God of heaven, whatever he may request of you,

²²up to one hundred talents of silver, one hundred kor of wheat, one hundred bath of wine, one hundred bath of oil, and salt without a set limit.

²³Let all the commands of the God of heaven be diligently fulfilled for the house of the God of heaven; otherwise wrath may befall the realm of the king and his sons.

²⁴You are informed that you have no authority to impose a general levy, poll tax, or land tax on any of the priests, Levites, musicians, door-keepers, temple servitors, or other servants of this house of God.

²⁵You, Ezra, in accordance with the wisdom of your God with which you are entrusted, are to appoint arbitrators and judges to administer justice for

all your people in the province of Beyond-Euphrates, all who acknowledge the laws of your God, and you with them are to instruct those who do not know those laws.

²⁶Whoever will not obey the law of your God and the law of the king, let judgement be rigorously executed on him, be it death, banishment, confiscation of property, or imprisonment.

²⁷Then Ezra the scribe said, Blessed is the LORD the God of our fathers who has put such a thing as this into the king's mind, to glorify the house of the LORD in Jerusalem,

²⁸and has made the king and his counsellors and all his high officers well disposed towards me! Encouraged by the help of the LORD my God, I gathered leading men out of Israel to go up with me.

8¹These are the heads of families, as registered, family by family, of those who went up with me from Babylon in the reign of King Artaxerxes:

² of the line of Phinehas, Gershom; of the line of Ithamar, Daniel; of the line of David, Hattush

³ son of Shecaniah; of the line of Parosh, Zechariah, and with him a hundred and fifty males in the register;

⁴ of the line of Pahath-moab, Elihoenai son of Zerahiah, and with him two hundred males;

⁵ of the line of Zattu, Shecaniah son of Jahaziel, and with him three hundred males;

⁶ of the line of Adin, Ebed son of Jonathan, and with him fifty males;

⁷ of the line of Elam, Isaiah son of Athaliah, and with him seventy males;

⁸ of the line of Shephatiah, Zebadiah son of Michael, and with him eighty males;

⁹ of the line of Joab, Obadiah son of Jehiel, and with him two hundred and eighteen males;

¹⁰ of the line of Bani, Shelomith son of Josiphiah, and with him a hundred and sixty males;

¹¹ of the line of Bebai, Zechariah son of Bebai, and with him twenty-eight males;

¹²of the line of Azgad, Johanan son of Hakkatan, and with him a hundred and ten males.

¹³The last were the line of Adonikam, and these were their names: Eliphelet, Jeiel, and Shemaiah, and with them sixty males;

¹⁴and the line of Bigvai, Uthai and Zabbud, and with them seventy males.

¹⁵I assembled them by the river which flows towards Ahava, and we encamped there for three days. I checked the people and the priests, and finding no one there who was a Levite,

¹⁶I sent to Eliezer, Ariel, Shemaiah, Elnathan, Jarib, Elnathan, Nathan, Zechariah, and Meshullam, prominent men, and Joiarib and Elnathan, men of discretion,

¹⁷and instructed them to go to Iddo, the head of the settlement at Casiphia; and I gave them a message for him and his colleagues, the temple servitors there, asking that there should be sent to us men to serve in the house of our God.

¹⁸Under the providence of God they sent us Sherebiah, a man of discretion,

of the line of Mahli son of Levi, son of Israel, together with his sons and kinsmen, eighteen men in all;

¹⁹also Hashabiah, together with Isaiah of the line of Merari, his kinsmen and their sons, twenty men;

²⁰besides two hundred and twenty temple servitors, an order instituted by David and his officers to assist the Levites. These were all indicated by name.

²¹I proclaimed a fast there by the river Ahava, so that we might mortify ourselves before our God and ask him for a straightforward journey for ourselves, our dependants, and all our possessions.

²²I was ashamed to apply to the king for an escort of infantry and cavalry to protect us against enemies on the way, for we had told him that the might of our God would ensure a successful outcome for all those who looked to him; but his fierce anger is on all who forsake him.

²³So we fasted and asked our God for a safe journey, and he answered our prayer.

²⁴ Then I set apart twelve of the chiefs of the priests, together with Sherebiah and Hashabiah and ten of their kinsmen.

²⁵ I weighed out for them the silver and gold and the vessels, the contribution for the house of our God presented by the king, his counsellors and officers, and by all the Israelites there present, as their contribution to the house of our God.

²⁶ After weighing it, I handed over to them six hundred and fifty talents of silver, a hundred silver vessels weighing two talents, a hundred talents of gold,

²⁷ twenty gold dishes worth a thousand darics, and two vessels of a fine red copper, precious as gold.

²⁸ I said, Just as you are consecrated to the LORD, so too are the sacred vessels; the silver and gold are a voluntary offering to the LORD the God of your fathers.

²⁹ Guard them with all vigilance until you weigh them at Jerusalem in the rooms of the LORD's house in the presence of the chiefs of the priests, the Levites, and the heads of the families of Israel.

³⁰ So the priests and the Levites received the consignment of silver and gold and vessels, to be taken to the house of God in Jerusalem.

³¹ On the twelfth day of the first month we struck camp at the river Ahava and set out for Jerusalem. Under the protection of our God, who saved us from enemy attack and ambush on the way,

³² we reached Jerusalem and rested there for three days.

³³ On the fourth day the silver and gold and vessels were weighed and handed over in the house of our God into the charge of Meremoth son of Uriah the priest, with whom was Eleazar son of Phinehas; present with them were the Levites Jozabad son of Jeshua and Noadiah son of Binnui.

³⁴ Everything was counted and weighed and every weight recorded then and there.

³⁵ Those who had returned from captivity offered as whole-offerings to the God of Israel twelve bulls for all Israel, ninety-six rams, and seventy-seven lambs, with twelve he-goats as

a purification-offering; all these were offered as a whole-offering to the LORD.

³⁶They also delivered the king's commission to the royal satraps and governors in the province of Beyond-Euphrates; and these gave support to the people and the house of God.

9¹ONCE this business had been concluded, the leaders came to me and said, The people of Israel, including even priests and Levites, have not kept themselves apart from the alien population and from the abominable practices of the Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites, Ammonites, Moabites, Egyptians, and Amorites.

²They have taken women of these nations as wives for themselves and their sons, so that the holy race has become mixed with the alien population; and the leaders and magistrates have been the chief offenders.

³At this news I tore my robe and mantle; I plucked tufts from my beard and the hair of my head and sat appalled.

⁴All who went in fear of the words of the God of Israel gathered round me because of the offence of these exiles;

and I sat appalled until the evening sacrifice.

⁵Then, at the evening sacrifice, with my robe and mantle torn, I rose from my self-abasement and, kneeling down, held out my hands in prayer to the LORD my God.

⁶I am humiliated, my God, I said, I am ashamed, my God, to lift my face to you. Our sins tower above us, and our guilt is so great that it reaches high heaven.

⁷From the days of our forefathers down to this present day our guilt has been great. Because of our iniquities we and our kings and priests have been given into the power of foreign rulers to be killed, taken captive, pillaged, and humiliated to this very day.

⁸But now, for a brief moment, the LORD our God has been gracious to us, leaving us some survivors and giving us a foothold in his holy place; our God has brought light to our eyes again and given us some chance to renew our lives in our slavery.

⁹For slaves we are; nevertheless, our God has not forsaken us in our slavery, but has secured for us the favour of the

kings of Persia: they have provided us with the means of renewal, so that we may repair the house of our God and rebuild its ruins, thereby giving us a wall of defence for Judah and Jerusalem.

¹⁰Now, our God, in the face of this, what are we to say? For we have neglected your commandments,

¹¹given us through your servants the prophets. You said: The land which you are going to occupy is a land defiled with the pollution of its heathen population and their abominable practices; they have filled it with their impure ways from end to end.

¹²Now therefore do not marry your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons; nor must you ever seek their welfare or prosperity. Only thus will you be strong and enjoy the good things of the land, and hand it on as an everlasting possession to your descendants.

¹³After all that has come upon us through our evil deeds and great guilt -- although you, our God, have punished us less than our iniquities deserved and

have allowed us to survive as now we do
--

¹⁴ shall we once again disobey your commands and intermarry with peoples who indulge in such abominable practices? Would you not be so angry with us as to destroy us till no remnant, no survivor was left?

¹⁵ LORD God of Israel, you are just; for we today are a remnant that has survived. In all our guilt we are here before you; because of it we can no longer stand in your presence.

10¹ While Ezra was praying and making confession, prostrate in tears before the house of God, there gathered round him a vast throng of Israelites, men, women, and children, and there was widespread lamentation among the crowd.

² Shecaniah son of Jehiel, one of the family of Elam, spoke up and said to Ezra, We have broken faith with our God in taking foreign wives from the peoples of the land. But in spite of this, there is still hope for Israel.

³ Let us now pledge ourselves to our God to get rid of all such wives with their

children, according to your counsel, my lord, and the counsel of those who go in fear of the command of our God; and let the law take its course.

⁴Rise up, the matter is in your hands; and we are with you. Take strong action!

⁵Ezra got up and put the chiefs of the priests, the Levites, and all the Israelites on oath to act in this way, and they took the oath.

⁶Ezra then left the forecourt of the house of God and went to the room of Jehohanan grandson of Eliashib. He stayed there, eating no bread and drinking no water, for he was still mourning for the unfaithfulness of the returned exiles.

⁷A proclamation was issued throughout Judah and Jerusalem directing all the returned exiles to assemble at Jerusalem.

⁸If any failed to arrive within three days, as decided by the chief officers and the elders, they were to have all their property confiscated and would themselves be excluded from the community that had come from exile.

⁹Three days later, on the twentieth day of the ninth month, all the men of Judah and Benjamin had assembled in Jerusalem, where they all sat in the open space before the house of God, full of apprehension and shivering in the heavy rain.

¹⁰Ezra the priest stood up and addressed them: You have broken faith in marrying foreign women, he said and have added to Israel's guilt.

¹¹Now, make confession to the LORD the God of your fathers; do his will, cut yourselves off from the peoples of the land and from your foreign wives.

¹²The whole company assented loudly, saying, We shall do as you say!

¹³But, they added, our numbers are great; it is the rainy season and we cannot stay out in the open. Besides, this is not the work of one or two days only, for the offence is rife amongst us.

¹⁴Let our leading men act for the whole assembly, and let all those who have married foreign wives present themselves at stated times, accompanied by the elders and judges for each town,

until our God's fierce anger at what has been done is averted from us.

¹⁵ Only Jonathan son of Asahel and Jahzeiah son of Tikvah, supported by Meshullam and Shabbethai the Levite, opposed this.

¹⁶ The returned exiles duly put this into effect, and Ezra the priest selected, each by name, certain men, heads of households representing their families. They met in session to investigate the matter on the first day of the tenth month,

¹⁷ and by the first day of the first month the enquiry into all the marriages with foreign women was brought to a conclusion.

¹⁸ Among the members of priestly families who had married foreign women were found Maaseiah, Eliezer, Jarib, and Gedaliah, of the line of Jeshua son of Jozadak, and his brothers.

¹⁹ They pledged themselves to dismiss their wives, and to offer a ram from the flock as a reparation-offering for their offence.

²⁰ Of the line of Immer: Hanani and Zebadiah.

²¹ Of the line of Harim: Maaseiah, Elijah, Shemaiah, Jehiel, and Uzziah.

²² Of the line of Pashhur: Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethanel, Jozabad, and Elasah.

²³ Of the Levites: Jozabad, Shimei, Kelaiah (that is Kelita), Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer.

²⁴ Of the singers: Eliashib. Of the door-keepers: Shallum, Telem, and Uri.

²⁵ And of Israel: of the line of Parosh: Ramiah, Izziah, Malchiah, Mijamin, Eleazar, Malchiah, and Benaiah.

²⁶ Of the line of Elam: Mattaniah, Zechariah, Jehiel, Abdi, Jeremoth, and Elijah.

²⁷ Of the line of Zattu: Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Jeremoth, Zabad, and Aziza.

²⁸ Of the line of Bebai: Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, and Athlai.

²⁹ Of the line of Bani: Meshullam, Malluch, Adaiah, Jashub, Sheal, and Jeremoth.

³⁰ Of the line of Pahath-moab: Adna, Kelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezalel, Binnui, and Manasseh.

³¹ Of the line of Harim: Eliezer, Isshiah, Malchiah, Shemaiah, Simeon,

³² Benjamin, Malluch, and Shemariah.

³³ Of the line of Hashum: Mattenai, Mattattah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, and Shimei.

³⁴ Of the line of Bani: Maadai, Amram and Uel,

³⁵ Benaiah, Bedeiah and Keluhi,

³⁶ Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib,

³⁷ Mattaniah, Mattenai, and Jaasau.

³⁸ Of the line of Binnui: Shimei,

³⁹ Shelemiah, Nathan and Adaiah,

⁴⁰ Maknadebai, Shashai and Sharai,

⁴¹ Azarel, Shelemiah and Shemariah,

⁴² Shallum, Amariah, and Joseph.

⁴³ Of the line of Nebo: Jeiel, Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jaddai, Joel, and Benaiah.

⁴⁴ All these had married foreign women, and they dismissed them, together with their children.

Nehemiah

1 ¹THE narrative of Nehemiah son of Hacaliah. In the month of Kislev in the twentieth year, when I was in Susa the capital city, it happened

²that one of my brothers, Hanani, arrived with some other Judaeans. I asked them about Jerusalem and about the Jews, the families still remaining of those who survived the captivity.

³They told me that those who had survived the captivity and still lived in the province were facing dire trouble and derision; the wall of Jerusalem was broken down and its gates had been destroyed by fire.

⁴When I heard this news, I sat and wept, mourning for several days, fasting and praying before the God of heaven.

⁵This was my prayer: LORD God of heaven, great and terrible God faithfully keeping covenant with those who love him and observe his commandments,

⁶let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to my humble prayer, which now

day and night I make in your presence on behalf of your servants, the people of Israel. I confess the sins which we Israelites have committed against you, and of which my father's house and I are also guilty.

⁷We have acted very wrongly towards you and have not observed the commandments, statutes, and rules which you enjoined on your servant Moses.

⁸Remember what you impressed on him when you said: If you are unfaithful, I shall scatter you among the nations;

⁹but if you return to me and observe my commandments and fulfil them, I shall gather those of you who have been scattered to the far corners of the world and bring you to the place I have chosen as a dwelling for my name.

¹⁰They are your servants and people, whom you have redeemed with your great might and your strong hand.

¹¹Lord, let your ear be attentive to my humble prayer, and to the prayer of your servants who delight to revere your name. Grant me success this day, and put it into this man's heart to show me

kindness. I was then cupbearer to the king.

2¹ One day, in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when his wine was ready, I took it and handed it to the king, and as I stood before him my face revealed my unhappiness.

² The king asked, Why do you look so unhappy? You are not ill; it can be nothing but a feeling of unhappiness. I was very much afraid,

³ but I answered, May the king live for ever! But how can I help looking unhappy when the city where my forefathers are buried lies in ruins with its gates burnt down?

⁴ What then do you want? asked the king. With a prayer to the God of heaven,

⁵ I answered, If it please your majesty, and if I enjoy your favour, I beg you to send me to Judah, to the city where my forefathers are buried, so that I may rebuild it.

⁶ The king, with the queen consort sitting beside him, asked me, How long will the journey last, and when will you return? When I told him how long I

should be, the king approved the request and let me go.

⁷I then said to him, If it please your majesty, let letters be given me for the governors in the province of Beyond-Euphrates, with orders to grant me safe passage until I reach Judah.

⁸Let me have also a letter for Asaph, the keeper of your royal forests, instructing him to supply me with timber to make beams for the gates of the citadel, which adjoins the temple, and for the city wall, and for the temple which is the object of my journey. The king granted my requests, for the gracious hand of my God was upon me.

⁹I CAME in due course to the governors in the province of Beyond-Euphrates and presented the king's letters to them; the king had given me an escort of army officers with cavalry.

¹⁰But when Sanballat the Horonite and the slave Tobiah, an Ammonite, heard this, they were greatly displeased that someone should have come to promote the interests of the Israelites.

¹¹WHEN I arrived in Jerusalem, I waited three days.

¹²Then I set out by night, taking a few men with me, but without telling anyone what my God was prompting me to do for Jerusalem. Taking no beast with me except the one on which I myself rode,

¹³I went out by night through the Valley Gate towards the Dragon Spring and the Dung Gate; and I inspected the places where the walls of Jerusalem had been broken down, and its gates, which had been destroyed by fire.

¹⁴Then I passed on to the Fountain Gate and the King's Pool; but there was no room for me to ride through.

¹⁵I went up the valley by night and inspected the city wall; then I re-entered the city through the Valley Gate. So I arrived back

¹⁶without the magistrates knowing where I had been or what I was doing, for I had not yet told the Jews, neither the priests, the nobles, the magistrates, nor any of those who would be responsible for the work.

¹⁷Then I said to them, You see what trouble we are in: Jerusalem lies in ruins, its gates destroyed by fire. Come, let us

rebuild the wall of Jerusalem and suffer derision no more.

¹⁸I told them also how the gracious hand of my God had been upon me and also what the king had said to me. They replied, Let us start the rebuilding, and they set about the work vigorously and to good purpose.

¹⁹But when Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah the Ammonite slave, and Geshem the Arab heard of it, they jeered at us, asking contemptuously, What is this you are doing? Is this a rebellion against the king?

²⁰But I answered, The God of heaven will grant us success. We, his servants, are making a start with the rebuilding. But you have no stake, or claim, or traditional right in Jerusalem.

3¹ Eliashib the high priest and his fellow-priests set to work and rebuilt the Sheep Gate. They laid its beams and put its doors in place; they carried the work as far as the Tower of the Hundred and the Tower of Hananel, and consecrated it.

²The men of Jericho worked next to Eliashib; and next to them Zaccur son of Imri.

³The Fish Gate was built by the sons of Hassenaah; they laid its tie-beams and put its doors in place with their bolts and bars.

⁴Next to them Meremoth son of Uriah, son of Hakkoz, repaired his section; next to them Meshullam son of Berechiah, son of Meshezabel; next to them Zadok son of Baana did the repairs;

⁵and next again the men of Tekoa did the repairs, but their nobles would not demean themselves to serve their governor.

⁶The Jeshanah Gate was repaired by Joiada son of Paseah and Meshullam son of Besodeiah; they laid its tie-beams and put its doors in place with their bolts and bars.

⁷Next to them Melatiah the Gibeonite and Jadon the Meronothite, the men of Gibeon and Mizpah, did the repairs in the service of the governor of the province of Beyond-Euphrates.

⁸Next to them Uzziel son of Harhaiah, a goldsmith, did the repairs, and next

Hananiah of the perfumers' guild; they reconstructed Jerusalem as far as the Broad Wall.

⁹Next to them Rephaiah son of Hur, ruler of half the district of Jerusalem, did the repairs.

¹⁰Next to them Jedaiah son of Harumaph did the repairs opposite his own house; and next Hattush son of Hashabniah.

¹¹Malchiah son of Harim and Hasshub son of Pahath-moab repaired a second section including the Tower of the Ovens.

¹²Next to them Shallum son of Hallohesh, ruler of half the district of Jerusalem, did the repairs with the help of his daughters.

¹³The Valley Gate was repaired by Hanun and the inhabitants of Zanoah; they rebuilt it and put its doors in place with their bolts and bars, and they repaired a thousand cubits of the wall as far as the Dung Gate.

¹⁴The Dung Gate itself was repaired by Malchiah son of Rechab, ruler of the district of Beth-hakkerem; he rebuilt it and put its doors in place with their bolts and bars.

¹⁵The Fountain Gate was repaired by Shallun son of Col-hozeh, ruler of the district of Mizpah; he rebuilt and roofed it and put its doors in place with their bolts and bars; and he built the wall of the Pool of Shelah next to the king's garden and onwards as far as the steps leading down from the City of David.

¹⁶After him Nehemiah son of Azbuk, ruler of half the district of Beth-zur, did the repairs as far as a point opposite the burial-place of David, as far as the artificial pool and the barracks.

¹⁷After him the Levites did the repairs: Rehum son of Bani and next to him Hashabiah, ruler of half the district of Keilah, did the repairs for his district.

¹⁸After him their kinsmen did the repairs: Binnui son of Henadad, ruler of half the district of Keilah;

¹⁹next to him Ezer son of Jeshua, ruler of Mizpah, repaired a second section opposite the point at which the ascent meets the escarpment;

²⁰after him Baruch son of Zabbai repaired a second section, from the escarpment to the door of the house of Eliashib the high priest.

²¹ After him Meremoth son of Uriah, son of Hakkoz, repaired a second section, from the door of Eliashib's house to the end of his house.

²² After him the priests of the neighbourhood of Jerusalem did the repairs.

²³ Next Benjamin and Hasshub did the repairs opposite their own house; and next Azariah son of Maaseiah, son of Ananiah, did the repairs beside his house.

²⁴ After him Binnui son of Henadad repaired a second section, from the house of Azariah as far as the escarpment and the corner.

