

Revised English Version

Old Testament
(Psalms s.d. Malachi)

Psalms

1 ¹ HAPPY is the one who does not take the counsel of the wicked for a guide, or follow the path that sinners tread, or take his seat in the company of scoffers.

² His delight is in the law of the LORD; it is his meditation day and night.

³ He is like a tree planted beside water channels; it yields its fruit in season and its foliage never fades. So he too prospers in all he does.

⁴ The wicked are not like this; rather they are like chaff driven by the wind.

⁵ When judgement comes, therefore, they will not stand firm, nor will sinners in the assembly of the righteous.

⁶ The LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked is doomed.

2 ¹ WHY are the nations in turmoil? Why do the peoples hatch their futile plots?

² Kings of the earth stand ready, and princes conspire together against the LORD and his anointed king.

³ Let us break their fetters, they cry, let us throw off their chains!

⁴ He who sits enthroned in the heavens laughs, the Lord derides them;

⁵ then angrily he rebukes them, threatening them in his wrath.

⁶ I myself have enthroned my king, he says, on Zion, my holy mountain.

⁷ I shall announce the decree of the LORD: You are my son, he said to me; this day I become your father.

⁸ Ask of me what you will: I shall give you nations as your domain, the earth to its farthest ends as your possession.

⁹ You will break them with a rod of iron, shatter them like an earthen pot.

¹⁰ Be mindful, then, you kings; take warning, you earthly rulers:

¹¹ worship the LORD with reverence; tremble, and pay glad homage to the king, for fear the LORD may become angry and you may be struck down in mid-course; for his anger flares up in a moment. Happy are all who find refuge in him!

¹² (2: 11)

3¹ A psalm: for David (when he fled from his son Absalom) LORD, how

numerous are my enemies! How many there are who rise against me,

²how many who say of me, He will not find safety in God! [Selah]

³But you, LORD, are a shield to cover me: you are my glory, you raise my head high.

⁴As often as I cry aloud to the LORD, he answers from his holy mountain. [Selah]

⁵I lie down and sleep, and I wake again, for the LORD upholds me.

⁶I shall not fear their myriad forces ranged against me on every side.

⁷Arise, LORD; save me, my God! You strike all my foes across the face; you break the teeth of the wicked.

⁸Yours is the victory, LORD; may your blessing rest on your people. [Selah]

4¹For the leader: with stringed instruments: a psalm: for David ANSWER me when I call, God, the upholder of my right! When I was hard pressed you set me free; be gracious to me and hear my prayer.

²Men of rank, how long will you dishonour my glorious one, setting your heart on empty idols and resorting to false gods? [Selah]

³ Know that the LORD has singled out for himself his loyal servant; the Lord hears when I call to him.

⁴ Let awe restrain you from sin; while you rest, meditate in silence: [Selah]

⁵ offer your due of sacrifice, and put your trust in the LORD.

⁶ There are many who say, If only we might see good times! Let the light of your face shine on us, LORD.

⁷ But you have put into my heart a greater happiness than others had from grain and wine in plenty.

⁸ Now in peace I shall lie down and sleep; for it is you alone, LORD, who let me live in safety.

5¹ For the leader: with the flutes:
a psalm: for David LISTEN to my words, LORD, consider my inmost thoughts;

² heed my cry for help, my King and God.

³ When I pray to you, LORD, in the morning you will hear me. I shall prepare a morning sacrifice and keep watch.

⁴ For you are not a God who welcomes wickedness; evil can be no guest of yours.

⁵The arrogant will not stand in your presence; you hate all evildoers,

⁶you make an end of liars. The LORD abhors those who are violent and deceitful.

⁷But through your great love I may come into your house, and at your holy temple bow down in awe.

⁸Lead me and protect me, LORD, because I am beset by enemies; give me a straight path to follow.

⁹Nothing they say is true; they are bent on complete destruction. Their throats are gaping tombs; smooth talk runs off their tongues.

¹⁰God, bring ruin on them; let their own devices be their downfall. Cast them out for their many rebellions, for they have defied you.

¹¹But let all who take refuge in you rejoice, let them for ever shout for joy; shelter those who love your name, that they may exult in you.

¹²For you, LORD, will bless the righteous; you will surround them with favour as with a shield.

6¹For the leader: with stringed instruments: according to the

sheminith: a psalm: for David LORD,
do not rebuke me in your anger, do not
punish me in your wrath.

²Show favour to me, LORD, for my
strength fails; LORD, heal me, for my
body is racked with pain;

³I am utterly distraught. When will you
act, LORD?

⁴Return, LORD, deliver me; save me,
for your love is steadfast.

⁵Among the dead no one remembers
you; in Sheol who praises you?

⁶I am wearied with my moaning; all
night long my pillow is wet with tears, I
drench my bed with weeping.

⁷Grief dims my eyes; they are worn out
because of all my adversaries.

⁸Leave me alone, you workers of evil,
for the LORD has heard my weeping!

⁹The LORD has heard my entreaty; the
LORD will accept my prayer.

¹⁰All my enemies will be confounded,
stricken with terror; they will turn away
in sudden confusion.

7¹A shiggaion: for David (which he
sang to the LORD because of Cush, a
Benjamite) LORD my God, in you I find

refuge; rescue me from all my pursuers
and save me

²before they tear at my throat like a
lion and drag me off beyond hope of
rescue.