²⁵ Palal son of Uzai worked opposite the escarpment and the upper tower which projects from the king's house and belongs to the court of the guard. After him Pedaiah son of Parosh

²⁶ worked as far as a point on the east opposite the Water Gate and the projecting tower.

²⁷ Next the men of Tekoa repaired a second section, from a point opposite the great projecting tower as far as the wall of Ophel.

²⁸ Above the Horse Gate the priests did the repairs opposite their own houses.

²⁹ After them Zadok son of Immer did the repairs opposite his own house; after him Shemaiah son of Shecaniah, the keeper of the East Gate, did the repairs.

³⁰ After him Hananiah son of Shelemiah, along with Hanun, sixth son of Zalaph, repaired a second section. After him Meshullam son of Berechiah did the repairs opposite his room.

³¹ After him Malchiah, a goldsmith, did the repairs as far as the house of the temple servitors and the merchants, opposite the Mustering Gate, as far as the roof-chamber at the corner.

³² Between the roof-chamber at the corner and the Sheep Gate the goldsmiths and merchants did the repairs.

4¹ THE news that we were rebuilding the wall roused the indignation of Sanballat, and angrily he jeered at the Jews,

² saying in front of his companions and of the garrison in Samaria, What do these feeble Jews think they are doing? Do they mean to reconstruct the place?

Do they hope to offer sacrifice and finish the work in a day? Can they make stones again out of heaps of rubble, and burnt rubble at that?

³Tobiah the Ammonite, who was beside him, said, Whatever it is they are building, if a fox climbs up their stone walls, it will break them down.

⁴Hear, our God, how we are treated with contempt. Make their derision recoil on their own heads; let them become objects of contempt in a land of captivity.

⁵Do not condone their guilt or let their sin be struck off the record, for they have openly provoked the builders.

⁶We built up the wall until it was continuous all round up to half its height; and the people worked with a will.

⁷But when Sanballat and Tobiah, and the Arabs and Ammonites and Ashdodites, heard that the new work on the walls of Jerusalem had made progress and that the closing up of the breaches had gone ahead, they were furious,

⁸and all banded together to launch an attack on Jerusalem and create confusion.

⁹So we prayed to our God, and posted a guard against them day and night.

¹⁰In Judah it was said: The labourers strength has failed, and there is too much rubble; by ourselves we shall never be able to rebuild the wall.'

¹¹Our adversaries said, Before they know it or see anything, we shall be upon them, killing them and putting an end to the work.

¹²When the Jews living nearby came into the city, they warned us a dozen times that our adversaries would gather from every place where they lived to attack us,

¹³and that they would station themselves on the lowest levels below the wall, on patches of open ground. Accordingly I posted my people by families, armed with swords, spears, and bows.

¹⁴Then having surveyed the position I addressed the nobles, the magistrates, and the rest of the people. Do not be afraid of them, I said. Remember the Lord, great and terrible, and fight for your brothers, your sons and daughters, your wives and your homes.

¹⁵When our enemies heard that everything was known to us, and that God had frustrated their plans, we all returned to the wall, each to his task.

¹⁶From that day forward half the men under me were engaged in the actual building, while the other half stood by holding their spears, shields, and bows, and wearing coats of mail; and officers supervised all the people of Judah

¹⁷who were engaged on the wall. The porters carrying the loads held their load with one hand and a weapon with the other.

¹⁸The builders had their swords attached to their belts as they built. The trumpeter stayed beside me,

¹⁹and I said to the nobles, the magistrates, and all the people: The work is great and extends over much ground, and we are widely separated on the wall, each man at some distance from his neighbour.

²⁰Wherever you hear the trumpet sound, rally to us there, and our God will fight for us.

²¹ So with half the men holding spears we continued the work from daybreak until the stars came out.

²² At the same time I had said to the people, Let every man and his servant remain all night inside Jerusalem, to act as a guard for us by night and a working party by day.

²³ Neither I nor my kinsmen nor the men under me nor my bodyguard ever took off our clothes; each one kept his right hand on his spear.

5¹ THERE came a time when the common people, both men and women, raised a great outcry against their fellow-Jews.

² Some complained that they had to give their sons and daughters as pledges for food to eat to keep themselves alive;

³ others that they were mortgaging their fields, vineyards, and homes to buy grain during the famine;

⁴ still others that they were borrowing money on their fields and vineyards to pay the king's tax.

⁵ But, they said, our bodily needs are the same as other people's, our children are as good as theirs; yet here we are,

forcing our sons and daughters into slavery. Some of our daughters are already enslaved, and there is nothing we can do, because our fields and vineyards now belong to others.

⁶When I heard their outcry and the story they told, I was greatly incensed,

⁷but I controlled my feelings and reasoned with the nobles and the magistrates. I said to them, You are holding your fellow-Jews as pledges for debt. I rebuked them severely

⁸and said, As far as we have been able, we have bought back our fellow-Jews who had been sold to foreigners; but you are now selling your own fellow-countrymen, and they will have to be bought back by us! They were silent and had not a word to say.

⁹I went on, What you are doing is wrong. You ought to live so much in the fear of our God that you are above reproach in the eyes of the nations who are our enemies.

¹⁰Speaking for myself, I and my kinsmen and the men under me are advancing them money and grain. Let us give up this taking of pledges for debt.

¹¹ This very day give them back their fields and vineyards, their olive groves and houses, as well as the income in money, in grain, new wine, and oil.

¹² We shall give them back, they promised, and exact nothing more. We shall do as you say. Then after summoning the priests I put the offenders on oath to do as they had promised.

¹³ Also I shook out the fold of my robe and said, So may God shake out from house and property every man who fails to keep this promise. May he be shaken out like this and emptied! All the assembled people said Amen and praised the LORD; and they did as they had promised.

¹⁴ Moreover, from the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, the time when I was appointed governor in Judah, until his thirty-second year, a period of twelve years, neither I nor my kinsmen drew the governor's allowance of food.

¹⁵ Former governors, my predecessors, had laid a heavy burden on the people, exacting from them a daily toll of bread and wine to the value of forty shekels of

silver, while the men under them had also tyrannized over the people. But, because I feared God, I did not behave like this.

¹⁶Further, I put all my energy into working on the wall; I acquired no land, and all my men were gathered there for the work.

¹⁷At my table I had as guests a hundred and fifty Jews, including the magistrates, as well as men who came to us from the surrounding nations.

¹⁸The provision which had to be made each day was an ox and six prime sheep; fowls also were prepared for me, and every ten days skins of wine in abundance. Yet even so I did not draw the governor's allowance, because the people were so heavily burdened.

¹⁹God, remember me favourably for all that I have done for this people!

6¹When it was reported to Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab, and the rest of our enemies that I had rebuilt the wall and not a single gap remained in it -- although I had not yet set up the gates in the gateways --

²Sanballat and Geshem sent me an invitation to come and confer with them at Hakkephirim in the plain of Ono; their intention was to do me some harm.

³So I sent messengers to them with this reply: I have important work on my hands at the moment and am unable to come down. Why should the work be brought to a standstill while I leave it and come down to you?

⁴Four times they sent me a similar invitation, and each time I gave them the same answer.

⁵On a fifth occasion Sanballat made a similar approach, but this time his servant came with an open letter.

⁶It ran as follows: It is reported among the nations, and Gashmu confirms it, that you and the Jews are plotting rebellion, and that is why you are building the wall; it is further reported that you yourself want to be king,

⁷and have even appointed prophets to make this proclamation concerning you in Jerusalem: Judah has a king! Such matters will certainly get to the king's notice; so come at once and let us talk them over.

⁸I sent this reply: No such thing as you allege has taken place; your imagination has invented the whole story.

⁹They were all trying to intimidate us, in the hope that we should then relax our efforts and that the work would never be completed. Strengthen me for the work, was my prayer.

¹⁰One day I went to the house of Shemaiah son of Delaiah, son of Mehetabel, for he was confined to his house. He said, Let us meet in the house of God, within the sanctuary, and let us shut the doors, for they are coming to kill you, and they will come to do it by night.

¹¹But I said, Should a man like me run away? Can a man like me go into the sanctuary to save his life? I will not go.

¹²Then it dawned on me: God had not sent him. His prophecy aimed at harming me, and Tobiah and Sanballat had bribed him to utter it.

¹³He had been bribed to frighten me into compliance and into committing sin; then they could give me a bad name and discredit me.

¹⁴ God, remember Tobiah and Sanballat for what they have done, and also the prophetess Noadiah and all the other prophets who tried to intimidate me!

¹⁵ On the twenty-fifth day of the month of Elul the wall was finished; it had taken fifty-two days.

¹⁶ When all our enemies heard of it, and all the surrounding nations saw it, they thought it a very wonderful achievement, and recognized it was by the help of our God that this work had been accomplished.

¹⁷ In those days the nobles in Judah kept sending letters to Tobiah, and receiving replies from him,

¹⁸ for many in Judah were in league with him, because he was a son-in-law of Shecaniah son of Arah, and his son Jehohanan had married a daughter of Meshullam son of Berechiah.

¹⁹ They were always praising him in my presence and repeating to him what I said. Tobiah also wrote to me to intimidate me.

7 ¹ WHEN the wall had been rebuilt, and I had put the gates in place and the gate-keepers had been appointed,

²I gave the charge of Jerusalem to my brother Hanani and to Hananiah, the governor of the citadel, for he was trustworthy and godfearing above other men.

³I said to them, The entrances to Jerusalem are not to be left open during the heat of the day; the gates must be kept shut and barred while the gate-keepers are standing at ease. Appoint guards from among the inhabitants of Jerusalem, some on sentry duty and others posted in front of their own homes.

⁴The city was large and spacious; there were few people in it and no houses had yet been rebuilt.

⁵Then God prompted me to assemble the nobles, the magistrates, and the people, to be enrolled family by family. I discovered the register of the genealogies of those who had been the first to come back, and this is what I found written in it:

⁶Of the captives whom King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had taken into exile, these are the people of the

province who have returned to Jerusalem and Judah, each to his own town,

⁷ led by Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum, and Baanah. The roll of the men of the people of Israel:

⁸ the line of Parosh two thousand one hundred and seventy-two;

⁹ the line of Shephatiah three hundred and seventy-two;

¹⁰ the line of Arah six hundred and fifty-two;

¹¹ the line of Pahath-moab, namely the lines of Jeshua and Joab, two thousand eight hundred and eighteen;

¹² the line of Elam one thousand two hundred and fifty-four;

¹³ the line of Zattu eight hundred and forty-five;

¹⁴ the line of Zaccai seven hundred and sixty;

¹⁵ the line of Binnui six hundred and forty-eight;

¹⁶ the line of Bebai six hundred and twenty-eight;

¹⁷ the line of Azgad two thousand three hundred and twenty-two;

¹⁸ the line of Adonikam six hundred and sixty-seven;

¹⁹ the line of Bigvai two thousand and sixty-seven;

²⁰ the line of Adin six hundred and fifty-five;

²¹ the line of Ater, namely that of Hezekiah, ninety-eight;

²² the line of Hashum three hundred and twenty-eight;

²³ the line of Bezai three hundred and twenty-four;

²⁴ the line of Hariph one hundred and twelve;

²⁵ the line of Gibeon ninety-five.

²⁶ The men of Bethlehem and Netophah one hundred and eighty-eight;

²⁷ the men of Anathoth one hundred and twenty-eight;

²⁸ the men of Beth-azmoth forty-two;

²⁹ the men of Kiriath-jearim, Kephirah, and Beeroth seven hundred and forty-three;

³⁰ the men of Ramah and Geba six hundred and twenty-one;

³¹ the men of Michmas one hundred and twenty-two;

³² the men of Bethel and Ai one hundred and twenty-three;

³³ the men of Nebo fifty-two;

³⁴ the men of the other Elam one thousand two hundred and fifty-four;

³⁵ the men of Harim three hundred and twenty;

³⁶ the men of Jericho three hundred and forty-five;

³⁷ the men of Lod, Hadid, and Ono seven hundred and twenty-one;

³⁸ the men of Senaah three thousand nine hundred and thirty.

³⁹ Priests: the line of Jedaiah, of the house of Jeshua, nine hundred and seventy-three;

⁴⁰ the line of Immer one thousand and fifty-two;

⁴¹ the line of Pashhur one thousand two hundred and forty-seven;

⁴² the line of Harim one thousand and seventeen.

⁴³ Levites: the lines of Jeshua and Kadmiel, of the house of Hodvah, seventy-four.

⁴⁴ Singers: the line of Asaph one hundred and forty-eight.

⁴⁵ Door-keepers: the line of Shallum, the line of Ater, the line of Talmon, the line of Akkub, the line of Hatita, and the line of Shobai, one hundred and thirty-eight in all.

⁴⁶ Temple servitors: the line of Ziha, the line of Hasupha, the line of Tabbaoth,

⁴⁷ the line of Keros, the line of Sia, the line of Padon,

⁴⁸ the line of Lebanah, the line of Hagabah, the line of Shalmal,

⁴⁹ the line of Hanan, the line of Giddel, the line of Gahar,

⁵⁰ the line of Reaiah, the line of Rezin, the line of Nekoda,

⁵¹ the line of Gazzam, the line of Uzza, the line of Paseah,

⁵² the line of Besai, the line of the Meunim, the line of the Nephishesim,

⁵³ the line of Bakbuk, the line of Hakupha, the line of Harhur,

⁵⁴ the line of Bazlith, the line of Mehida, the line of Harsha,

⁵⁵ the line of Barkos, the line of Sisera, the line of Temah,

⁵⁶ the line of Neziah, and the line of Hatipha.

⁵⁷ Descendants of Solomon's servants: the line of Sotai, the line of Sophereth, the line of Perida,

⁵⁸ the line of Jaalah, the line of Darkon, the line of Giddel,

⁵⁹ the line of Shephatiah, the line of Hattil, the line of Pochereth-hazzebaim, and the line of Amon.

⁶⁰ The temple servitors and the descendants of Solomon's servants amounted to three hundred and ninety-two in all.

⁶¹ The following were those who returned from Tel-melah, Tel-harsha, Kerub, Addon, and Immer, but could not establish their father's line nor whether by descent they belonged to Israel:

⁶² the line of Delaiah, the line of Tobiah, the line of Nekoda, six hundred and forty-two.

⁶³ Also of the priests: the line of Hobaiah, the line of Hakkoz, and the line of Barzillai who had married a daughter of Barzillai the Gileadite and went by his name.

⁶⁴ These searched for their names among those enrolled in the genealogies, but they could not be found; they

were disqualified for the priesthood as unclean,

⁶⁵ and the governor forbade them to partake of the most sacred food until there should be a priest able to consult the Urim and the Thummim.

⁶⁶ The whole assembled people numbered forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty,

⁶⁷ apart from their slaves, male and female, of whom there were seven thousand three hundred and thirty-seven; and they had two hundred and forty-five singers, men and women.

⁶⁸ Their horses numbered seven hundred and thirty-six, their mules two hundred and forty-five,

⁶⁹ their camels four hundred and thirty-five, and their donkeys six thousand seven hundred and twenty.

⁷⁰ Some of the heads of families gave contributions for the work. The governor gave to the treasury a thousand gold drachmas, fifty tossing-bowls, and five hundred and thirty priestly vestments.

⁷¹ Some of the heads of families gave for the fabric fund twenty thousand

gold drachmas and two thousand two hundred silver minas.

⁷²What the rest of the people gave us was twenty thousand gold drachmas, two thousand silver minas, and sixty-seven priestly vestments.

⁷³The priests and Levites, with some of the people, lived in Jerusalem and its neighbourhood; the door-keepers, the singers, the temple servitors, and all other Israelites lived in their own towns. WHEN the seventh month came, and the Israelites were now settled in their towns,

8¹ all the people assembled with one accord in the broad space in front of the Water Gate, and requested Ezra the scribe to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had enjoined upon Israel.

²On the first day of the seventh month, Ezra the priest brought the law before the whole assembly, both men and women, and all who were capable of understanding what they heard.

³From early morning till noon he read aloud from it, facing the square in front of the Water Gate, in the presence of

the men and the women, and those who could understand; the people all listened attentively to the book of the law.

⁴Ezra the scribe stood on a wooden platform which had been made for this purpose; beside him stood Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah on his right hand, and on his left Pedaiah, Mishael, Malchiah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam.

⁵Then Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above them; and when he opened it, they all stood.

⁶Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God, and all the people raised their hands and responded, Amen, Amen; then they bowed their heads and prostrated themselves before the LORD.

⁷Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, and Pelaiah, the Levites, expounded the law to the people while the people remained in their places.

⁸They read from the book of the law of God clearly, made its sense plain, and gave instruction in what was read.

⁹Then Nehemiah the governor and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who instructed the people, said to them all, This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep; for the people had all been weeping while they listened to the words of the law.

¹⁰Go now, he continued, feast yourselves on rich food and sweet drinks, and send a share to all who cannot provide for themselves, for the day is holy to our Lord. Let there be no sadness, for joy in the LORD is your strength.

¹¹The Levites calmed the people, saying, Be quiet, for this day is holy; let there be no sadness.

¹²So all the people went away to eat and to drink, to send shares to others, and to celebrate the day with great rejoicing, because they had understood what had been explained to them.

¹³On the second day the heads of families of the whole people, with the

priests and the Levites, assembled before Ezra the scribe to study the law.

¹⁴They found written in the law that the LORD had given commandment through Moses that the Israelites were to live in booths during the feast of the seventh month;

¹⁵they should issue this proclamation throughout all their towns and in Jerusalem: Go out to the hills and fetch branches of olive and wild olive, myrtle and palm, and other leafy boughs, to make booths as prescribed.

¹⁶So the people went and fetched branches and made booths for themselves, each on his own roof, and in their courtyards and in the precincts of the house of God, and in the square at the Water Gate and the square at the Ephraim Gate.

¹⁷The whole community of those who had returned from the captivity made booths and lived in them, a thing that the Israelites had not done from the days of Joshua son of Nun until that day; and there was very great rejoicing.

¹⁸The book of the law of God was read day by day, from the first day to the last.

They kept the feast for seven days, and on the eighth day there was a closing ceremony, according to the rule.

9¹ ON the twenty-fourth day of this month the Israelites, clothed in sackcloth and with dust on their heads, assembled for a fast.

² Those who were of Israelite descent separated themselves from all who were foreigners; they stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their forefathers.

³ Then, while they stood up where they were, the book of the law of the LORD their God was read for one quarter of the day, and another quarter of the day they spent in confession and in worshipping the LORD their God.

⁴ On the steps assigned to the Levites stood Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, and Kenani, and they cried aloud to the LORD their God.

⁵ Then the Levites, Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabniah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah, and Pethahiah, said, Stand up and bless the LORD your God in these words: From everlasting to everlasting

may your glorious name be blessed and exalted above all blessing and praise.

⁶You alone are the LORD; you created the heavens, the highest heavens with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them. You give life to them all, and the heavenly host worships you.

⁷You are the LORD, the God who chose Abram, who brought him from Ur of the Chaldees and named him Abraham.

⁸Finding him faithful you made a covenant with him to give to his descendants the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, and Perizzites, Jebusites, and Girgashites; you fulfilled your promise, for you are just.

⁹You saw the misery of our forefathers in Egypt and heard their cry at the Red Sea.

¹⁰You worked signs and portents against Pharaoh, against all his courtiers and the people of his land, for you knew how arrogantly they treated our forefathers; and you won for yourself renown that lives to this day.

¹¹You divided asunder the sea before them, and they passed through on dry

ground; but their pursuers you flung into the depths, like a stone flung into turbulent waters.

¹²By a pillar of cloud you guided them in the daytime, and at night by a pillar of fire to light the road they were to travel.

¹³You came down on Mount Sinai and spoke to them from heaven; you gave them right judgements and true laws, statutes and commandments which were good.

¹⁴You made known to them your holy sabbath, and through Moses your servant you gave them commandments, statutes, and laws.

¹⁵You gave them bread from heaven to stay their hunger and brought water out from a rock to quench their thirst. You bade them enter and take possession of the land which you had solemnly sworn to give them.

¹⁶But they, our forefathers, were arrogant; stubbornly they flouted your commandments.

¹⁷They refused to listen, forgetful of the miracles you had accomplished among them. In their stubbornness they appointed a leader to bring them back to

slavery in Egypt. But you are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, long-suffering and ever constant, and you did not abandon them.

¹⁸Even when they made for themselves the metal image of a bull-calf and said, This is your god who brought you up from Egypt, and were guilty of gross blasphemies,

¹⁹you in your great compassion did not abandon them in the wilderness. The pillar of cloud never failed to guide them on their journey by day, nor did the pillar of fire fail by night to light the road they were to travel.

²⁰You gave your good spirit to instruct them; you did not withhold your manna, and you gave them water for their thirst.

²¹During forty years you sustained them; in the wilderness they lacked nothing, their clothes did not wear out, and their feet were not swollen.

²²You gave them kings and their people as spoils of war. They took possession of the land of King Sihon of Heshbon and the land of King Og of Bashan.

²³You made their descendants numerous, countless as the stars in the

sky, and brought them into the land you had promised their forefathers they would enter and possess.

²⁴When their descendants came into the land to take possession of it, you subdued the Canaanite inhabitants before them, giving kings and peoples into their hands to do with them as they pleased.

²⁵They captured fortified towns and fertile land, taking possession of houses filled with all good things, of rock-hewn cisterns, vineyards, olive groves, and fruit trees in abundance. They ate and were satisfied and grew fat; they found delight in your great goodness.

²⁶In growing defiance, they rebelled and turned their backs on your law. They killed your prophets, who with warnings admonished them to bring them again to you; they were guilty of great blasphemies.

²⁷You handed them over to enemies to be oppressed. But when they, under oppression, appealed to you, from heaven you heard them and in your great compassion sent saviours to save them from their enemies.

²⁸After some respite again they did what was wrong in your eyes, and you abandoned them to their enemies, who held them in subjection. Yet once more they appealed to you, and time after time you heard them from heaven and in your compassion saved them.

²⁹To bring them back to your law you solemnly warned them, but arrogantly they flouted your commandments, sinning against the ordinances which bring life to those who keep them. Stubbornly they turned aside; in their obstinacy they would not obey.

³⁰For many years you were patient and your spirit admonished them through the prophets. Still they would not listen, and so you handed them over to the peoples of other countries.

³¹Nevertheless in your great compassion you did not make an end of them or forsake them; for you are a gracious and compassionate God.

³²Now, great and mighty and terrible God, faithfully keeping covenant, our God, do not regard as a small thing the hardships that have befallen us, our kings and princes, our priests, our

prophets, our forefathers, and all your people from the time of the kings of Assyria up to the present day.

³³In all that has come upon us you have been just, for you have kept faith while we have done wrong.

³⁴Our kings, our princes, our priests, and our forefathers did not keep your law; they paid no heed to your commandments and the warnings you gave them.

³⁵Even in their own kingdom, while they were enjoying the great prosperity you gave them, and the broad, fertile land you bestowed on them, they did not serve you or renounce their evil ways.

³⁶Today we are slaves, slaves here in the land which you gave to our forefathers so that they might eat its fruits and enjoy its good things.

³⁷All its produce now goes to the kings whom you have set over us because of our sins. They have power over our bodies, and they do as they please with our livestock: we are in dire distress.

³⁸Because of all this we make a binding declaration in writing, and our princes,

our Levites, and our priests witness the sealing.

10¹ Those who witness the sealing are Nehemiah the governor, son of Hacaliah, Zedekiah,

² Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah,

³ Pashhur, Amariah, Malchiah,

⁴ Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluch,

⁵ Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah,

⁶ Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch,

⁷ Meshullam, Abiah, Mijamin,

⁸ Maaziah, Bilgai, Shemaiah; these are the priests.

⁹ The Levites: Jeshua son of Azaniah, Binnui of the line of Henadad, Kadmiel;

¹⁰ and their brethren, Shebaniah, Hodiah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan,

¹¹ Mica, Rehob, Hashabiah,

¹² Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah,

¹³ Hodiah, Bani, Beninu.

¹⁴ The chiefs of the people: Parosh, Pahath-moab, Elam, Zattu, Bani,

¹⁵ Bunni, Azgad, Bebai,

¹⁶ Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin,

¹⁷ Ater, Hezekiah, Azzur,

¹⁸ Hodiah, Hashum, Bezai,

¹⁹ Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai,

²⁰ Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir,

²¹ Meshezabel, Zadok, Jaddua,

²² Pelatiah, Hanan, Anaiah,

²³ Hoshea, Hananiah, Hasshub,

²⁴ Hallohesh, Pilha, Shobek,

²⁵ Rehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah,

²⁶ Ahiah, Hanan, Anan,

²⁷ Malluch, Harim, Baanah.

²⁸ The rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the door-keepers, the singers, the temple servitors, with their wives, their sons, and their daughters, all who are capable of understanding, all who for the sake of the law of God have kept themselves apart from the foreign population,

²⁹ join with the leading brethren, when the oath is put to them, in swearing to obey God's law given by Moses the servant of God, and to observe and fulfil all the commandments of the LORD our Lord, his rules and his statutes.

³⁰ We shall not give our daughters in marriage to the foreign population or take their daughters for our sons.

³¹ If on the sabbath these people bring in merchandise or grain for sale, we shall not buy from them on the sabbath or on any holy day. We shall forgo the crops

of the seventh year and release every person still held as a pledge for debt.

³²We hereby undertake the duty of giving yearly one third of a shekel for the service of the house of our God:

³³for the rows of the Bread of the Presence, the regular grain-offering and whole-offering, the sabbaths, the new moons, the appointed seasons, the holy-gifts, and the purification-offerings to make expiation on behalf of Israel, and for all else that has to be done in the house of our God.

³⁴We, the priests, the Levites, and the people, have cast lots for the wood-offering, so that it may be brought into the house of our God by each family in turn, at appointed times, year by year, to burn upon the altar of the LORD our God, as prescribed in the law.

³⁵We undertake to bring the firstfruits of our land and the firstfruits of every fruit tree, year by year, to the house of the LORD;

³⁶also to bring to the house of our God, to the priests who minister in the house of our God, the firstborn of our sons and of our cattle, as prescribed in the law,

and the firstborn of our herds and of our flocks;

³⁷ and to bring to the priests the first kneading of our dough, and the first of the fruit of every tree, of the new wine and of the oil, to the storerooms in the house of our God; and to bring to the Levites the tithes from our land, for it is the Levites who collect the tithes in all our farming villages.

³⁸ An Aaronite priest must be with the Levites when they collect the tithes; and the Levites are to bring up one tenth of the tithes to the house of our God, to the appropriate rooms in the storehouse.

³⁹ For the Israelites and the Levites must bring the contribution of grain, new wine, and oil to the rooms where the vessels of the sanctuary are kept, and where the ministering priests, the door-keepers, and the singers are lodged. We shall not neglect the house of our God.

11 ¹ THE leaders of the people settled in Jerusalem; and the rest of the people cast lots to bring one in every ten to live in Jerusalem, the Holy City, while the remaining nine lived in other towns.

²The people invoked a blessing on all those who volunteered to settle in Jerusalem.

³These are the chiefs of the province who lived in Jerusalem; but, in the towns of Judah, other Israelites, priests, Levites, temple servitors, and descendants of Solomon's servants lived on their own property, in their own towns.

⁴Some members of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin lived in Jerusalem. Of Judah: Athaiah son of Uzziah, son of Zechariah, son of Amariah, son of Shephatiah, son of Mahalalel of the line of Perez,

⁵and Maaseiah son of Baruch, son of Col-hozeh, son of Hazaiah, son of Adaiah, son of Joiarib, son of Zechariah of the Shelanite family.

⁶all of whose family, to the number of four hundred and sixty-eight men of substance, lived in Jerusalem;

⁷These were the Benjamites: Sallu son of Meshullam, son of Joed, son of Pedaiah, son of Kolaiah, son of Maaseiah, son of Ithiel, son of Isaiah,

⁸and his kinsmen Gabbai and Sallai, nine hundred and twenty-eight in all.

⁹Joel son of Zichri was their overseer, and Judah son of Hassenuah was second over the city.

¹⁰Of the priests: Jedaiah son of Joiarib, son of

¹¹Seraiah, son of Hilkiah, son of Meshullam, son of Zadok, son of Meraioth, son of Ahitub, supervisor of the house of God,

¹²and his brethren responsible for the work in the temple, eight hundred and twenty-two in all; and Adaiah son of Jeroham, son of Pelaliah, son of Amzi, son of Zechariah, son of Pashhur, son of Malchiah,

¹³and his brethren, heads of fathers' houses, two hundred and forty-two in all; and Amashai son of Azarel, son of Ahzai, son of Meshillemoth, son of Immer,

¹⁴and his brethren, men of substance, a hundred and twenty-eight in all; their overseer was Zabdiel son of Haggadolim.

¹⁵And of the Levites: Shemaiah son of Hasshub, son of Azrikam, son of Hashabiah, son of Bunni;

¹⁶and Shabbethai and Jozabad of the chiefs of the Levites, who had charge of the external business of the house of God;

¹⁷and Mattaniah son of Micah, son of Zabdi, son of Asaph, who as precentor led the prayer of thanksgiving, and Bakbukiah who held the second place among his brethren; and Abda son of Shammua, son of Galal, son of Jeduthun.

¹⁸The number of Levites in the Holy City was two hundred and eighty-four in all.

¹⁹The gate-keepers who kept guard at the gates were Akkub, Talmon, and their brethren, a hundred and seventy-two.

²⁰The rest of the Israelites were in all the towns of Judah, each man on his own inherited property.

²¹But the temple servitors lodged on Mount Ophel, and Ziha and Gishpa were in charge of them.

²²The overseer of the Levites in Jerusalem was Uzzi son of Bani, son of Hashabiah, son of Mattaniah, son of Mica, of the line of Asaph, the singers, for the supervision of the business of the house of God.

²³For they were under the king's orders, and there was obligatory duty for the singers every day.

²⁴Pethahiah son of Meshezabel, of the line of Zerah son of Judah, was the king's adviser on all matters affecting the people.

²⁵As for the hamlets with their surrounding fields: some of the men of Judah lived in Kiriath-arba and its villages, in Dibon and its villages, and in Jekabzeel and its hamlets,

²⁶in Jeshua, Moladah, and Bethpelet,

²⁷in Hazar-shual, and in Beersheba and its villages,

²⁸in Ziklag and in Meconah and its villages,

²⁹in Enrimmon, Zorah, and Jarmuth,

³⁰in Zanoah, Adullam, and their hamlets, in Lachish and its fields, and Azekah and its villages. Thus they occupied the country from Beersheba to the valley of Hinnom.

³¹The men of Benjamin lived in Geba, Michmash, Aiah, and Bethel with its villages,

³²in Anathoth, Nob, and Ananiah,

³³in Hazor, Ramah, and Gittaim,

³⁴in Hadid, Zeboim, and Neballat,

³⁵in Lod, Ono, and Ge-harashim.

³⁶Certain divisions of the Levites in Judah were attached to Benjamin.

12¹These are the priests and the Levites who came back with Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, and with Jeshua: Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra,

²Amariah, Malluch, Hattush,

³Shecaniah, Rehum, Meremoth,

⁴Iddo, Ginnethon, Abiah,

⁵Mijamin, Maadiah, Bilgah,

⁶Shemaiah, Joiarib, Jedaiah,

⁷Sallu, Amok, Hilkiah, Jedaiah. These were the chiefs of the priests and of their brethren in the days of Jeshua.

⁸And the Levites: Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, and Mattaniah, who with his brethren was in charge of the songs of thanksgiving.

⁹And Bakbukiah and Unni their brethren stood opposite them in the service.

¹⁰And Jeshua was the father of Joiakim, Joiakim the father of Eliashib, Eliashib of Joiada,

¹¹Joiada the father of Jonathan, and Jonathan the father of Jaddua.

¹²And in the days of Joiakim the priests who were heads of families were: of Seraiah, Meraiah; of Jeremiah, Hananiah;

¹³of Ezra, Meshullam; of Amariah, Jehohanan;

¹⁴of Melichu, Jonathan; of Shebaniah, Joseph;

¹⁵of Harim, Adna; of Meraioth, Helkai;

¹⁶of Iddo, Zechariah; of Ginnethon, Meshullam;

¹⁷of Abiah, Zichri; of Miniamin; of Moadiah, Piltai;

¹⁸of Bilgah, Shammua; of Shemaiah, Jehonathan;

¹⁹of Joiarib, Mattenai; of Jedaiah, Uzzi;

²⁰of Sallu, Kallai; of Amok, Eber;

²¹of Hilkiah, Hashabiah; of Jedaiah, Nethanel.

²²The heads of the priestly families in the days of Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan, and Jaddua were recorded down to the reign of Darius the Persian.

²³The heads of the levitical families were recorded in the annals only down to the days of Johanan the grandson of Eliashib.

²⁴ And the chiefs of the Levites: Hashabiah, Sherebiah, Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, with their brethren in the other turn of duty, to praise and to give thanks, according to the commandment of David the man of God, turn by turn.

²⁵ Mattaniah, Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, and Akkub were gate-keepers standing guard at the gatehouses.

²⁶ This was the arrangement in the days of Joiakim son of Jeshua, son of Jozadak, and in the days of Nehemiah the governor and of Ezra the priest and scribe.

²⁷ At the dedication of the wall of Jerusalem the Levites, wherever they had settled, were sought out and brought to the city to celebrate the dedication with rejoicing, with thanksgiving and song, to the accompaniment of cymbals, harps, and lyres.

²⁸ The Levites, the singers, were assembled from the district round Jerusalem and from the hamlets of the Netophathites,

²⁹ also from Beth-gilgal and the region of Geba and Beth-azmoth; for the

singers had built themselves hamlets in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem.

³⁰When the priests and the Levites had purified themselves, they purified the people, the gates, and the wall.

³¹Then I assembled the leading men of Judah on the city wall, and appointed two large choirs to give thanks. One went in procession to the right, going along the wall to the Dung Gate;

³²and after it went Hoshaiah with half the leading men of Judah,

³³and Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam,

³⁴Judah, Benjamin, Shemaiah, and Jeremiah;

³⁵and certain of the priests with trumpets: Zechariah son of Jonathan, son of Shemaiah, son of Mattaniah, son of Micaiah, son of Zaccur, son of Asaph,

³⁶and his kinsmen, Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah, and Hanani, with the musical instruments of David the man of God; and Ezra the scribe led them.

³⁷They went past the Fountain Gate and thence straight forward by the steps up to the City of David, by the ascent to

the city wall, past the house of David, and on to the Water Gate on the east.

³⁸The other thanksgiving choir went to the left, and I followed it with half the leading men of the people, continuing along the wall, past the Tower of the Ovens to the Broad Wall,

³⁹and past the Ephraim Gate, and over the Jeshanah Gate, and over the Fish Gate, taking in the Tower of Hananel and the Tower of the Hundred, as far as the Sheep Gate; and they halted at the Guardhouse Gate.

⁴⁰Then the two thanksgiving choirs took their place in the house of God, and I and half the magistrates with me;

⁴¹and the priests Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Micaiah, Elioenai, Zechariah, and Hananiah, with trumpets;

⁴²Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malchiah, Elam, and Ezer. The singers, led by Izrahiah, raised their voices.

⁴³A great sacrifice was celebrated that day, and they all rejoiced because God had given them great cause for rejoicing; the women and children rejoiced with

them. And the rejoicing in Jerusalem was heard a long way off.

⁴⁴Men were appointed at that time to take charge of the storerooms for the contributions, the firstfruits, and the tithes, to gather in the portions required by the law for the priests and Levites according to the extent of the farmlands round the towns; for all Judah was full of rejoicing at the ministry of the priests and Levites,

⁴⁵who performed the service of their God and the service of purification, as did the singers and the door-keepers, according to the rules laid down by David and his son Solomon.

⁴⁶For it was in the days of David that Asaph took the lead as chief of the singers and director of praise and thanksgiving to God,

⁴⁷and in the days of Zerubbabel and of Nehemiah all Israel gave the portions for the singers and the door-keepers as each day required; they set apart the portion for the Levites, and the Levites set apart the portion for the Aaronites.

13¹ON that day at the public reading from the book of Moses,

it was found to be laid down that no Ammonite or Moabite should ever enter the assembly of God,

²because they did not welcome the Israelites with food and water but hired Balaam to curse them, though our God turned the curse into a blessing.

³When the people heard the law, they separated off from Israel all who were of mixed blood.

⁴But before this, Eliashib the priest, who was appointed over the storerooms of the house of our God, and who was connected by marriage with Tobiah,

⁵had provided for his use a large room where formerly they had kept the grain-offering, the frankincense, the temple vessels, the tithes of grain, new wine, and oil prescribed for the Levites, singers, and door-keepers, and the contributions for the priests.

⁶All this while I was not in Jerusalem because, in the thirty-second year of King Artaxerxes of Babylon, I had gone to the king. Some time later, however, having asked permission from him,

⁷I returned to Jerusalem and there discovered the outrageous thing that

Eliashib had done for Tobiah's benefit in providing him with a room in the courts of the house of God.

⁸I was greatly displeased and threw all Tobiah's belongings out of the room.

⁹I then gave orders that the room should be purified, and that the vessels of the house of God, with the grain-offering and frankincense, should be put back into it.

¹⁰I also learnt that the Levites had not been given their portions; both they and the singers, who were responsible for their respective duties, had made off to their farms.

¹¹I remonstrated with the magistrates: Why is the house of God deserted? I demanded. I recalled the men and restored them to their places.

¹²Then all Judah brought the tithes of grain, new wine, and oil into the storehouses.

¹³Over the stores I set Shelemiah the priest, Zadok the accountant, and Pedaiah a Levite, with Hanan son of Zaccur, son of Mattaniah, as their assistant, for they were considered trustworthy men; their duty was the

distribution of their shares to their brethren.

¹⁴God, remember this to my credit, and do not wipe out of your memory the devotion which I have shown in the house of my God and in his service!

¹⁵In those days I saw men in Judah treading winepresses on the sabbath, collecting quantities of produce and loading it on donkeys -- wine, grapes, figs, and every kind of load, which they brought into Jerusalem on the sabbath. I warned them against the selling of food on that day.

¹⁶Tyrians living in Jerusalem were also bringing fish and all kinds of merchandise and selling them on the sabbath to the people of Judah, even in Jerusalem.

¹⁷I complained to the nobles of Judah and said to them, How dare you profane the sabbath in this wicked fashion?

¹⁸Is not this just what your forefathers did, so that our God has brought all this evil on us and on this city? Now you are bringing more wrath on Israel by profaning the sabbath.

¹⁹When the entrances to Jerusalem had been cleared in preparation for the

sabbath, I gave orders that the gates should be shut and not opened until after the sabbath; and I posted some of my men at the gates to ensure that no load came in on the sabbath.

²⁰Then on one or two occasions the merchants and all kinds of traders spent the night just outside Jerusalem,

²¹but I warned them: Why are you spending the night in front of the city wall? Do it again, and I shall take action against you. After that they did not come on the sabbath.

²²I instructed the Levites to purify themselves and take up duty as guards at the gates, to ensure that the sabbath was kept holy. God, remember this also to my credit, and spare me in your great love!

²³In those days also I saw that some Jews had married women from Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab.

²⁴Half their children spoke the language of Ashdod or of one of the other peoples but could not speak the language of the Jews.

²⁵I argued with them and reviled them, I beat some of them and tore out their

hair; and I made them swear in the name of God: We shall not marry our daughters to their sons, or take any of their daughters in marriage for our sons or for ourselves.

²⁶ Was it not because of such women, I said, that King Solomon of Israel sinned? Among all the nations there was no king like him; he was loved by his God, and God made him king over all Israel; nevertheless even he was led by foreign women into sin.

²⁷ Are we then to follow your example and commit this grave offence, breaking faith with our God by marrying foreign women?

²⁸ One of the sons of Joiada son of Eliashib the high priest had married a daughter of Sanballat the Horonite; therefore I drove him out of my presence.

²⁹ God, remember to their discredit that they have defiled the priesthood and the covenant of the priests and the Levites.

³⁰ Thus I purified them from everything foreign, and I made the Levites and the priests resume the duties of their office;

³¹ I also made provision for the delivery of the wood at appointed times, and for the firstfruits. God, remember me favourably!

Esther

1 ¹THE events here related happened in the days of Ahasuerus, that Ahasuerus who ruled from India to Ethiopia, a hundred and twenty-seven provinces,

²at the time when he was settled on the royal throne in Susa, the capital city.

³In the third year of his reign he gave a banquet for all his officers and his courtiers; the Persians and Medes in full force, along with his nobles and provincial rulers, were in attendance.

⁴He put on display for many days, a hundred and eighty in all, the dazzling wealth of his kingdom and the pomp and splendour of his realm.

⁵At the end of that time the king gave a banquet for all the people present in Susa the capital city, both high and low; it lasted for seven days and was held in the garden court of the royal pavilion.

⁶There were white curtains and violet hangings fastened to silver rings by cords of fine linen with purple thread;

the pillars were of marble, and gold and silver couches were placed on a mosaic pavement of malachite, marble, mother-of-pearl, and turquoise.

⁷Wine was served in golden goblets, each of a different design: the king's wine flowed in royal style,

⁸and the drinking was according to no fixed rule, for the king had laid down that all the palace stewards should respect the wishes of each guest.

⁹Queen Vashti too gave a banquet for the women inside the royal palace of King Ahasuerus.

¹⁰On the seventh day, when he was merry with wine, the king ordered Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, the seven eunuchs who were in attendance on the king's person,

¹¹to bring Queen Vashti into his presence wearing her royal diadem, in order to display her beauty to the people and to the officers; for she was indeed a beautiful woman.

¹²But when the royal command was conveyed to her by the eunuchs, Queen Vashti refused to come. This greatly

incensed the king, and his wrath flared up.

¹³He conferred with wise men versed in precedents, for it was his custom to consult all who were expert in law and usage.

¹⁴Those closest to the king were Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memucan, the seven vicegerents of Persia and Media; they had access to the king and occupied the premier positions in the kingdom.

¹⁵What, he asked, does the law require to be done with Queen Vashti for disobeying my royal command conveyed to her by the eunuchs?

¹⁶In the presence of the king and the vicegerents, Memucan declared: Queen Vashti has done wrong, not to the king alone, but also to all the officers and to all the peoples in every province of King Ahasuerus.

¹⁷The queen's conduct will come to the ears of all women and embolden them to treat their husbands with disrespect; they will say, King Ahasuerus ordered Queen Vashti to be brought before him, but she would not come!

¹⁸The great ladies of Persia and Media, who have heard what the queen has said, will quote this day to all the king's officers, and there will be no end to the disrespect and discord!

¹⁹If it please your majesty, let a royal decree be issued by you, and let it be inscribed among the laws of the Persians and Medes, never to be revoked, that Vashti shall not again appear before King Ahasuerus; and let your majesty give her place as queen to another who is more worthy of it than she.

²⁰When the edict made by the king is proclaimed throughout the length and breadth of the kingdom, all women, high and low alike, will give honour to their husbands.

²¹The advice pleased the king and the vicegerents, and the king did as Memucan had proposed.

²²Dispatches were sent to all the king's provinces, to every province in its own script and to every people in their own language, in order that each man, whatever language he spoke, should be master in his own house.

2¹ SOME time later, when the anger of King Ahasuerus had died down, he called Vashti to mind, remembering what she had done and what had been decreed against her.

²The king's attendants said: Let there be sought out for your majesty beautiful young virgins;

³let your majesty appoint commissioners in every province of your kingdom to assemble all these beautiful young virgins and bring them to the women's quarters in the capital Susa. Have them placed under the care of Hegai, the king's eunuch who has charge of the women, and let him provide the cosmetics they need.

⁴The girl who is most acceptable to the king shall become queen in place of Vashti. The advice pleased the king, and he acted on it.

⁵In Susa the capital there lived a Jew named Mordecai son of Jair, son of Shimei, son of Kish, a Benjamite;

⁶he had been taken into exile from Jerusalem among those whom King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon had carried away with King Jeconiah of Judah.

⁷ He had a foster-child Hadassah, that is, Esther, his uncle's daughter, who had neither father nor mother. She was a beautiful and charming girl, and after the death of her parents, Mordecai had adopted her as his own daughter.

⁸ When the king's order and decree were proclaimed and many girls were brought to Susa the capital to be committed to the care of Hegai, who had charge of the women, Esther too was taken to the palace to be entrusted to him.

⁹ He found her pleasing, and she received his special favour: he promptly supplied her with her cosmetics and her allowance of food, and also with seven specially chosen maids from the king's palace. She and her maids were marked out for favourable treatment in the women's quarters.

¹⁰ Esther had not disclosed her race or family, because Mordecai had forbidden her to do so.

¹¹ Every day Mordecai would walk past the forecourt of the women's quarters to learn how Esther fared and what was happening to her.

¹²The full period of preparation before a girl went to King Ahasuerus was twelve months: six months' treatment with oil of myrrh, and six months' with perfumes and cosmetics. At the end of this each girl's turn came,

¹³and, when she went from the women's quarters to the king's palace, she was allowed to take with her whatever she asked.

¹⁴She would enter the palace in the evening and return in the morning to another part of the women's quarters, to be under the care of Shaashgaz, the king's eunuch in charge of the concubines. She would not go again to the king unless he expressed a wish for her and she was summoned by name.

¹⁵When the turn came for Esther, the girl Mordecai had adopted, the daughter of his uncle Abihail, to go in to the king, she asked for nothing to take with her except what was advised by Hegai, the king's eunuch in charge of the women. Esther charmed all who saw her,

¹⁶and when she was brought to King Ahasuerus in the royal palace, in the

tenth month, the month of Tebeth, in the seventh year of his reign,

¹⁷ the king loved her more than any of his other women. He treated her with greater favour and kindness than all the rest of the virgins, and placed a royal diadem on her head, making her queen in place of Vashti.

¹⁸ Then in Esther's honour the king gave a great banquet, to which were invited all his officers and courtiers. He also proclaimed a holiday throughout his provinces and distributed gifts worthy of a king.

¹⁹ MORDECAI was in attendance in the court.

²⁰ On his instructions Esther had not disclosed her family or her race, obeying Mordecai in this as she used to do when she was his ward.

²¹ One day when Mordecai was at court, two of the king's eunuchs, Bigthan and Teresh, keepers of the threshold who were disaffected, were plotting to assassinate King Ahasuerus.

²² This became known to Mordecai, who told Queen Esther; and she, on behalf of Mordecai, informed the king.

²³The matter was investigated and, the report being confirmed, the two men were hanged on the gallows. All this was recorded in the court chronicle in the king's presence.

3¹IT was after those events that King Ahasuerus promoted Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, advancing him and giving him precedence above all his fellow-officers.

²Everyone in attendance on the king at court bowed down and did obeisance to Haman, for so the king had commanded; but Mordecai would not bow or do obeisance.

³The courtiers said to him, Why do you flout his majesty's command?

⁴They challenged him day after day, and when he refused to listen they informed Haman, in order to discover if Mordecai's conduct would be tolerated, for he had told them that he was a Jew.

⁵Haman was furious when he saw that Mordecai was not bowing down or doing obeisance to him;

⁶but having learnt who Mordecai's people were, he scorned to lay hands on him alone; he looked for a way to

exterminate not only Mordecai but all the Jews throughout the whole kingdom.

⁷In the twelfth year of King Ahasuerus, in the first month, Nisan, they cast lots -- Pur as it is called -- in the presence of Haman, taking the days and months one by one, and the lot fell on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar.

⁸Haman said to King Ahasuerus: Dispersed in scattered groups among the peoples throughout the provinces of your realm, there is a certain people whose laws are different from those of every other people. They do not observe the king's laws, and it does not befit your majesty to tolerate them.

⁹If it please your majesty, let an order be drawn up for their destruction; and I shall hand over to your majesty's officials the sum of ten thousand talents of silver, to be deposited in the royal treasury.

¹⁰The king drew off the signet ring from his finger and gave it to Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of the Jews.

¹¹Keep the money, he said, and deal with the people as you think best.

¹²On the thirteenth day of the first month the king's secretaries were summoned and, in accordance with Haman's instructions, a writ was issued to the king's satraps and the governors of every province, and to the rulers over each separate people. It was drawn up in the name of King Ahasuerus and sealed with the king's signet, and transcribed for each province in its own script and for each people in their own language.

¹³Dispatches were sent by courier to all the king's provinces with orders to destroy, slay, and exterminate all Jews, young and old, women and children, in one day, the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, the month of Adar; their goods were to be treated as spoil.

¹⁴A copy of the writ was to be issued as a decree in every province and to be publicly displayed to all the peoples, so that they might be ready for that day.

¹⁵At the king's command the couriers set off post-haste, and the decree was issued in Susa the capital city. The king and Haman sat down to carouse, but in the city of Susa confusion reigned.

4¹ WHEN Mordecai learnt of all that had been done, he tore his clothes and put on sackcloth and ashes. He went out through the city, lamenting loudly and bitterly,

² until he came right in front of the palace gate; no one wearing sackcloth was allowed to pass through that gate.

³ In every province reached by the royal command and decree there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting and weeping and beating of the breast; most of them lay down on beds of sackcloth and ashes.

⁴ When Queen Esther's maids and eunuchs came in and told her, she was greatly distraught. She sent clothes for Mordecai to wear instead of his sackcloth; but he would not accept them.

⁵ Esther then summoned Hathach, one of the king's eunuchs appointed to wait on her, and ordered him to find out from Mordecai what was the trouble and the reason for it.

⁶ Hathach went out to Mordecai in the city square opposite the palace,

⁷ and Mordecai told him all that had happened to him and how much money

Haman had offered to pay into the royal treasury for the destruction of the Jews.

⁸He also gave him a copy of the writ for their extermination, which had been issued in Susa, so that he might show it to Esther and tell her about it, directing her to go to the king to implore his favour and intercede for her people.

⁹When Hathach came in and informed Esther of what Mordecai had said,

¹⁰she told him to take back this message:

¹¹All the courtiers and the people in the king's provinces know that if any person, man or woman, enters the royal presence in the inner court without being summoned, there is but one law: that person shall be put to death, unless the king extends to him the gold sceptre; only then may he live. What is more, I have not been summoned to the king for the last thirty days.

¹²When Mordecai was told what Esther had said,

¹³he sent this reply, Do not imagine, Esther, that, because you are in the royal palace, you alone of all the Jews will escape.

¹⁴If you remain silent at such a time as this, relief and deliverance for the Jews will appear from another quarter; but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows whether it is not for a time like this that you have become queen?

¹⁵Esther sent this answer back to Mordecai:

¹⁶Go and assemble all the Jews that are in Susa, and fast on my behalf; for three days, night and day, take neither food nor drink, and I also will fast with my maids. After that, in defiance of the law, I shall go to the king; if I perish, I perish.

¹⁷Mordecai then went away and did exactly as Esther had bidden him.

5¹On the third day Esther arrayed herself in her royal robes and stood in the inner court, facing the palace itself; the king was seated on his royal throne in the palace, opposite the entrance.

²When he caught sight of Queen Esther standing in the court, he extended to her the gold sceptre he held, for she had obtained his favour. Esther approached and touched the tip of the sceptre.

³The king said to her, What is it, Queen Esther? Whatever you request, up to half my kingdom, it shall be granted you.

⁴If it please your majesty, she answered, will you come today, my lord, and Haman with you, to a banquet I have prepared for you?

⁵The king gave orders for Haman to be brought with all speed to meet Esther's wishes; and the king and Haman went to the banquet she had prepared.

⁶Over the wine the king said to Esther, Whatever you ask will be given you; whatever you request, up to half my kingdom, will be granted.

⁷Esther replied, What I ask and request is this:

⁸If I have found favour with your majesty, and if it please you, my lord, to give me what I ask and to grant my request, will your majesty and Haman come again tomorrow to the banquet that I shall prepare for you both? Tomorrow I shall do as your majesty says.

⁹Haman left the royal presence that day overjoyed and in the best of spirits, but as soon as he saw Mordecai in the

king's court and observed that he did not rise or defer to him, he was furious;

¹⁰yet he kept control of himself. When he arrived home, he sent for his friends and for Zeresh his wife

¹¹and held forth to them about the splendour of his wealth and his many sons, and how the king had promoted him and advanced him above the other officers and courtiers.

¹²Nor is that all, Haman went on; Queen Esther had no one but myself come with the king to the banquet which she had prepared; and I am invited by her again tomorrow with the king.

¹³Yet all this gives me no satisfaction so long as I see that Jew Mordecai in attendance at the king's court.

¹⁴His wife Zeresh and all his friends said to him, Have a gallows set up, seventy-five feet high, and in the morning propose to the king that Mordecai be hanged on it. Then you can go with the king to the banquet and enjoy yourself. This advice seemed good to Haman, and he set up the gallows.

6¹ THAT night sleep eluded the king, so he ordered the chronicle of

memorable events to be brought, and it was read to him.

²There it was found recorded how Mordecai had furnished information about Bigthana and Teresh, the two royal eunuchs among the keepers of the threshold who had plotted to assassinate King Ahasuerus.

³When the king asked what honour or dignity had been conferred on Mordecai for this, his attendants said, Nothing has been done for him.

⁴Who is in the court? said the king. As Haman had just then entered the outer court of the palace to propose to the king that Mordecai should be hanged on the gallows he had prepared for him,

⁵the king's attendants replied, Haman is standing there in the court. Let him enter! commanded the king.

⁶When he came in, the king asked him, What should be done for the man whom the king wishes to honour? Haman thought to himself, Whom, other than myself, would the king wish to honour?

⁷So he answered, For the man whom the king wishes to honour,

⁸let there be brought a royal robe which the king himself has worn, and a horse on which the king rides, with a royal diadem on its head.

⁹Let the robe and the horse be handed over to one of the king's noble officers, and let him invest the man whom the king wishes to honour and lead him mounted on the horse through the city square, proclaiming as he goes: This is what is done for the man whom the king wishes to honour.

¹⁰The king said to Haman, Take the robe and the horse at once, as you have said, and do this for Mordecai the Jew who is present at court. Let nothing be omitted of all you have proposed.

¹¹Haman took the robe and the horse, invested Mordecai, and led him on horseback through the city square, proclaiming before him: This is what is done for the man whom the king wishes to honour.

¹²Mordecai then returned to court, while Haman in grief hurried off home with his head veiled.

¹³When he told his wife Zeresh and all his friends everything that had happened

to him, the response he got from his advisers and Zeresh was: If you have begun to fall before Mordecai, and he is a Jew, you cannot get the better of him; your downfall before him is certain.

¹⁴While they were still talking with him, the king's eunuchs arrived and Haman was hurried off to the banquet Esther had prepared.

7¹ So the king and Haman went to Queen Esther's banquet,

²and again on that second day over the wine the king said, Whatever you ask will be given you, Queen Esther. Whatever you request, up to half my kingdom, it will be granted.

³She answered, If I have found favour with your majesty, and if it please you, my lord, what I ask is that my own life and the lives of my people be spared.

⁴For we have been sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, slain, and exterminated. If it had been a matter of selling us, men and women alike, into slavery, I should have kept silence; for then our plight would not have been such as to injure the king's interests.

⁵ King Ahasuerus demanded, Who is he, and where is he, who has dared to do such a thing?

⁶ A ruthless enemy, she answered, this wicked Haman! Haman stood aghast before the king and queen.

⁷ In a rage the king rose from the banquet and went into the garden of the pavilion, while Haman remained where he was to plead for his life with Queen Esther; for he saw that in the king's mind his fate was determined.

⁸ When the king returned from the pavilion garden to the banqueting hall, Haman had flung himself on the couch where Esther was reclining. The king exclaimed, Will he even assault the queen in the palace before my very eyes? The words had no sooner left the king's lips than Haman's face was covered.

⁹ Harbona, one of the eunuchs in attendance on the king, said, There is a gallows seventy-five feet high standing at Haman's house; he had it erected for Mordecai, whose evidence once saved your majesty. Let Haman be hanged on it! said the king.

¹⁰So they hanged Haman on the gallows he had prepared for Mordecai. Then the king's anger subsided.

8¹That same day King Ahasuerus gave Queen Esther the property of Haman, the enemy of the Jews, and Mordecai came into the king's presence, for Esther had revealed his relationship to her.

²The king drew off his signet ring, which he had taken back from Haman, and gave it to Mordecai. Esther put Mordecai in charge of Haman's property.

³ONCE again Esther addressed the king, falling at his feet and imploring him with tears to thwart the wickedness of Haman the Agagite and frustrate his plot against the Jews.

⁴The king extended his gold sceptre towards her, and she rose and stood before him.

⁵May it please your majesty, Esther said; if I have found favour with you, and if what I propose seems right to your majesty and I have won your approval, let a writ be issued to recall the dispatches which Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite wrote in

pursuance of his plan to destroy the Jews in all the royal provinces.

⁶For how can I bear to witness the disaster which threatens my people? How can I bear to witness the destruction of my kindred?

⁷King Ahasuerus said to Queen Esther and to Mordecai the Jew, I have given Haman's property to Esther, and he has been hanged on the gallows because he threatened the lives of the Jews.

⁸Now you may issue a writ in my name concerning the Jews, in whatever terms you think fit, and seal it with the royal signet; no order written in the name of the king and sealed with the royal signet can be rescinded.

⁹On the twenty-third day of the third month, the month of Sivan, the king's secretaries were summoned, and a writ exactly as Mordecai directed was issued to the Jews, and to the satraps, the governors, and the rulers of the hundred and twenty-seven provinces from India to Ethiopia; it was issued for each province in its own script and for each people in their own language, and also for the Jews in their script and language.

¹⁰The writ was drawn up in the name of King Ahasuerus and sealed with the royal signet, and dispatches were sent by couriers mounted on horses from the royal stables.

¹¹By these dispatches the king granted permission to the Jews in each and every city to assemble in self-defence, and to destroy, slay, and exterminate every man, woman, and child, of any people or province which might attack them, and to treat their goods as spoil,

¹²throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, in one day, the thirteenth day of Adar, the twelfth month.

¹³A copy of the writ was to be issued as a decree in every province and published to all peoples, and the Jews were to be ready for that day, the day of vengeance on their enemies.

¹⁴Couriers, mounted on horses from the royal stables, set off post-haste at the king's urgent command; and the decree was proclaimed also in Susa the capital.

¹⁵When Mordecai left the king's presence in a royal robe of violet and white, wearing an imposing gold crown

and a cloak of fine linen with purple thread, the city of Susa shouted for joy.

¹⁶All was light and joy, gladness and honour for the Jews;

¹⁷in every province and city reached by the royal command and decree there was joy and gladness for the Jews, feasting and holiday. And many of the peoples of the world professed Judaism, because fear of the Jews had fallen on them.

9¹ ON the thirteenth day of Adar, the twelfth month, the time came for the king's command and decree to be carried out. That very day on which the enemies of the Jews had hoped to triumph over them was to become the day when the Jews should triumph over those who hated them.

²Throughout all the provinces of King Ahasuerus, the Jews assembled in their cities to attack those who had sought to bring disaster on them. None could offer resistance, because fear of them had fallen on all the peoples.

³The rulers of the provinces, the satraps and the governors, and the royal officials all aided the Jews, out of fear of Mordecai,

⁴for he had become a person of great power in the royal palace, and as the power of the man increased, his fame spread throughout every province.

⁵The Jews put all their enemies to the sword. There was great slaughter and destruction, and they worked their will on those who hated them.

⁶In Susa the capital the Jews slaughtered five hundred men;

⁷and they also put to death Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha,

⁸Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha,

⁹Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai, and Vaizatha,

¹⁰the ten sons of Haman son of Hammedatha, the persecutor of the Jews; but they took no plunder.

¹¹That day when the number of those killed in Susa was reported to the king,

¹²he said to Queen Esther, In Susa the capital the Jews have slaughtered five hundred men; they have killed the ten sons of Haman; what will they have done in the rest of the provinces of the kingdom? Whatever you ask will be given you; whatever further request you have, it will be granted.

¹³ Esther replied, If it please your majesty, let the Jews in Susa be permitted tomorrow also to take action according to this day's decree; and let the bodies of Haman's ten sons be hung up on the gallows.

¹⁴ The king gave orders for this to be done; the decree was issued in Susa, and Haman's ten sons were hung up on the gallows.

¹⁵ The Jews in Susa assembled again on the fourteenth day of the month of Adar and killed there three hundred men; but they took no plunder.

¹⁶ The rest of the Jews throughout the king's provinces rallied in self-defence and so had respite from their enemies; they slaughtered seventy-five thousand of those who hated them, but they took no plunder.

¹⁷ That was on the thirteenth day of the month of Adar; on the fourteenth day they rested and made it a day of feasting and joy.

¹⁸ The Jews in Susa had assembled on both the thirteenth and fourteenth days of the month; they rested on the

fifteenth day and made that a day of feasting and joy.

¹⁹This explains why Jews in the countryside who live in remote villages observe the fourteenth day of Adar with joy and feasting as a holiday, sending presents of food to one another.

²⁰MORDECAI put these things on record, and he sent letters to all the Jews throughout the provinces of King Ahasuerus, both near and far,

²¹requiring them to observe annually the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month of Adar

²²as the days on which the Jews had respite from their enemies; that was the month which was changed for them from sorrow into joy, from a time of mourning to a holiday. They were to observe them as days of feasting and joy, days for sending presents of food to one another and gifts to the poor.

²³The Jews undertook to continue the practice that they had begun in accordance with Mordecai's letter.

²⁴This they did because Haman son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the enemy of all the Jews, had plotted to destroy them

and had cast lots -- Pur as it is called -- with intent to crush and destroy them.

²⁵ But when the matter came before the king, he issued written orders that the wicked plot which Haman had devised against the Jews should recoil on his own head, and that he and his sons should be hanged on the gallows.

²⁶ This is why these days were named Purim, from the word Pur. Accordingly, because of all that was written in this letter, because of all they had seen and experienced in this affair,

²⁷ the Jews resolved and undertook, on behalf of themselves, their descendants, and all who might join them, to observe without fail these two days as a yearly festival in the prescribed manner and at the appointed time;

²⁸ further, that these days were to be remembered and celebrated throughout all generations, in every family, province, and city, so that the observance of the days of Purim should never lapse among the Jews, and the commemoration of them should never cease among their descendants.

²⁹ Queen Esther daughter of Abihail gave full authority in writing to Mordecai the Jew, to confirm this second letter about Purim.

³⁰ Letters to ensure peace and security were sent to all the Jews in the one hundred and twenty-seven provinces of King Ahasuerus,

³¹ requiring the observance of these days of Purim at their appointed time, as Mordecai the Jew and Queen Esther had prescribed for them, and in the same way as regulations for fasts and lamentations were prescribed for themselves and for their descendants.

³² By the command of Esther these regulations for Purim were confirmed and put in writing.

10¹ King Ahasuerus exacted tribute from the land and the coasts and islands.

² All his acts of might and power, and the high dignities which he conferred on Mordecai, are recorded in the annals of the kings of Media and Persia.

³ Mordecai the Jew ranked second only to King Ahasuerus himself; he was a great man among the Jews and

popular with all his many countrymen,
for he sought the good of his people
and promoted the welfare of all their
descendants.

Job

1 ¹ THERE lived in the land of Uz a man of blameless and upright life named Job, who feared God and set his face against wrongdoing.

² He had seven sons and three daughters;

³ and he owned seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, and five hundred she-donkeys, together with a large number of slaves. Thus Job was the greatest man in all the East.

⁴ His sons used to meet together and give, each in turn, a banquet in his own house, and they would send and invite their three sisters to eat and drink with them.

⁵ Then, when a round of banquets was over, Job would send for his children and sanctify them, rising early in the morning and sacrificing a whole-offering for each of them; for he thought that they might somehow have sinned against God and

committed blasphemy in their hearts. This Job did regularly.

⁶The day came when the members of the court of heaven took their places in the presence of the LORD, and the Adversary, Satan, was there among them.

⁷The LORD asked him where he had been. Ranging over the earth, said the Adversary, from end to end.

⁸The LORD asked him, Have you considered my servant Job? You will find no one like him on earth, a man of blameless and upright life, who fears God and sets his face against wrongdoing.

⁹Has not Job good reason to be godfearing? answered the Adversary.

¹⁰Have you not hedged him round on every side with your protection, him and his family and all his possessions? Whatever he does you bless, and everywhere his herds have increased beyond measure.

¹¹But just stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and see if he will not curse you to your face.

¹²Very well, said the LORD. All that he has is in your power; only the man

himself you must not touch. With that the Adversary left the LORD's presence.

¹³On the day when Job's sons and daughters were eating and drinking in the eldest brother's house,

¹⁴a messenger came to Job and said, The oxen were ploughing and the donkeys were grazing near them,

¹⁵when the Sabaeans swooped down and carried them off, after putting the herdsmen to the sword; only I have escaped to bring you the news.

¹⁶While he was still speaking, another messenger arrived and said, God's fire flashed from heaven, striking the sheep and the shepherds and burning them up; only I have escaped to bring you the news.

¹⁷While he was still speaking, another arrived and said, The Chaldaeans, three bands of them, have made a raid on the camels and carried them off, after putting those tending them to the sword; only I have escaped to bring you the news.

¹⁸While this man was speaking, yet another arrived and said, Your sons and

daughters were eating and drinking in their eldest brother's house,

¹⁹when suddenly a whirlwind swept across from the desert and struck the four corners of the house, which fell on the young people. They are dead, and only I have escaped to bring you the news.

²⁰At this Job stood up, tore his cloak, shaved his head, and threw himself prostrate on the ground,

²¹saying: Naked I came from the womb, naked I shall return whence I came. The LORD gives and the LORD takes away; blessed be the name of the LORD.

²²Throughout all this Job did not sin, nor did he ascribe any fault to God.

2¹ Once again the day came when the members of the court of heaven took their places in the presence of the LORD, and the Adversary was there among them.

²The LORD enquired where he had been. Ranging over the earth, said the Adversary, from end to end.

³The LORD asked, Have you considered my servant Job? You will find no one like

him on earth, a man of blameless and upright life, who fears God and sets his face against wrongdoing. You incited me to ruin him without cause, but he still holds fast to his integrity.

⁴The Adversary replied, Skin for skin! To save himself there is nothing a man will withhold.

⁵But just reach out your hand and touch his bones and his flesh, and see if he will not curse you to your face.

⁶The LORD said to the Adversary, So be it. He is in your power; only spare his life.

⁷When the Adversary left the LORD's presence, he afflicted Job with running sores from the soles of his feet to the crown of his head,

⁸and Job took a piece of a broken pot to scratch himself as he sat among the ashes.

⁹His wife said to him, Why do you still hold fast to your integrity? Curse God, and die!

¹⁰He answered, You talk as any impious woman might talk. If we accept good from God, shall we not accept evil?

Throughout all this, Job did not utter one sinful word.

¹¹ When Job's three friends, Eliphaz of Teman, Bildad of Shuah, and Zophar of Naamah, heard of all these calamities which had overtaken him, they set out from their homes, arranging to go and condole with him and comfort him.

¹² But when they first saw him from a distance, they did not recognize him; they wept aloud, tore their cloaks, and tossed dust into the air over their heads.

¹³ For seven days and seven nights they sat beside him on the ground, and none of them spoke a word to him, for they saw that his suffering was very great.

3¹ AFTER this Job broke his silence and cursed the day of his birth:

² (3: 1)

³ Perish the day when I was born, and the night which said, A boy is conceived!

⁴ May that day turn to darkness; may God above not look for it, nor light of dawn shine on it.

⁵ May gloom and deep darkness claim it again; may cloud smother that day, blackness eclipse its sun.

⁶ May blind darkness swallow up that night! May it not be counted among the days of the year or reckoned in the cycle of the months.

⁷ May that night be barren for ever, may no cry of joy be heard in it.

⁸ Let it be cursed by those whose spells bind the sea monster, who have the skill to tame Leviathan.

⁹ May no star shine out in its twilight; may it wait for a dawn that never breaks, and never see the eyelids of the morning,

¹⁰ because it did not shut the doors of the womb that bore me and keep trouble away from my sight.

¹¹ Why was I not stillborn, why did I not perish when I came from the womb?

¹² Why was I ever laid on my mother's knees or put to suck at her breasts?

¹³ For now I should be lying in the quiet grave, asleep in death, at rest

¹⁴ with kings and their earthly counsellors who built for themselves cities now laid waste,

¹⁵ or with princes rich in gold whose houses were replete with silver.

¹⁶Or why was I not concealed like an untimely birth, like an infant who never saw the light?

¹⁷There the wicked chafe no more, there the tired labourer takes his ease;

¹⁸the captive too finds peace there, no slave-driver's voice reaches him;

¹⁹high and low alike are there, even the slave, free from his master.

²⁰Why should the sufferer be born to see the light? Why is life given to those who find it so bitter?

²¹They long for death but it does not come, they seek it more eagerly than hidden treasure.

²²They are glad when they reach the grave; when they come to the tomb they exult.

²³Why should a man be born to wander blindly, hedged about by God on every side?

²⁴Sighing is for me all my food; groans pour from me in a torrent.

²⁵Every terror that haunted me has caught up with me; what I dreaded has overtaken me.

²⁶There is no peace of mind, no quiet for me; trouble comes, and I have no rest.

4¹ THEN Eliphaz the Temanite spoke up:

²If one should venture a word with you, would you lose patience? Yet who could curb his tongue any longer?

³Think how you once encouraged many, how you braced feeble arms,

⁴how a word from you upheld those who stumbled and put strength into failing knees.

⁵But now adversity comes on you, and you are impatient; it touches you, and you are dismayed.

⁶Does your piety give you no assurance? Does your blameless life afford you no hope?

⁷For consider, has any innocent person ever perished? Where have the upright ever been destroyed?

⁸This is what I have seen: those who plough mischief and sow trouble reap no other harvest.

⁹They perish at the blast of God; they are shrivelled by the breath of his nostrils.

¹⁰The roar of the lion, the whimpering of his cubs, fall silent; the teeth of the young lions are broken;

¹¹the lion perishes for lack of prey and the whelps of the lioness are abandoned.

¹²A word came to me stealthily, so that my ear caught a mere whisper of it.

¹³In the anxious visions of the night when everyone sinks into deepest sleep,

¹⁴terror seized me and shuddering; it made my whole frame tremble with fear.

¹⁵A wind brushed across my face and made the hairs of my body stand on end.

¹⁶A figure halted there, whose shape I could not discern, an apparition loomed before me, and I heard a voice murmur:

¹⁷Can a human being be righteous before God, a mere mortal pure before his Maker?

¹⁸If God mistrusts his own servants and finds his messengers at fault,

¹⁹how much more those who dwell in houses of clay, whose foundations are in the dust, which can be crushed like a bird's nest,

²⁰torn down between dawn and dusk. How much more shall they perish unheeded for ever,

²¹ die without ever finding wisdom!

5¹ Call if you will; is there any to answer you? To whom among the holy ones will you turn?

²Fools are destroyed by their own angry passion, and the end of childish resentment is death.

³I have seen it for myself: fools uprooted, their homes in sudden ruin,

⁴their children cut off from help, browbeaten in court with none to come to their defence.

⁵Their rich possessions are snatched from them; what they have harvested others hungrily devour; panting, thirsting for their wealth, stronger men seize it from the panniers.

⁶Mischief does not grow out of the ground, nor does trouble spring from the soil;

⁷yet man is born to trouble, as surely as birds fly upwards.

⁸For my part, I would make my appeal to God; I would lay my plea before him

⁹who does great and unsearchable things, marvels beyond all reckoning.

¹⁰He gives rain to the earth and sends water over the fields;

¹¹ he raises the lowly on high, and the mourners are lifted to safety;

¹² he frustrates the plots of the crafty, and they achieve no success;

¹³ he traps the cunning in their own craftiness, and the schemers' plans are thrown into confusion.

¹⁴ By day they encounter darkness, and grope their way at noon as in the night;

¹⁵ he saves the destitute from their greed, and the needy from the clutches of the strong.

¹⁶ So the poor have hope again, to the outrage of the unjust.

¹⁷ Happy indeed are they whom God rebukes! Therefore do not reject the Almighty's discipline.

¹⁸ For, though he wounds, he will bind up; the hands that harm will heal.

¹⁹ You may meet disaster six times, and he will rescue you; seven times, and no harm will touch you.

²⁰ In famine he will deliver you from death, in battle from the menace of the sword.

²¹ You will be shielded from the scourge of slander, unafraid when violence comes.

²²You will laugh at violence and famine and need not fear any beast on earth;

²³for you will be in league with the stones of the fields, and the wild animals have been constrained to leave you at peace.

²⁴You will know that all is well with your household, you will look round your home and find nothing amiss;

²⁵you will know that your descendants will be many and your offspring like grass, thick on the earth.

²⁶You will come to the grave in sturdy old age as sheaves come in due season to the threshing-floor.

²⁷We have enquired into all this, and so it is; this we have heard, and know it to be true for you.

6¹ Job answered:

²If only the grounds for my resentment might be weighed, and my misfortunes placed with them on the scales!

³For they would outweigh the sands of the sea: what wonder if my words are frenzied!

⁴The arrows of the Almighty find their mark in me, and their poison soaks into

my spirit; God's onslaughts wear me down.

⁵ Does a wild ass bray when it has grass or an ox low when it has fodder?

⁶ Is tasteless food eaten unseasoned, or is there any flavour in the juice of mallows?

⁷ Such food sticks in my throat, and my bowels rumble like an echo.

⁸ If only I might have my request and God would grant what I hope for:

⁹ that he would be pleased to crush me, to sever with his hand and cut me off!

¹⁰ That would bring me relief, and in the face of unsparing anguish I would leap for joy, for I have never denied the words of the Holy One.

¹¹ Have I the strength to go on waiting? What end have I to expect, that I should be patient?

¹² Is my strength the strength of stone, or is my flesh made of bronze?

¹³ Oh how shall I find help within myself now that success has been put beyond my reach?

¹⁴ Devotion is due from his friends to one who despairs and loses faith in the Almighty;

¹⁵ but my brothers have been deceptive as a torrent, like the watercourses of torrents that run dry.

¹⁶ They turn dark with ice and are hidden with piled-up snow;

¹⁷ but they vanish the moment they are in spate, dwindle in the heat and are gone.

¹⁸ Caravans, winding hither and thither, go up into the desert and perish;

¹⁹ the caravans of Tema look for the water, the travelling merchants of Sheba rely on it;

²⁰ but they are disappointed, for all their confidence, they arrive, only to be frustrated.

²¹ Just so unreliable have you now been to me: you felt dismay and took fright.

²² Did I ever say, Give me this or that, or say, Use your wealth to save my life?

²³ Did I say, Rescue me from my enemy's grip, or, Ransom me from the clutches of ruthless people?

²⁴ Tell me plainly, and I shall listen in silence; show me where I have been at fault.

²⁵How harsh are the words of the upright! But what do your arguments prove?

²⁶Do you mean to argue about mere words? Surely such despairing utterance is mere wind.

²⁷Would you assail an orphan? Would you make attacks on your friend?

²⁸So now, I beg you, turn and look at me: am I likely to lie to your faces?

²⁹Think again, let me have no more injustice; think again, for my integrity is in question.

³⁰Do I ever give voice to injustice? Have I not the sense to discern when my words are wild?

7¹ Does not every mortal have hard service on earth, and are not his days like those of a hired labourer,

²like those of a slave longing for the shade or a servant kept waiting for his wages?

³So months of futility are my portion, troubled nights are my lot.

⁴When I lie down, I think, When will it be day, that I may rise? But the night drags on, and I do nothing but toss till dawn.

⁵My body is infested with worms, and scabs cover my skin; it is cracked and discharging.

⁶My days pass more swiftly than a weaver's shuttle and come to an end as the thread of life runs out.

⁷Remember that my life is but a breath of wind; I shall never again see good times.

⁸The eye that now sees me will behold me no more; under your very eyes I shall vanish.

⁹As a cloud breaks up and disperses, so no one who goes down to Sheol ever comes back;

¹⁰he never returns to his house, and his abode knows him no more.

¹¹But I cannot hold my peace; I shall speak out in my anguish of spirit and complain in my bitterness of soul.

¹²Am I the monster of the deep, am I the sea serpent, that you set a watch over me?

¹³When I think that my bed will comfort me, that sleep will relieve my complaint,

¹⁴you terrify me with dreams and affright me through visions.

¹⁵I would rather be choked outright; death would be better than these sufferings of mine.

¹⁶I am in despair, I have no desire to live; let me alone, for my days are but a breath.

¹⁷What is man, that you make much of him and turn your thoughts towards him,

¹⁸only to punish him morning after morning or to test him every hour of the day?

¹⁹Will you not look away from me for an instant, leave me long enough to swallow my spittle?

²⁰If I have sinned, what harm can I do you, you watcher of the human heart? Why have you made me your target? Why have I become a burden to you?

²¹Why do you not pardon my offence and take away my guilt? For soon I shall lie in the dust of the grave; you may seek me, but I shall be no more.

8¹ Then Bildad the Shuhite spoke up:
²How long will you go on saying such things, those long-winded ramblings of an old man?

³ Does God pervert justice? Does the Almighty pervert what is right?

⁴ If your sons sinned against him, he has left them to be victims of their own iniquity.

⁵ If only you yourself will seek God and plead for the favour of the Almighty,

⁶ if you are pure and upright, then indeed he will watch over you and see your just intent fulfilled.

⁷ Then, though your beginnings were humble, your future will be very great.

⁸ Enquire now of older generations and consider the experience of their forefathers;

⁹ for we are but of yesterday and know nothing; our days on earth are but a passing shadow.

¹⁰ Will they not teach you and tell you and pour out the wisdom of their minds?

¹¹ Can rushes thrive where there is no marsh? Can reeds flourish without water?

¹² While still in flower and not ready for cutting, they would wither before any green plant.

¹³ Such is the fate of all who forget God; the life-thread of the godless breaks off;

¹⁴ his confidence is gossamer, and the basis of his trust a spider's web.

¹⁵ He leans against his house, but it does not stand; he clutches at it, but it does not hold firm.

¹⁶ His is the lush growth of a plant in the sun, pushing out shoots over the garden;

¹⁷ but its roots become entangled in a stony patch and run against a bed of rock.

¹⁸ Then someone uproots it from its place, which disowns it, saying, I have never known you.

¹⁹ That is how its life withers away, and other plants spring up from the earth.

²⁰ Be sure, God will not spurn the blameless man, nor will he clasp the hand of the wrongdoer.

²¹ He will yet fill your mouth with laughter, and shouts of joy will be on your lips;

²² your enemies will be wrapped in confusion, and the dwellings of the wicked will vanish away.

9¹ Job answered:

² Indeed, this I know for the truth:
that no one can win his case against
God.

³ If anyone does choose to argue with
him, God will not answer one question in
a thousand.

⁴ He is wise, he is all-powerful; who
has stood up to him and remained
unscathed?

⁵ It is God who moves mountains before
they know it, overturning them in his
wrath;

⁶ who makes the earth start from its
place so that its pillars are shaken;

⁷ who commands the sun not to rise
and shuts up the stars under his seal;

⁸ who by himself spread out the heavens
and trod on the back of the sea monster;

⁹ who made Aldebaran and Orion, the
Pleiades and the circle of the southern
stars;

¹⁰ who does great, unsearchable things,
marvels beyond all reckoning.

¹¹ He goes by me, and I do not see him;
he moves on his way undiscerned by me.

¹² If he hurries on, who can bring him
back? Who will ask him what he is doing?

¹³ God does not turn back his wrath; the partisans of Rahab lie prostrate at his feet.

¹⁴ How much less can I answer him or find words to dispute with him?

¹⁵ Though I am in the right, I get no answer, even if I plead with my accuser for mercy.

¹⁶ If I summoned him to court and he responded, I do not believe that he would listen to my plea;

¹⁷ for he strikes at me for a trifle and rains blows on me without cause;

¹⁸ he leaves me no respite to recover my breath, but sates me with bitter thoughts.

¹⁹ If the appeal is to force, see how mighty he is; if to justice, who can compel him to give me a hearing?

²⁰ Though I am in the right, he condemns me out of my own mouth; though I am blameless, he makes me out to be crooked.

²¹ Blameless, I say; of myself I reckon nothing, I hold my life cheap.

²² But it is all one; therefore I declare, He destroys blameless and wicked alike.

²³ When a sudden flood brings death,
he mocks the plight of the innocent.

²⁴ When a country is delivered into the
power of the wicked, he blindfolds the
eyes of its judges.

²⁵ My days have passed more swiftly
than a runner, they have slipped away
without ever seeing prosperity;

²⁶ they have glided by like reed-built
skiffs, swift as an eagle swooping on its
prey.

²⁷ If I think, I shall forget my complaints,
I shall show a cheerful face and smile,

²⁸ I still dread all I must suffer; I know
that you will not acquit me.

²⁹ If I am to be accounted guilty, why
do I waste my labour?

³⁰ Though I were to wash myself with
soap and cleanse my hands with lye,

³¹ you would thrust me into the miry
pit and my clothes would render me
loathsome.

³² God is not as I am, not someone I
can challenge, and say, Let us confront
one another in court.

³³ If only there were one to arbitrate
between us and impose his authority on
us both,

³⁴ so that God might take his rod from my back, and terror of him might not come on me suddenly.

³⁵ I should then speak out without fear of him, for I know I am not what I am thought to be.

10¹ I am sickened of life; I shall give free rein to my complaints, speaking out in the bitterness of my soul.

² I shall say to God, Do not condemn me, but let me know the charge against me.

³ Do you find any advantage in oppression, in spurning the work of your own hands while smiling on the policy of the wicked?

⁴ Have you the eyes of flesh? Do you see as a mortal sees?

⁵ Are your days as those of a mortal or your years as his lifespan?

⁶ Is that why you look for guilt in me and seek in me for sin,

⁷ though you know that I am guiltless and have none to save me from your power?

⁸Your hands shaped and fashioned me; and will you at once turn and destroy me?

⁹Recall that you moulded me like clay; and would you reduce me to dust again?

¹⁰Did you not pour me out like milk and curdle me like cheese,

¹¹clothe me with skin and flesh and knit me together with bones and sinews?

¹²You granted me life and continuing favour, and your providence watched over my spirit.

¹³Yet this was the secret purpose of your heart, and I know what was your intent:

¹⁴that, if I sinned, you would be watching me and would not absolve me of my guilt.

¹⁵If indeed I am wicked, all the worse for me! If I am upright, I cannot hold up my head; I am filled with shame and steeped in my affliction.

¹⁶If I am proud as a lion, you hunt me down and confront me again with marvellous power;

¹⁷you renew your onslaught on me, and with mounting anger against me bring fresh forces to the attack.

¹⁸Why did you bring me out of the womb? Better if I had expired and no one had set eyes on me,

¹⁹if I had been carried from womb to grave and were as though I had not been born.

²⁰Is not my life short and fleeting? Let me be, that I may be happy for a moment,

²¹before I depart to a land of gloom, a land of deepest darkness, never to return,

²²a land of dense darkness and disorder, increasing darkness lit by no ray of light.

11 ¹Then Zophar the Naamathite spoke up:

²Is this spate of words to go unanswered? Must the glib of tongue always be right?

³Is your endless talk to reduce others to silence? When you speak irreverently, is no one to take you to task?

⁴You claim that your opinions are sound; you say to God, I am spotless in your sight.

⁵But if only God would speak and open his lips to reply,

⁶to expound to you the secrets of wisdom, for wonderful are its achievements! Know then that God exacts from you less than your sin deserves.

⁷Can you fathom the mystery of God, or attain to the limits of the Almighty?

⁸They are higher than the heavens. What can you do? They are deeper than Sheol. What can you know?

⁹In extent they are longer than the earth and broader than the ocean.

¹⁰If he passes by, he may keep secret his passing; if he proclaims it, who can turn him back?

¹¹He surely knows who are false, and when he sees iniquity, does he not take note of it?

¹²A fool will attain to understanding when a wild ass's foal is born a human being!

¹³If only you had directed your heart rightly and spread out your hands in prayer to him!

¹⁴Any wrongdoing you have in hand, thrust it far away, and do not let iniquity make its home with you.

¹⁵Then you could hold up your head without fault; you would be steadfast and fearless.

¹⁶Then you will forget trouble, remembering it only as floodwaters that have passed.

¹⁷Life will be lasting, radiant as noon, and darkness will be turned to morning.

¹⁸You will be confident, because there is hope; sure of protection, you will rest in confidence

¹⁹and lie down unafraid. The great will court your favour.

²⁰But blindness will fall on the wicked; to them the ways of escape are closed, and their only hope is death.

12¹ Job answered:
²No doubt you are intelligent people, and when you die, wisdom will perish!

³But I have sense, as well as you; in no way do I fall short of you; what gifts indeed have you that others have not?

⁴Yet I am a laughing-stock to my friends -- a laughing-stock, though I am innocent and blameless: one that called upon God, but he afflicted me.

⁵Those at ease look down on
misfortune, on the blow that fells one
who is already reeling,

⁶while the marauders' tents are left
undisturbed and those who provoke God
live safe and sound.

⁷But ask the beasts, and they will teach
you; ask the birds of the air to inform
you,

⁸or tell the creatures that crawl to
teach you, and the fish of the sea to
instruct you.

⁹Who does not come to know from all
these that the hand of the LORD has
done this?

¹⁰In his hand are the souls of all that
live, the spirits of every human being.

¹¹Does not the ear test words as the
palate savours food?

¹²Is wisdom with the aged? Does long
life bring understanding?

¹³With God are wisdom and power, to
him belong counsel and understanding.

¹⁴If he pulls down, there is no
rebuilding; if he imprisons, there is no
release.

¹⁵If he holds back the waters, there is drought; if he lets them loose, the earth is overwhelmed.

¹⁶Strength and success belong to him, deceived and deceiver are his to use.

¹⁷He makes counsellors behave like madmen and turns judges crazy;

¹⁸he looses the bonds imposed by kings and removes the girdle of office from their waists;

¹⁹he makes priests behave like idiots and overthrows those long in office;

²⁰trusted counsellors he strikes with dumbness, he robs the old of their judgement;

²¹he pours scorn on princes and abates the arrogance of nobles.

²²He unveils mysteries deep in obscurity and into thick darkness he brings light.

²³He leads peoples astray and destroys them, he lays them low, and there they lie.

²⁴He deprives the nations' rulers of their wits and leaves them wandering in a trackless desert;

²⁵without light they grope their way in darkness and are left to wander like drunkards.

13¹ All this I have seen with my own eyes, with my own ears I have heard and understood it.

² What you know, I also know; in no way do I fall short of you.

³ Nevertheless I would speak with the Almighty; I am ready to argue with God,

⁴ while you go on smearing truth with your falsehoods, one and all stitching a patchwork of lies.

⁵ If only you would be silent and let silence be your wisdom!

⁶ Listen, now, to my arguments; attend while I put my case.

⁷ Is it on God's behalf that you speak so wickedly, in his defence that you voice what is false?

⁸ Must you take God's part, putting his case for him?

⁹ Will all go well when he examines you? Can you deceive him as you could a human being?

¹⁰ He will most surely expose you if you take his part by falsely accusing me.

¹¹ Will not God's majesty strike you with dread, and fear of him overcome you?

¹² Your moralizing talk is so much dross, your arguments crumble like clay.

¹³ Be silent, leave me to speak my mind, and let what may come upon me!

¹⁴ Why do I expose myself to danger and take my life in my hands?

¹⁵ If he wishes to slay me, I have nothing to lose; I shall still defend my conduct to his face.

¹⁶ This at least assures my deliverance: that no godless person may appear before him.

¹⁷ Listen closely, then, to my words, and give a hearing to my statement.

¹⁸ Be sure of this: once I have stated my case I know that I shall be acquitted.

¹⁹ Who is there that can make a case against me so that I should be reduced to silence and death?

²⁰ God, grant me these two conditions only, and then I shall not hide out of your sight:

²¹ remove your hand from upon me and let not fear of you strike me with dismay.

²²Then summon me, and I shall respond; or let me speak first, and you answer me.

²³How many crimes and sins are laid to my charge? Let me know my offence and my sin.

²⁴Why do you hide your face and treat me as your enemy?

²⁵Will you harass a wind-driven leaf and pursue dry chaff,

²⁶that you draw up bitter charges against me, making me heir to the iniquities of my youth,

²⁷putting my feet in the stocks, keeping a close watch on all I do, and setting a slave-mark on my instep?

²⁸[[EMPTY]]

14¹ Every being born of woman is short-lived and full of trouble.

²He blossoms like a flower and withers away; fleeting as a shadow, he does not endure; he is like a wineskin that perishes or a garment that moths have eaten.

³It is on such a creature you fix your eyes, and bring him into court before you!

⁴[[EMPTY]]

⁵ Truly the days of such a one's life are determined, and the number of his months is known to you; you have laid down a limit, which cannot be exceeded.

⁶ Look away from him therefore and leave him to count off the hours like a hired labourer.

⁷ If a tree is cut down, there is hope that it will sprout again and fresh shoots will not fail.

⁸ Though its root becomes old in the earth, its stump dying in the ground,

⁹ yet when it scents water it may break into bud and make new growth like a young plant.

¹⁰ But when a human being dies all his power vanishes; he expires, and where is he then?

¹¹ As the waters of a lake dwindle, or as a river shrinks and runs dry,

¹² so mortal man lies down, never to rise until the very sky splits open. If a man dies, can he live again? He can never be roused from this sleep.

¹³ If only you would hide me in Sheol, conceal me until your anger is past, and only then fix a time to recall me to mind!

¹⁴I would not lose hope, however long my service, waiting for my relief to come.

¹⁵You would summon me, and I would answer; you would long to see the creature you have made,

¹⁶whereas now you count my every step, watching all my errant course.

¹⁷Every offence of mine is stored in your bag, where you keep my iniquity under seal.

¹⁸Yet as a falling mountainside is swept away, and a rock is dislodged from its place,

¹⁹as water wears away stone, and a cloudburst scours the soil from the land, so you have wiped out the hope of frail man;

²⁰finally you overpower him, and he is gone; with changed appearance he is banished from your sight.

²¹His sons may rise to honour, but he is unaware of it; they may sink into obscurity, but he knows it not.

²²His kinsfolk are grieved for him and his slaves mourn his loss.

15¹ THEN Eliphaz the Temanite answered:

² Would a sensible person give vent to such hot-air arguments or puff himself up with an east wind?

³ Would he bandy useless words and speeches so unprofitable?

⁴ Why! You even banish the fear of God from your mind, cutting off all communication with him.

⁵ Your iniquity dictates what you say, and deceit is your chosen language.

⁶ You are condemned out of your own mouth, not by me; your own lips testify against you.

⁷ Were you the firstborn of mankind, brought forth before the hills?

⁸ Do you listen in God's secret council or usurp all wisdom for yourself alone?

⁹ What do you know that we do not know? What insight have you that we do not share?

¹⁰ We have age and white hairs in our company, men older than your father.

¹¹ Does not consolation from God suffice you, a word whispered quietly in your ear?

¹² What makes you so bold at heart, and why do your eyes flash,

¹³ that you vent your anger on God and pour out such mouthfuls of words?

¹⁴ What is any human being, that he should be innocent, or any child of woman, that he should be justified?

¹⁵ If God puts no trust in his holy ones, and the heavens are not innocent in his sight,

¹⁶ how much less so are human beings, who are loathsome and corrupt and lap up evil like water!

¹⁷ I shall tell you, if only you will listen; I shall recount what I have seen --

¹⁸ what has been handed down by wise men and was not concealed from them by their forefathers,

¹⁹ to whom alone the land was given, and no foreigner moved among them:

²⁰ the wicked through all their days are racked with anxiety; so it is with the tyrant through all the years allotted to him.

²¹ The noise of the hunter's scare rings in his ears; even in time of peace the marauder swoops down on him;

²² he cannot hope to escape from dark death; he is marked down for the sword;

²³ he is flung out as food for vultures;
he knows that his destruction is certain.

²⁴ Suddenly a black day comes upon
him, distress and anxiety overwhelm
him like a king about to fall;

²⁵ for he has lifted his hand against God
and pits himself against the Almighty,

²⁶ running at him head lowered, with
the full weight of his bossed shield.

²⁷ Heavy though his jowl is and gross,
and though his sides bulge with fat,

²⁸ the city where he lives will lie in ruins,
his house will be deserted, destined to
crumble in a heap of rubble.

²⁹ He will be rich no longer, his wealth
will not endure, and he will strike no root
in the earth;

³⁰ scorching heat will shrivel his shoots,
and his blossom will be shaken off by the
wind.

³¹ He deceives himself, trusting in his
high rank, for all his dealings will come
to nothing.

³² His palm trees will wither
unseasonably, and his branches
will not be luxuriant;

³³ he will be like a vine that sheds its grapes unripened, like an olive tree that drops its blossom.

³⁴ For the godless, one and all, are barren, and their homes, enriched through bribery, are destroyed by fire;

³⁵ they conceive mischief and give birth to trouble, and the child of their womb is deceit.

16 ¹ Job answered:

² I have heard such things so often before! You are trouble-makers one and all!

³ You say, Will this windbag never have done? or What makes him so stubborn in argument?

⁴ If you and I were to change places, I could talk as you do; how I could harangue you and wag my head at you!

⁵ But no, I would speak words of encouragement, and my condolences would be unrestrained.

⁶ If I speak, my pain is not eased; if I am silent, it does not leave me.

⁷ Meanwhile, my friend wearies me with his gloating; he and his fellows seize me.

⁸He has come forward to give evidence against me; the liar testifies against me to my face,

⁹in his wrath he tears me and assaults me angrily; he gnashes at me with his teeth. My enemies look daggers at me,

¹⁰they bare their teeth at me, they strike me on the cheek and taunt me; they are all in league against me.

¹¹God has left me at the mercy of malefactors, he has cast me into the power of the wicked.

¹²I was at ease, but he savaged me, seized me by the neck, and worried me. He set me up as his target;

¹³his arrows rained on me from every side; pitiless, he pierced deep into my vitals, he spilt my gall on the ground.

¹⁴He made breach after breach in my defences; like a warrior he rushed on me.

¹⁵I stitched sackcloth together to cover my body and laid my forehead in the dust;

¹⁶my cheeks were inflamed with weeping and dark shadows were round my eyes.

¹⁷ Yet my hands were free from violence and my prayer was sincere.

¹⁸ Let not the earth cover my blood, and let my cry for justice find no rest!

¹⁹ For now my witness is in heaven; there is One on high ready to answer for me.

²⁰ My appeal will come before God, while my eyes turn anxiously to him.

²¹ If only there were one to arbitrate between man and God, as between a man and his neighbour!

²² For there are but few years to come before I take the road from which there is no return.

17 ¹ My mind is distraught, my days are numbered, and the grave awaits me.

² Wherever I turn, I am taunted, and my eye meets nothing but sneers.

³ Be my surety with yourself, for who else will pledge himself for me?

⁴ You will not let those triumph whose minds you have sunk in ignorance;

⁵ if such a one denounces his friends to their ruin, his sons' eyes will fail.

⁶ I am held up as a byword in every land, a marvel for all to see;

⁷ my eyes are dimmed by grief, my limbs wasted to a shadow.

⁸ The upright are bewildered at this, and at my downfall the innocent are indignant.

⁹ In spite of all, one who is righteous maintains his course; he goes from strength to strength whose hands are clean.

¹⁰ But come on, one and all, try again! I shall not find one who is wise among you.

¹¹ My days die away like an echo; my heart-strings are snapped.

¹² Night is turned into day, and morning light is darkened before me.

¹³ If I measure Sheol for my house, if I spread my couch in the darkness,

¹⁴ if I call the grave my father and the worm my mother or my sister,

¹⁵ where, then, will my hope be, and who will take account of my piety?

¹⁶ I cannot take them with me down to Sheol, nor shall we descend together to the dust.

18¹ Then Bildad the Shuhite answered:

²How soon will you bridle your tongue?
Show some sense, and then we can talk.

³What do you mean by treating us as
no more than cattle? Are we nothing but
brute beasts to you?

⁴Is the earth to be deserted to prove
you right, or the rocks to be moved from
their place?

⁵No, it is the evildoer whose light is
extinguished, from whose fire no flame
will rekindle;

⁶the light in his tent fades, his lamp
beside him dies down.

⁷His vigorous stride is shortened, and
he is tripped by his own policy;

⁸he rushes headlong into a net and his
feet are entangled in its meshes;

⁹his heel is caught in a snare, the thong
grips him tightly;

¹⁰a noose lies hidden for him in the
ground and a trap in his path.

¹¹Terror of death suddenly besets him
so that he cannot hold back his urine.

¹²For all his vigour he is paralysed with
fear; strong as he is, disaster awaits
him.

¹³Disease eats away his skin, death's
firstborn devours his limbs.

¹⁴He is plucked from the safety of his home, and death's terrors escort him to their king.

¹⁵Fire settles on his tent, and brimstone is strewn over his dwelling.

¹⁶His roots beneath dry up, and above, his branches wither.

¹⁷All memory of him vanishes from the earth and he leaves no name in the inhabited world.

¹⁸He is thrust out from light into darkness and banished from the land of the living.

¹⁹He leaves no issue or offspring among his people, no survivor where once he lived.

²⁰In the west people are appalled at his end; in the east they shudder with horror.

²¹Such is the fate of the dwellings of evildoers, of the homes of those who care nothing for God.

19¹ Job answered:
²How long will you grieve me and crush me with words?

³You have insulted me now a dozen times and shamelessly wronged me.

⁴If in fact I had erred, the error would still be mine alone.

⁵Will you indeed claim to excel me and put forward my disgrace as an argument against me?

⁶I tell you, God himself has put me in the wrong and drawn his net about me.

⁷If I shout Violence! no one answers; if I appeal for help, I get no justice.

⁸He has blocked my path so that I cannot go forward, he has planted a hedge across my way.

⁹He has stripped me of all honour and taken the crown from my head.

¹⁰On every side he beats me down till I am gone; he has uprooted my hope like a tree.

¹¹His anger is hot against me and he regards me as his enemy.

¹²His raiders gather in force, raising their siege-ramps against me and encamping about my tent.

¹³My kinsfolk hold aloof, my acquaintances are wholly estranged from me;

¹⁴my relatives and friends fall away. My retainers have forgotten me; my

slave-girls treat me as a stranger; I have become an alien in their eyes.

¹⁵(19: 14)

¹⁶I summon my slave, but he does not answer, though I ask him directly as a favour.

¹⁷My breath is offensive to my wife, and I stink in the nostrils of my own family.

¹⁸The very children despise me and, when I rise, turn their backs on me.

¹⁹All my close companions abhor me, and those whom I love have turned against me.

²⁰My bones stand out under my skin, and I gnaw my under-lip with my teeth.

²¹Pity me, have pity on me, you that are my friends, for the hand of God has touched me.

²²Must you pursue me as God pursues me? Have you not had your teeth in me long enough?

²³Would that my words might be written down, that they might be engraved in an inscription,

²⁴incised with an iron tool and filled with lead, carved in rock as a witness!

²⁵ But I know that my vindicator lives and that he will rise last to speak in court;

²⁶ I shall discern my witness standing at my side and see my defending counsel, even God himself,

²⁷ whom I shall see with my own eyes, I myself and no other. My heart sank within me

²⁸ when you said, What a series of misfortunes befalls him, and the root of the trouble lies in himself!

²⁹ Beware of the sword that points at you, the sword that sweeps away all iniquity; then you will know that there is a judge.

20¹ Then Zophar the Naamathite answered:

² My distress of mind forces me to reply, and this is why I hasten to speak.

³ I have heard arguments that are an outrage to me, but a spirit beyond my understanding gives me the answers.

⁴ Surely you know that since time began, since mortals were first set on the earth, this has been true:

⁵ the triumph of a wicked person is short-lived, the glee of one who is godless lasts but a moment!

⁶ Though in his pride he stands high as the heavens, and his head touches the clouds,

⁷ he will be swept utterly away like his own dung, and those used to seeing him will say, Where is he?

⁸ He will fly away like a dream and be found no more, gone like a vision of the night;

⁹ eyes which glimpsed him will do so no more and never again will they see him in his place.

¹⁰ His sons will curry favour with the poor; his children will give back his wealth.

¹¹ The youthful vigour which filled his bones will lie with him in the earth.

¹² Though evil tastes sweet in his mouth, and he savours it, rolling it round his tongue,

¹³ though he lingers over it and will not let it go, and holds it back on his palate,

¹⁴ yet his food turns in his stomach, changing to asps' venom within him.

¹⁵ He gulps down wealth, then spews it up; God makes him vomit it from his stomach.

¹⁶ He sucks the poison of asps, and the tongue of the viper kills him.

¹⁷ Not for him to swill down rivers of cream or torrents of honey and curds;

¹⁸ he must give back his gains unswallowed, and spew out his profit undigested;

¹⁹ for he has oppressed and harassed the poor, he has seized houses which he did not build.

²⁰ Because his appetite gave him no rest, he let nothing he craved escape him;

²¹ because nothing survived his greed, therefore his wellbeing does not last.

²² With every need satisfied his troubles begin, and the full force of hardship strikes him.

²³ Let that fill his belly! God vents his anger upon him and rains on him cruel blows.

²⁴ He is wounded by an iron weapon and pierced by a bronze-tipped arrow;

²⁵ the point comes out at his back,
the gleaming tip from his gall-bladder.
Terrors threaten him,

²⁶ darkness unrelieved awaits him; a
fire that needs no fanning will consume
him. Woe betide any survivor in his tent!

²⁷ The heavens will lay bare his guilt,
and earth will rise up to condemn him.

²⁸ A flood will sweep away his house,
rushing waters on the day of wrath.

²⁹ Such is God's reward for the wicked,
the God-ordained portion for the rebel.

21 ¹ Job answered:

² Give careful heed to my words,
and let that be the comfort you offer me.

³ Bear with me while I have my say;
after I have spoken, you may mock.

⁴ My complaint is not about mortals, so
have I not cause to be impatient?

⁵ Look at my plight, and be aghast; clap
your hand to your mouth.

⁶ When I stop to think, I am filled with
horror, and my whole body shudders.

⁷ Why do the wicked live on, hale in old
age, and great and powerful?

⁸ They see their children settled around
them, their descendants flourishing,

⁹ their households secure and safe; the rod of God's justice does not reach them.

¹⁰ Their bull breeds without fail; their cow calves and does not cast her calf.

¹¹ Like flocks they produce babes in droves, and their little ones skip and dance;

¹² they rejoice with tambourine and lyre and make merry to the sound of the flute.

¹³ They live out their days in prosperity, and they go down to Sheol in peace.

¹⁴ They say to God, Leave us alone; we do not want to know your ways!

¹⁵ What is the Almighty that we should worship him, or what should we gain by entreating his favour?

¹⁶ Is not the prosperity of the wicked in their own hands? Are not their purposes very different from God's?

¹⁷ How often is the lamp of the wicked snuffed out, how often does ruin come upon them? How often does God in his anger deal out suffering?

¹⁸ How often are they like a wisp of straw before the wind, like chaff which the storm whirls away?

¹⁹You say, The trouble a man earns, God reserves for his sons; no, let him be paid for it in full and be punished.

²⁰Let his own eyes witness the condemnation come on him; may the wrath of the Almighty be the cup he drinks.

²¹What joy will he have in his children after him, if his months are numbered?

²²Can any human being teach God, when it is he who judges even those in heaven above?

²³I tell you this: one man dies crowned with success, lapped in security and comfort,

²⁴his loins full of vigour and the marrow juicy in his bones;

²⁵another dies in bitterness of soul, never having tasted prosperity.

²⁶Side by side they are laid in the earth, and worms are the shroud of both.

²⁷I know well what you are thinking and the arguments you are marshalling against me;

²⁸I know you will ask, Where now is the great man's house, what has become of the dwelling of the wicked?

²⁹ Have you never questioned travellers? Do you not accept the evidence they bring:

³⁰ that a wicked person is spared when disaster comes and conveyed to safety before the day of wrath?

³¹ Who will denounce his conduct to his face? Who will requite him for what he has done?

³² When he is borne to the grave, all the world escorts him, before and behind; the dust of earth is sweet to him, and thousands keep watch at his tomb.

³³ (21: 32)

³⁴ How futile, then, is the comfort you offer me! How false your answers ring!

22 ¹ THEN Eliphaz the Temanite answered:

² Can anyone be any benefit to God? Can he benefit even from the wise?

³ Is it an advantage to the Almighty if you are righteous? What gain to him if your conduct is perfect?

⁴ Does he arraign you for your piety -- is it on this count he brings you to trial?

⁵ No: it is because your wickedness is so great, and your depravity passes all bounds.

⁶Without cause you exact pledges from your brothers, leaving them stripped of their clothes and naked.

⁷To the weary you give no water to drink and you withhold bread from the starving.

⁸Is the earth, then, the preserve of the strong, a domain for the favoured few?

⁹You have sent widows away empty-handed, the fatherless you have left without support.

¹⁰No wonder there are pitfalls in your path, scares to fill you with sudden terror!

¹¹No wonder light is turned to darkness, so that you cannot see, and a deluge of rain envelops you!

¹²Surely God is at the zenith of the heavens and looks down on the topmost stars, high as they are.

¹³Yet you say, What can God know? Can he see through thick darkness to judge?

¹⁴His eyes cannot pierce the curtain of the clouds as he moves to and fro on the vault of heaven.

¹⁵Consider the course of the wicked, the path the miscreants tread;

¹⁶see how they are snatched off before their time, their very foundation flowing away like a river.

¹⁷They said to God, Leave us alone. What can the Almighty do to us?

¹⁸Yet it was he who filled their houses with good things, although their purposes and his were very different.

¹⁹The righteous see and exult, the innocent make game of them;

²⁰for their riches are swept away, the profusion of their wealth is consumed by fire.

²¹Come to terms with God and you will prosper; that is the way to mend your fortune.

²²Accept instruction from his lips and take his words to heart.

²³If you come back to the Almighty in sincerity, if you banish wrongdoing from your home,

²⁴if you treat your precious metal as dust and the gold of Ophir as stones from the stream,

²⁵then the Almighty himself will be your precious metal; he will be your silver in double measure.

²⁶Then, with sure trust in the Almighty,
you will raise your face to God;

²⁷you will pray to him, and he will hear
you, and you will fulfil your vows.

²⁸In all your decisions you will have
success, and on your path light will
shine;

²⁹but God brings down the pride of the
haughty and keeps safe those who are
humble.

³⁰He will deliver the innocent, and you
will be delivered, because your hands
are pure.

23¹ Job answered:

²Even today my thoughts are
embittered, for God's hand is heavy on
me in my trouble.

³If only I knew how to reach him, how
to enter his court,

⁴I should state my case before him and
set out my arguments in full;

⁵then I should learn what answer he
would give and understand what he had
to say to me.

⁶Would he exert his great power to
browbeat me? No; God himself would
never set his face against me.

⁷ There in his court the upright are vindicated, and I should win from my judge an outright acquittal.

⁸ If I go to the east, he is not there; if west, I cannot find him;

⁹ when I turn north, I do not descry him; I face south, but he is not to be seen.

¹⁰ Yet he knows me in action and at rest; when he tests me, I shall emerge like gold.

¹¹ My feet have kept to the path he has set me; without deviating I have kept to his way.

¹² I do not neglect the commands he issues, I have treasured in my heart all he says.

¹³ When he decides, who can turn him from his purpose? What he desires, he does.

¹⁴ Whatever he determines for me, that he carries out; his mind is full of plans like these.

¹⁵ That is why I am fearful of meeting him; when I think about it, I am afraid;

¹⁶ it is God who makes me faint-hearted, the Almighty who fills me with fear,

¹⁷ yet I am not reduced to silence by the darkness or by the mystery which hides him.

24 ¹ The day of reckoning is no secret to the Almighty, though those who know him have no hint of its date.

² The wicked move boundary stones, and pasture flocks they have stolen.

³ They drive off the donkey belonging to the fatherless, and lead away the widow's ox with a rope.

⁴ They jostle the poor out of the way; the destitute in the land are forced into hiding together.

⁵ The poor rise early like the wild ass, when it scours the wilderness for food; but though they work till nightfall, their children go hungry.

⁶ In the field they reap what is not theirs, and filch the late grapes from the rich man's vineyard.

⁷ Without clothing, they pass the night naked and with no cover against the cold.

⁸ Drenched by rainstorms from the hills, they cling to the rock, their only shelter.

⁹They snatch the fatherless infant from the breast and take the poor person's child in pledge.

¹⁰Naked and bare they go about their work; those who carry the sheaves go hungry;

¹¹they press the oil in the shade where two walls meet, they tread the winepress but themselves go thirsty.

¹²Far from the city, they groan as if dying, and like those mortally wounded they cry out; but God remains deaf to their prayer.

¹³Some there are who rebel against the light, who know nothing of its ways and do not stay in its paths.

¹⁴Before daylight the murderer rises to kill some miserable wretch. The seducer watches eagerly for twilight, thinking, No one will set eyes on me. In the night the thief prowls about, his face covered with a mask;

¹⁵(24: 14)

¹⁶in the darkness he breaks into houses which he has marked down during the day. One and all, they are strangers to the daylight,

¹⁷ but dark night is morning to them; and amid the terrors of night they are at home.

¹⁸ Such men are scum on the surface of the water; throughout the land their fields are accursed, and no labourer will go near their vineyards.

¹⁹ As drought and heat make away with snow, so the waters of Sheol make away with sinners.

²⁰ The womb forgets them, the worm sucks them dry; they will not be remembered ever after. Iniquity is snapped like a stick!

²¹ They may have wronged the barren childless woman and been no help to the widow;

²² yet God in his strength carries off the mighty; they may rise, but they have no firm hope of life.

²³ He lulls them into security and confidence; but his eyes are fixed on their ways.

²⁴ For a moment they rise to the heights, but they are soon gone. Laid low they wilt like a mallow-flower; they droop like an ear of grain on the stalk.

²⁵If this is not so, who will prove me wrong and make nonsense of my argument?

25 ¹Then Bildad the Shuhite answered:

²Authority and awe are with him who has established peace in his realm on high.

³His squadrons are without number; at whom will they not spring from ambush?

⁴How then can a mere mortal be justified in God's sight, or one born of woman be regarded as virtuous?

⁵If the circling moon is found wanting, and the stars are not innocent in his eyes,

⁶much more so man, who is but a maggot, mortal man, who is a worm.

26 ¹Job answered:

²What a help you have been to one without resource! What deliverance you have brought to the powerless!

³What counsel you offer to one bereft of wisdom, what sound advice to the simple!

⁴Who has prompted you to utter such words, and whose spirit is expressed in your speech?

⁵The shades below writhe in fear, the waters and all that inhabit them are afraid.

⁶Sheol is laid bare before him; Abaddon lies uncovered.

⁷God spreads the canopy of the sky over chaos and suspends earth over the void.

⁸He keeps the waters penned in dense cloud masses, yet no cloud bursts open under their weight.

⁹He veils the face of the full moon, unrolling his clouds across it.

¹⁰He has fixed the horizon on the surface of the waters at the boundary between light and darkness.

¹¹The pillars of heaven quake, aghast at the thunder of his voice.

¹²With his strong arm he cleft the sea monster; he struck down Rahab by his skill.

¹³Winds from him clear the skies, and his hand slays the twisting sea serpent.

¹⁴These are but the fringes of his power, and how faint the whisper that we hear of him! Who could comprehend the thunder of his might?

27 ¹ Then Job resumed his discourse:

² I swear by the living God, who has denied me justice, by the Almighty, who has filled me with bitterness,

³ that so long as there is any life left in me and the breath of God is in my nostrils,

⁴ no untrue word will pass my lips, nor will my tongue utter any falsehood.

⁵ Far be it from me to concede that you are right! Till I cease to be, I shall not abandon my claim of innocence.

⁶ I maintain and shall never give up the rightness of my cause; so long as I live, I shall not change.

⁷ Let my enemy meet the fate of the wicked, and my antagonist the doom of the wrongdoer!

⁸ What hope has a godless man, when he is cut off, when God takes away his life?

⁹ Will God listen to his cry when trouble overtakes him?

¹⁰ Will he trust himself to the Almighty? Will he call upon God at all times?

¹¹ I shall teach you what is in God's power, and not conceal the purpose of the Almighty.

¹²If all of you have seen these things, why then do you talk such empty nonsense?

¹³Such is God's reward for the wicked man, the Almighty's portion for him who is ruthless.

¹⁴Though his sons be many, they will fall by the sword, and his offspring will never have enough to eat;

¹⁵the survivors will be brought to the grave by plague, and no widows will weep for them.

¹⁶He may heap up silver like dirt and get himself stacks of clothes;

¹⁷he may get them, but the righteous will wear them, and his silver will be shared among the innocent.

¹⁸The house he builds is flimsy as a bird's nest or a shelter put up by a watchman.

¹⁹He may lie down rich one day, but never again; he opens his eyes, to find his wealth is gone.

²⁰Disaster overtakes him like a flood, and a storm snatches him away in the night;

²¹an east wind lifts him up and he is gone; it sweeps him far from his home;

²²it hurls itself at him without mercy, and he is battered and buffeted by its force;

²³it snaps its fingers at him and whistles over him wherever he may be.

28¹THERE are mines for silver and places where gold is refined.

²Iron is won from the earth and copper smelted from the ore.

³Men master the darkness; to the farthest recesses they seek ore in gloom and deep darkness.

⁴Foreigners cut the shafts; forgotten, suspended without foothold, they swing to and fro, far away from anyone.

⁵While grain is springing from the earth above, what lies beneath is turned over like a fire,

⁶and out of its rocks comes lapis lazuli, dusted with flecks of gold.

⁷No bird of prey knows the path there; the falcon's keen eye cannot descry it;

⁸proud beasts do not set foot on it, and no lion passes there.

⁹Man sets his hand to the granite rock and lays bare the roots of the mountains;

¹⁰he cuts galleries in the rocks, and gems of every kind meet his eye;

¹¹ he dams up the sources of the streams and brings the hidden riches of the earth to light.

¹² But where can wisdom be found, and where is the source of understanding?

¹³ No one knows the way to it, nor is it to be found in the land of the living.

¹⁴ It is not in us, declare the ocean depths; the sea declares, It is not with me.

¹⁵ Red gold cannot buy it, nor can its price be weighed out in silver;

¹⁶ gold of Ophir cannot be set in the scales against it, nor precious cornelian nor sapphire;

¹⁷ gold and crystal are not to be matched with it, no work in fine gold can be bartered for it;

¹⁸ black coral and alabaster are not worth mention, and a parcel of wisdom fetches more than red coral;

¹⁹ chrysolite from Ethiopia is not to be matched with it, pure gold cannot be set in the scales against it.

²⁰ Where, then, does wisdom come from? Where is the source of understanding?

²¹ No creature on earth can set eyes on it; even from birds of the air it is concealed.

²² Destruction and Death declare, We know of it only by hearsay.

²³ God alone understands the way to it, he alone knows its source;

²⁴ for he can see to the ends of the earth and observe every place under heaven.

²⁵ When he regulated the force of the wind and measured out the waters in proportion,

²⁶ when he laid down a limit for the rain and cleared a path for the thunderbolt,

²⁷ it was then he saw wisdom and took stock of it, he considered it and fathomed its very depths.

²⁸ And he said to mankind: The fear of the Lord is wisdom, and to turn from evil, that is understanding!

29 ¹ THEN Job resumed his discourse:
² If only I could go back to the old days, to the time when God was watching over me,

³ when his lamp shone above my head, and by its light I walked through the darkness!

⁴If I could be as in the days of my prime, when God protected my home,
⁵while the Almighty was still there at my side, and my servants stood round me,

⁶while my path flowed with milk, and the rocks poured forth streams of oil for me!

⁷When I went out of my gate up to the town to take my seat in the public square,

⁸young men saw me and kept back out of sight, old men rose to their feet,

⁹men in authority broke off their talk and put their hands to their lips;

¹⁰the voices of the nobles died away, and every man held his tongue.

¹¹Whoever heard of me spoke favourably of me, and those who saw me bore witness to my merit,

¹²how I saved the poor who appealed for help, and the fatherless and him who had no protector.

¹³He who was threatened with ruin blessed me, and I made the widow's heart sing for joy.

¹⁴I put on righteousness as a garment and it clothed me; justice, like a cloak and turban, adorned me.

¹⁵I was eyes to the blind and feet to the lame;

¹⁶I was a father to the needy, and I took up the stranger's cause.

¹⁷I broke the fangs of the miscreant and wrested the prey from his teeth.

¹⁸I thought, I shall die with my powers unimpaired and my days uncounted as the grains of sand,

¹⁹with my roots spreading out to the water and the dew lying on my branches,

²⁰with the bow always new in my grasp and the arrow ever ready to my hand.

²¹They listened to me expectantly and waited in silence for my counsel.

²²After I had spoken, no one spoke again; my words fell gently on them;

²³they waited for me as for rain, open-mouthed as for spring showers.

²⁴When I smiled on them, they took heart; when my face lit up, they lost their gloomy looks.

²⁵I presided over them, planning their course, like a king encamped with his troops, like one who comforts mourners.

30¹ But now I am laughed to scorn by men of a younger generation, men whose fathers I would have disdained to put with the dogs guarding my flock.

² What use to me was the strength of their arms, since their vigour had wasted away?

³ Gaunt with want and hunger, they gnawed roots in the desert,

⁴ they plucked saltwort and wormwood and for warmth the root of broom.

⁵ Driven out from human society, pursued like thieves with hue and cry,

⁶ they made their homes in gullies and ravines, in holes in the ground and rocky clefts;

⁷ they howled like beasts among the bushes, huddled together beneath the scrub,

⁸ vile, disreputable wretches, outcasts from the haunts of men.

⁹ Now I have become the target of their taunts; my name is a byword among them.

¹⁰ They abhor me, they shun me, they dare to spit in my face.

¹¹ They run wild and savage me; at sight of me they throw off all restraint.

¹² On my right flank they attack in a mob; they raise their siege-ramps against me;

¹³ to destroy me they tear down my crumbling defences, and scramble up against me unhindered;

¹⁴ they burst in as through a gaping breach; at the moment of the crash they come in waves.

¹⁵ Terror after terror overwhelms me; my noble designs are swept away as by the wind, and my hope of deliverance vanishes like a cloud.

¹⁶ So now my life ebbs away; misery has me daily in its grip.

¹⁷ By night pain pierces my very bones, and there is ceaseless throbbing in my veins;

¹⁸ my garments are all bespattered with my phlegm, which chokes me like the collar of a garment.

¹⁹ God himself has flung me down in the mud; I have become no better than dust or ashes.

²⁰I call out to you, God, but you do not answer, I stand up to plead, but you keep aloof.

²¹You have turned cruelly against me; with your strong hand you persecute me.

²²You snatch me up and mount me on the wind; the tempest tosses me about.

²³I know that you will hand me over to death, to the place appointed for all mortals.

²⁴Yet no beggar held out his hand to me in vain for relief in his distress.

²⁵Did I not weep for the unfortunate? Did not my heart grieve for the destitute?

²⁶Yet evil has come though I expected good, and when I looked for light, darkness came.

²⁷My bowels are in ferment and know no peace; days of misery stretch out in front of me.

²⁸I go about dejected and comfortless; I rise in the assembly, only to appeal for help.

²⁹The wolf is now my brother, the desert-owls have become my companions.

³⁰My blackened skin peels off, and my body is scorched by the heat.

³¹ My lyre has been tuned for a dirge,
my flute to the sound of weeping.

31 ¹ I have taken an oath never to
let my eyes linger on a girl.

² What is the lot prescribed by God
above, the portion from the Almighty on
high?

³ Is not ruin prescribed for the
miscreant, disaster for the wrongdoer?

⁴ Yet does not God himself see my ways
and take account of my every step?

⁵ I swear I have had no dealings with
falsehood and have not gone hotfoot
after deceit.

⁶ Let God weigh me in the scales of
justice, and he will know that I am
blameless!

⁷ If my steps have wandered from the
way, if my heart has followed my eyes,
or any dirt has stuck to my hands,

⁸ then may another eat what I sow, and
may my crops be uprooted!

⁹ If my heart has been enticed by
a woman or I have lurked by my
neighbour's door,

¹⁰ may my wife be another man's slave,
and may other men enjoy her.

¹¹ For that would have been a heinous act, an offence before the law:

¹² it would be a consuming and destructive fire raging among my crops.

¹³ If I ever rejected the plea of my slave or slave-girl when they brought a complaint against me,

¹⁴ what shall I do if God appears? What shall I answer if he intervenes?

¹⁵ Did not he who made me in the belly make them? Did not the same God create us in the womb?

¹⁶ If I have withheld from the poor what they needed or made the widow's eye grow dim with tears;

¹⁷ if I have eaten my portion of food by myself, and the fatherless child has not shared it with me --

¹⁸ the boy who said, From my youth he brought me up, or the girl who claimed that from her birth I guided her --

¹⁹ if I have seen anyone perish for lack of clothing or a poor man with nothing to cover him;

²⁰ if his body had no cause to bless me, because he was not kept warm with a fleece from my flock;

²¹ if I have raised my hand against the innocent, knowing that those who would side with me were in court:

²² then may my shoulder-blade be torn from my shoulder, my arm wrenched out of its socket!

²³ But the fear of God was heavy upon me; because of his majesty I could do none of these things.

²⁴ If I have put my faith in gold and my trust in the gold of Nubia;

²⁵ if I have rejoiced in my great wealth and in the increase of riches in my possession;

²⁶ if I ever looked on the sun in splendour or the moon moving in her glory,

²⁷ and was led astray in my secret heart and kissed my hand in homage:

²⁸ this would have been an offence before the law, for I should have been unfaithful to God on high.

²⁹ Have I rejoiced at the ruin of anyone who hated me or been filled with glee when misfortune overtook him,

³⁰ even though I did not allow my tongue to sin by laying his life under a curse?

³¹ The men of my household have indeed said: Who has eaten of his food and not been satisfied?

³² No stranger has had to spend the night in the street, for I have kept open house for the traveller.

³³ Have I ever concealed my misdeeds as others do, keeping my guilt hidden within my breast,

³⁴ because I feared the gossip of the town or dreaded the scorn of my fellow-citizens? Let me but call a witness in my defence! Let the Almighty state his case against me! If my accuser had written out his indictment, I should not keep silence and remain indoors.

³⁵ (31: 34)

³⁶ No! I should flaunt it on my shoulder and wear it like a crown on my head;

³⁷ I should plead the whole record of my life and present that in court as my defence.

³⁸ If my land has cried out in reproach at me, and its furrows have joined in weeping;

³⁹ If I have eaten its produce without payment and left my creditors to languish:

⁴⁰may thistles spring up instead of wheat, and noxious weeds instead of barley! Job's speeches are finished.

32¹THESE three men gave up answering Job, for he continued to think himself righteous.

²Then Elihu son of Barakel the Buzite, of the family of Ram, became angry: angry because Job had made himself out to be more righteous than God,

³and angry with his three friends because they had found no answer to Job and so let God appear wrong.

⁴Now Elihu had hung back while they were talking with Job because they were older than he was;

⁵but, when he saw that the three had no answer to give, he could no longer contain his anger.

⁶So Elihu son of Barakel the Buzite began to speak: I am young in years, while you are old; that is why I held back and shrank from expressing my opinion in front of you.

⁷I said to myself, Let age speak, and length of years expound wisdom.

⁸But it is a spirit in a human being, the breath of the Almighty, that gives him understanding;

⁹it is not only the old who are wise, not only the aged who understand what is right.

¹⁰Therefore I say: Listen to me; I too want to express an opinion.

¹¹Here I have been waiting for what you had to say, listening to your reasoning, while you picked your words;

¹²I have been giving thought to those conclusions, but not one of you convicts Job or refutes his arguments.

¹³See then that you do not claim to have found wisdom; or say God will rebut him, not man.

¹⁴I shall not string words together like you or answer him in the way you have done.

¹⁵If these men are confounded and are stuck for an answer, if words fail them,

¹⁶am I to wait because they do not speak, because they stand there, stuck for an answer?

¹⁷I, too, have a furrow to plough; I am going to express my opinion,

¹⁸for I am bursting with words, as if wind in my belly were griping me.

¹⁹My belly is distended as if with wine, about to burst open like a new wineskin;

²⁰I must speak and find relief, I must open my lips and answer;

²¹I shall show no favour to anyone; I shall flatter no one,

²²for I cannot use flattering titles, or my Maker would soon do away with me.

33¹ But now, Job, listen to my words, attend carefully to everything I say.

²I am ready with my answer as you see; the words are on the tip of my tongue.

³My heart assures me that I speak with knowledge, that my lips speak with sincerity.

⁴For the spirit of God made me, the breath of the Almighty gave me life.

⁵Answer me, if you can, marshal your arguments and confront me.

⁶In God's sight I am just what you are; I too am only a handful of clay.

⁷Fear of me need not abash you, nor any pressure from me overawe you.

⁸You have said your say in my hearing;
I have listened to the words you spoke:

⁹I am innocent, you said, and free from
offence, blameless and without guilt.

¹⁰Yet God finds occasions to put me in
the wrong and counts me his enemy;

¹¹he puts my feet in the stocks and
keeps a close watch on all my conduct.

¹²You are not in the right -- that is
my answer; for God is greater than any
mortal.

¹³Why then plead your case with him,
for no one can answer his arguments?

¹⁴Indeed, once God has spoken he
does not speak a second time to confirm
it.

¹⁵In dreams, in visions of the night,
when deepest slumber falls on mortals,
while they lie asleep in bed

¹⁶God imparts his message, and as a
warning strikes them with terror.

¹⁷To turn someone from his evil deeds,
to check human pride,

¹⁸at the edge of the pit he holds him
back alive and stops him from crossing
the river of death.

¹⁹Or again, someone learns his lesson on a bed of pain, tormented by a ceaseless ague in his bones;

²⁰he turns from his food with loathing and has no relish for the choicest dishes;

²¹his flesh hangs loose on him, his bones are loosened and out of joint,

²²his soul draws near to the pit, his life to the waters of death.

²³Yet if an angel, one of a thousand, stands by him, a mediator between him and God, to expound God's righteousness to man and to secure mortal man his due;

²⁴if he speaks on behalf of him and says, Reprieve him from going down to the pit; I have the price of his release:

²⁵then his body will grow sturdier than it was in his youth; he will return to the days of his prime.

²⁶If he entreats God to show him favour, to let him enter his presence with joy;

²⁷if he affirms before everyone, I have sinned, turned right into wrong without a thought:

²⁸ then he saves himself from going down to the pit, he lives and sees the light.

²⁹ All these things God may do to someone again and yet again,

³⁰ bringing him back from the pit to enjoy the full light of life.

³¹ Listen, Job, and attend to me; be silent, and let me speak.

³² If you have anything to say, answer me; speak, for I shall gladly find you proved right.

³³ But if you have nothing, then listen to me: be silent, and I shall teach you wisdom.

34 ¹ Then Elihu went on to say:
² Mark my words, you master-minds! You that know so much, listen to me!

³ For the ear tests words as the palate savours food.

⁴ Let us then examine for ourselves what is right; let us together establish the true good.

⁵ Job has said, I am innocent, but God has denied me justice,

⁶ he has falsified my case; my state is desperate, yet I have done no wrong.

⁷ Was there ever a man like Job with his thirst for irreverent talk,

⁸ choosing bad company to share his journeys, a fellow-traveller with wicked men?

⁹ For he says that it brings no profit to anyone to find favour with God.

¹⁰ But listen to me, you men of good sense. Far be it from God to do evil, from the Almighty to play false!

¹¹ For he requites everyone according to his actions and sees that each gets the reward his conduct deserves.

¹² The truth is, God would never do wrong, the Almighty does not pervert justice.

¹³ Who committed the earth to his keeping? Who but he established the whole world?

¹⁴ If he were to turn his thoughts inwards and withdraw his life-giving spirit,

¹⁵ all flesh would perish on the instant, all mortals would turn again to dust.

¹⁶ Now Job, if you have the wit, consider this; listen to what I am saying:

¹⁷ Can it be that a hater of justice is in control? Do you disparage a sovereign whose rule is so fair,

¹⁸ who says to a prince, You scoundrel, and calls the nobles blackguards to their faces;

¹⁹ who shows no special respect to those in office and favours the rich no more than the poor? All alike are God's creatures,

²⁰ who may die in a moment, in the middle of the night; at his touch the rich are no more, and he removes the mighty without lifting a finger!

²¹ His eyes are on the ways of everyone, and he watches each step they take;

²² there is nowhere so dark, so deep in shadow, that wrongdoers may hide themselves.

²³ There are no appointed days for people to appear before God for judgement.

²⁴ Without holding an enquiry, he breaks the powerful and sets others in their place.

²⁵ Therefore he repudiates all that they do; he turns on them in the night, and they are crushed.

²⁶For their crimes he strikes them down as a public spectacle,

²⁷because they have ceased to obey him, and pay no heed to any of his ways,

²⁸but have caused the cry of the poor to reach his ears, so that he hears the distressed when they cry.

²⁹Even if he is silent, who can condemn him? If he looks away, who can find fault? What though he makes a godless man king over a stubborn nation and all its people?

³⁰(34: 29)

³¹But suppose you were to say to God, I have overstepped the mark, but shall do no more mischief.

³²I am contemptible; grant me guidance; whatever wrong I have done, I shall do no more.

³³Will he, at these words, condone your rejection of him? It is for you, Job, to decide, not me: but what can you answer?

³⁴Men of good sense will say, any intelligent hearer will tell me,

³⁵Job is talking without knowledge, and there is no sense in his words.

³⁶If only Job could be put to the test once and for all for answering like a mischief-maker!

³⁷He is a sinner and a rebel as well with his endless ranting against God.

35 ¹Elihu went on to say:
²Do you reckon this to be a sound plea, to maintain that you are in the right against God

³if you say, What would be the advantage to me? How much should I gain from sinning?

⁴I shall bring arguments myself in reply to you and to your three friends as well.

⁵Look up at the sky and then consider, observe the rain-clouds towering above you.

⁶How does it touch God if you have sinned? However many your misdeeds, how does it affect him?

⁷If you do right, what good do you bring him, what does he receive at your hand?

⁸Your wickedness touches only your fellow-creatures; any right you do affects none but other mortals.

⁹ People cry out under the weight of oppression and call for help against the power of the great;

¹⁰ but none of them asks, Where is God, my Maker, who gives protection by night,

¹¹ who grants us more knowledge than the beasts of the earth and makes us wiser than the birds of the air?

¹² So, when they cry out, he does not answer, because they are proud and wicked.

¹³ All to no purpose! God does not listen, the Almighty takes no notice.

¹⁴ The worse for you when you say you do not see him! Humble yourself in his presence and wait for his word.

¹⁵ But now, because God does not grow angry and punish, because he lets folly pass unheeded,

¹⁶ Job gives vent to windy nonsense; he babbles a stream of empty words.

36 ¹ Then Elihu went on to say:

² Be patient a little longer, and let me enlighten you; there is still more to be said on God's behalf.

³ I shall search far and wide to support my conclusions, as I ascribe justice to my Maker.

⁴There are, I claim, no flaws in my reasoning; before you stands one whose conclusions are sound.

⁵God, I say, repudiates the high and mighty

⁶and does not let the wicked prosper, but bestows justice on the wronged.

⁷He does not deprive sufferers of their due, but on the throne with kings he seats them in eminence, for ever exalted.

⁸Next you may see them loaded with fetters, held fast in chains like captives:

⁹he denounces their conduct to them, showing how, puffed with pride, they lapsed into sin.

¹⁰With his warnings sounding in their ears he directs them back from their evil courses.

¹¹If they listen and serve him, they will live out their days in prosperity and their years in comfort.

¹²But, if they do not listen, they cross the river of death, dying with their lesson unlearned.

¹³The proud rage against him and do not cry to him for help when caught in his toils;

¹⁴so they die in their prime, short-lived as male prostitutes.

¹⁵Those who suffer he rescues through suffering and teaches them by the discipline of affliction.

¹⁶Beware, if you are tempted to exchange hardship for comfort, with unlimited plenty spread before you and a generous table;

¹⁷if you eat your fill of a rich man's fare when you are occupied with the business of the law,

¹⁸do not be led astray by lavish gifts of wine and do not let bribery warp your judgement.

¹⁹Will that wealth of yours, however great, avail you, or all the resources of your high position?

²⁰Have no fear if in the breathless terrors of the night you see nations vanish where they stand.

²¹Take care not to turn to mischief, for that is why you are tried by affliction.

²²God is pre-eminent in majesty; who wields such sovereign power as he?

²³Who has prescribed his course for him or said to him, You have done wrong?

²⁴ Remember, then, to sing the praises of his work, as mortals have always sung them.

²⁵ All mankind gazes at him; the race of mortals look on from afar.

²⁶ Consider: God is so great that we cannot know him; the number of his years is past searching out.

²⁷ He draws up drops of water from the sea and distils rain from the flood;

²⁸ the rain-clouds pour down in torrents, they descend in showers on the ground;

²⁹ Can anyone read the secret of the billowing clouds, spread like a carpet under his pavilion?

³⁰ See how he scatters his light about him, and its rays cover the sea.

³¹ thus he sustains the nations and provides food in plenty.

³² He charges the thunderbolts with flame and launches them straight at the mark;

³³ in his anger he calls up the tempest, and the thunder is the herald of its coming.

37 ¹ This too makes my heart beat wildly and start from its place.

²Just listen to the thunder of God's voice, the rumbling of his utterance!

³Under the vault of heaven he lets it roll, and his lightning flashes to the ends of the earth.

⁴There follows a sound, a roaring as he thunders with majestic voice.

⁵At God's command wonderful things come to pass; great deeds beyond our knowledge are done by him.

⁶For he says to the snow, Fall over the earth; to the rainstorms he says, Be violent, and at his voice the rains pour down unchecked.

⁷He shuts everyone fast indoors, and all whom he has made are quiet;

⁸beasts withdraw into their lairs and take cover in their dens.

⁹The hurricane bursts from its prison, and the rain-winds bring bitter cold.

¹⁰By the breath of God the ice is formed, and the wide waters are frozen hard.

¹¹He hurls lightning from the dense clouds, and the clouds spread his light,

¹²as they travel round in their courses, directed by his guiding hand to do his bidding all over the habitable world;

¹³ whether for punishment or for love he brings them forth.

¹⁴ Listen, Job, to this argument; stop and consider God's wonderful works.

¹⁵ Do you know how God assigns them their tasks, how he sends light flashing from his clouds?

¹⁶ Do you know how the clouds hang poised overhead, a wonderful work of his consummate skill?

¹⁷ Sweltering there in your stifling clothes, when the earth lies sultry under the south wind,

¹⁸ can you as he does beat out the vault of the skies, hard as a mirror of cast metal?

¹⁹ Teach us then what to say to him; for all is dark, and we cannot marshal our thoughts.

²⁰ Can anyone dictate to God when he is to speak, or command him to make proclamation?

²¹ At one moment the light is not seen, being overcast with cloud; then the wind passes by and clears it away,

²² and a golden glow comes from the north.

²³ But the Almighty we cannot find; his power is beyond our ken, yet in his great righteousness he does not pervert justice.

²⁴ Therefore mortals pay him reverence, and all who are wise fear him.

38¹ THEN the LORD answered Job out of the tempest:

² Who is this who darkens counsel with words devoid of knowledge?

³ Brace yourself and stand up like a man; I shall put questions to you, and you must answer.

⁴ Where were you when I laid the earth's foundations? Tell me, if you know and understand.

⁵ Who fixed its dimensions? Surely you know! Who stretched a measuring line over it?

⁶ On what do its supporting pillars rest? Who set its corner-stone in place,

⁷ while the morning stars sang in chorus and the sons of God all shouted for joy?

⁸ Who supported the sea at its birth, when it burst in flood from the womb --

⁹ when I wrapped it in a blanket of cloud and swaddled it in dense fog,

¹⁰when I established its bounds, set its barred doors in place,

¹¹and said, Thus far may you come but no farther; here your surging waves must halt?

¹²In all your life have you ever called up the dawn or assigned the morning its place?

¹³Have you taught it to grasp the fringes of the earth and shake the Dog-star from the sky;

¹⁴to bring up the horizon in relief as clay under a seal, until all things stand out like the folds of a cloak,

¹⁵when the light of the Dog-star is dimmed and the stars of the Navigator's Line go out one by one?

¹⁶Have you gone down to the springs of the sea or walked in the unfathomable deep?

¹⁷Have the portals of death been revealed to you? Have you seen the door-keepers of the place of darkness?

¹⁸Have you comprehended the vast expanse of the world? Tell me all this, if you know.

¹⁹Which is the way to the home of light, and where does darkness dwell?

²⁰ Can you then take each to its appointed boundary and escort it on its homeward path?

²¹ Doubtless you know, for you were already born. So long is the span of your life!

²² Have you visited the storehouses of the snow or seen the arsenal where hail is stored,

²³ which I have kept ready for the day of calamity, for war and for the hour of battle?

²⁴ By what paths is the heat spread abroad or the east wind dispersed world-wide?

²⁵ Who has cut channels for the downpour and cleared a path for the thunderbolt,

²⁶ for rain to fall on land devoid of people, on the uninhabited wilderness,

²⁷ clothing waste and derelict lands with green and making grass spring up on thirsty ground?

²⁸ Does the rain have a father? Who sired the drops of dew?

²⁹ Whose womb gave birth to the ice, and who was the mother of the hoar-frost in the skies,

³⁰ which lays a stony cover over the waters and freezes the surface of the deep?

³¹ Can you bind the cluster of the Pleiades or loose Orion's belt?

³² Can you bring out the signs of the zodiac in their season or guide Aldebaran and its satellite stars?

³³ Did you proclaim the rules that govern the heavens or determine the laws of nature on the earth?

³⁴ Can you command the clouds to envelop you in a deluge of rain?

³⁵ If you bid lightning speed on its way, will it say to you, I am ready?

³⁶ Who put wisdom in depths of darkness and veiled understanding in secrecy?

³⁷ Who is wise enough to marshal the rain-clouds and empty the cisterns of heaven,

³⁸ when the dusty soil sets in a dense mass, and the clods of earth stick fast together?

³⁹ Can you hunt prey for the lioness and satisfy the appetite of young lions,

⁴⁰ as they crouch in the lair or lie in wait in the covert?

⁴¹ Who provides the raven with its quarry when its fledgelings cry aloud, croaking for lack of food?

39 ¹ Do you know when the mountain goats give birth? Do you attend the wild doe when she is calving?

² Can you count the months that they carry their young or know the time of their delivery,

³ when they crouch down to open their wombs and deliver their offspring,

⁴ when the fawns growing and thriving in the open country leave and do not return?

⁵ Who has let the Syrian wild ass range at will and given the Arabian wild ass its freedom?

⁶ I have made its haunts in the wilderness and its home in the saltings;

⁷ it disdains the noise of the city and does not obey a driver's shout;

⁸ it roams the hills as its pasture in search of a morsel of green.

⁹ Is the wild ox willing to serve you or spend the night in your stall?

¹⁰ Can you harness its strength with ropes; will it harrow the furrows after you?

¹¹ Can you depend on it, strong as it is, and leave your heavy work to it?

¹² Can you rely on it to come, bringing your grain to the threshing-floor?

¹³ The wings of the ostrich are stunted; her pinions and plumage being so scanty

¹⁴ she leaves her eggs on the ground and lets them be kept warm by the sand.

¹⁵ She is unmindful that a foot may crush them, or a wild animal trample on them;

¹⁶ she treats her chicks heartlessly as if they were not her own, not caring if her labour is wasted.

¹⁷ For God has denied her wisdom and left her without sense,

¹⁸ while like a cock she struts over the uplands, scorning both horse and rider.

¹⁹ Do you give the horse his strength? Have you clothed his neck with a mane?

²⁰ Do you make him quiver like a locust's wings, when his shrill neighing strikes terror?

²¹ He shows his mettle as he paws and prances; in his might he charges the armoured line.

²²He scorns alarms and knows no dismay; he does not shy away before the sword.

²³The quiver rattles at his side, the spear and sabre flash.

²⁴Trembling with eagerness, he devours the ground and when the trumpet sounds there is no holding him;

²⁵at the trumpet-call he cries Aha! and from afar he scents the battle, the shouting of the captains, and the war cries.

²⁶Does your skill teach the hawk to use its pinions and spread its wings towards the south?

²⁷Do you instruct the eagle to soar aloft and build its nest high up?

²⁸It dwells among the rocks and there it has its nest, secure on a rocky crag;

²⁹from there it searches for food, keenly scanning the distance,

³⁰that its brood may be gorged with blood; wherever the slain are, it is there.

40¹The LORD then said to Job:
²Is it for a man who disputes with the Almighty to be stubborn? Should he who argues with God answer back?

³Job answered the LORD:

⁴What reply can I give you, I who carry no weight? I put my finger to my lips.

⁵I have spoken once; I shall not answer again; twice have I spoken; I shall do so no more.

⁶Then the LORD answered Job out of the tempest:

⁷Brace yourself and stand up like a man; I shall put questions to you, and you must answer.

⁸Would you dare deny that I am just, or put me in the wrong to prove yourself right?

⁹Have you an arm like God's arm; can you thunder with a voice like his?

¹⁰Deck yourself out, if you can, in pride and dignity, array yourself in pomp and splendour.

¹¹Unleash the fury of your wrath, look on all who are proud, and humble them;

¹²look on all who are proud, and bring them low, crush the wicked where they stand;

¹³bury them in the earth together, and shroud them in an unknown grave.

¹⁴Then I in turn would acknowledge that your own right hand could save you.

¹⁵ But consider the chief of beasts, the crocodile, who devours cattle as if they were grass:

¹⁶ what strength is in his loins! What power in the muscles of his belly!

¹⁷ His tail is rigid as a cedar, the sinews of his flanks are tightly knit;

¹⁸ his bones are like tubes of bronze, his limbs like iron bars.

¹⁹ He is the chief of God's works, made to be a tyrant over his fellow-creatures;

²⁰ for he takes the cattle of the hills for his prey and in his jaws he crunches all beasts of the wild.

²¹ There under the thorny lotus he lies, hidden among the reeds in the swamp;

²² the lotus conceals him in its shade, the poplars of the stream surround him.

²³ If the river is in spate, that does not perturb him; he sprawls at his ease though submerged in the torrent.

²⁴ Can anyone blind his eyes and take him or pierce his nose with the teeth of a trap?

41 ¹ [[EMPTY]]

² [[EMPTY]]

³ [[EMPTY]]

⁴ [[EMPTY]]

⁵ [[EMPTY]]

⁶ [[EMPTY]]

⁷ Can you fill his skin with harpoons or his head with fishing spears?

⁸ If ever you lift your hand against him, think of the struggle that awaits you, and stop!

⁹ Anyone who tackles him has no hope of success, but is overcome at the very sight of him.

¹⁰ How fierce he is when roused! Who is able to stand up to him?

¹¹ Who has ever attacked him and come out of it safely? No one under the wide heaven.

¹² I shall not pass over in silence his limbs, his prowess, and the grace of his proportions.

¹³ Who has ever stripped off his outer garment or penetrated his doublet of hide?

¹⁴ Who has ever prised open the portals of his face where terror lies in the circuits of his teeth?

¹⁵ His back is row upon row of shields, enclosed in a wall of flints;

¹⁶ one presses so close on the next that no air can pass between them,

¹⁷ each so firmly clamped to its neighbour that they hold and cannot be parted.

¹⁸ His sneezing sends out sprays of light, and his eyes gleam like the shimmer of dawn.

¹⁹ Firebrands shoot from his mouth, and sparks come flying out;

²⁰ his nostrils gush forth steam like a cauldron on a fire fanned to full heat.

²¹ His breath sets coals ablaze, and flames issue from his mouth.

²² Strength resides in his neck, and dismay dances ahead of him.

²³ Close-knit is his underbelly, no pressure will make it yield.

²⁴ His heart is firm as a rock, firm as the nether millstone.

²⁵ When he rears up, strong men are afraid, panic-stricken at the lashings of his tail.

²⁶ Sword or spear, dart or javelin may touch him, but all without effect.

²⁷ Iron he counts as straw, and bronze as rotted wood.

²⁸ No arrow can pierce him, and for him sling-stones are so much chaff;

²⁹ to him a cudgel is but a reed, and he laughs at the swish of the sabre.

³⁰ Armoured beneath with jagged sherds, he sprawls on the mud like a threshing-sledge.

³¹ He makes the deep water boil like a cauldron, he churns up the lake like ointment in a mixing bowl.

³² He leaves a shining trail behind him, and in his wake the great river is like white hair.

³³ He has no equal on earth, a creature utterly fearless.

³⁴ He looks down on all, even the highest; over all proud beasts he is king.

42 ¹ Job answered the LORD:

² I know that you can do all things and that no purpose is beyond you.

³ You ask: Who is this obscuring counsel yet lacking knowledge? But I have spoken of things which I have not understood, things too wonderful for me to know.

⁴ Listen, and let me speak. You said: I shall put questions to you, and you must answer.

⁵I knew of you then only by report, but now I see you with my own eyes.

⁶Therefore I yield, repenting in dust and ashes.

⁷WHEN the LORD had finished speaking to Job, he said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My anger is aroused against you and your two friends, because, unlike my servant Job, you have not spoken as you ought about me.

⁸Now take seven bulls and seven rams, go to my servant Job and offer a whole-offering for yourselves, and he will intercede for you. I shall surely show him favour by not being harsh with you because you have not spoken as you ought about me, as he has done.

⁹Then Eliphaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuhite and Zophar the Naamathite went and carried out the LORD's command, and the LORD showed favour to Job

¹⁰when he had interceded for his friends. The LORD restored Job's fortunes, and gave him twice the possessions he had before.

¹¹All Job's brothers and sisters and his acquaintance of former days came

and feasted with him in his home. They consoled and comforted him for all the misfortunes which the LORD had inflicted on him, and each of them gave him a sheep and a gold ring.

¹²Thus the LORD blessed the end of Job's life more than the beginning: he had fourteen thousand sheep and six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen, and as many she-donkeys.

¹³He also had seven sons and three daughters;

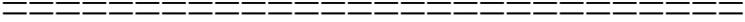
¹⁴he named his eldest daughter Jemimah, the second Keziah, and the third Keren-happuch.

¹⁵There were no women in all the world so beautiful as Job's daughters; and their father gave them an inheritance with their brothers.

¹⁶Thereafter Job lived another hundred and forty years; he saw his sons and his grandsons to four generations,

¹⁷and he died at a very great age.

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