³LORD my God, if I have done any
of these things -- if I have stained my
hands with guilt,

⁴if I have repaid a friend evil for good
or wantonly despoiled an adversary --

⁵let an enemy come in pursuit and
overtake me, let him trample my life to
the ground and lay my honour in the
dust! [Selah]

⁶Arise, LORD, in your anger, rouse
yourself in wrath against my adversaries.
My God who ordered justice to be done,
awake.

⁷Let the peoples assemble around you;
take your seat on high above them.

⁸The LORD passes sentence on the
nations. Uphold my cause, LORD, as my
righteousness deserves, for I am clearly
innocent.

⁹Let the wicked do no more harm,
but grant support to the righteous,
you searcher of heart and mind, you
righteous God.

¹⁰I rely on God to shield me; he saves the honest of heart.

¹¹God is a just judge, constant in his righteous anger.

¹²The enemy sharpens his sword again, strings his bow and makes it ready.

¹³It is against himself he has prepared his deadly shafts and tipped his arrows with fire.

¹⁴He is in labour with iniquity; he has conceived mischief and given birth to lies.

¹⁵He has made a pit and dug it deep, but he himself will fall into the hole he was making.

¹⁶His mischief will recoil upon him, and his violence fall on his own head.

¹⁷I shall praise the LORD for his righteousness and sing to the name of the LORD Most High.

8¹For the leader: according to the gittith: a psalm: for David LORD our sovereign, how glorious is your name throughout the world! Your majesty is praised as high as the heavens,

²from the mouths of babes and infants at the breast. You have established a

bulwark against your adversaries to restrain the enemy and the avenger.

³When I look up at your heavens, the work of your fingers, at the moon and the stars you have set in place,

⁴what is a frail mortal, that you should be mindful of him, a human being, that you should take notice of him?

⁵Yet you have made him little less than a god, crowning his head with glory and honour.

⁶You make him master over all that you have made, putting everything in subjection under his feet:

⁷all sheep and oxen, all the wild beasts,
⁸the birds in the air, the fish in the sea, and everything that moves along ocean paths.

⁹LORD our sovereign, how glorious is your name throughout the world!

9¹For the leader: set to Muth labben: a psalm: for David I SHALL give praise to you, LORD, with my whole heart, I shall recount all your marvellous deeds.

²I shall rejoice and exult in you, the Most High; I shall sing praise to your name

³because my enemies turn back; at your presence they fall headlong and perish.

⁴For seated on your throne, a righteous judge, you have upheld my right and my cause;

⁵you have rebuked the nations and overwhelmed the ungodly, blotting out their name for all time.

⁶The enemy are finished, ruined for evermore. You have overthrown their cities; all memory of them is lost.

⁷The LORD sits enthroned for ever: he has established his throne for judgement.

⁸He it is who will judge the world with justice, who will try the cause of peoples with equity.

⁹May the LORD be a tower of strength for the oppressed, a tower of strength in time of trouble.

¹⁰Those who acknowledge your name will trust in you, for you, LORD, do not abandon those who seek you.

¹¹Sing to the LORD enthroned in Zion; proclaim his deeds among the nations.

¹²For the avenger of blood keeps the afflicted in mind; he does not ignore their cry.

¹³Show me favour, LORD; see how my foes afflict me; you raise me from the gates of death,

¹⁴that I may declare all your praise and in the gates of Zion exult at this deliverance.

¹⁵The nations have plunged into a pit of their own making; their feet are entangled in the net they have hidden.

¹⁶The LORD makes himself known, and justice is done: the wicked are trapped in their own devices. [Higgaion. Selah]

¹⁷The wicked depart to Sheol, all the nations who are heedless of God.

¹⁸But the poor will not always be unheeded, nor the hope of the destitute be always vain.

¹⁹Arise, LORD, restrain the power of mortals; let the nations be judged in your presence.

²⁰Strike them with fear, LORD; let the nations know that they are but human beings. [Selah]

10¹Why stand far off, LORD? Why hide away in times of trouble?

²The wicked in their arrogance hunt down the afflicted: may their crafty schemes prove their undoing!

³The wicked boast of the desires they harbour; in their greed they curse and revile the LORD.

⁴The wicked in their pride do not seek God; there is no place for God in any of their schemes.

⁵Their ways are always devious; your judgements are beyond their grasp, and they scoff at all their adversaries.

⁶Because they escape misfortune, they think they will never be shaken.

⁷The wicked person's mouth is full of cursing, deceit, and violence; mischief and wickedness are under his tongue.

⁸He lurks in ambush near settlements and murders the innocent by stealth. Ever on the watch for some unfortunate wretch,

⁹he seizes him and drags him away in his net. He crouches stealthily, like a lion in its lair crouching to seize its victim;

¹⁰he strikes and lays him low.

Unfortunate wretches fall into his toils.

¹¹He says to himself, God has forgotten; he has hidden his face and seen nothing.

¹²Arise, LORD, set your hand to the task; God, do not forget the afflicted.

¹³Why have the wicked rejected you, God, and said that you will not call them to account?

¹⁴You see that mischief and grief are their companions; you take the matter into your own hands. The hapless victim commits himself to you; in you the fatherless finds a helper.

¹⁵Break the power of the wicked and evil person; hunt out his wickedness until you can find no more.

¹⁶The LORD is king for ever and ever; the nations have vanished from his land.

¹⁷LORD, you have heard the lament of the humble; you strengthen their hearts, you give heed to them,

¹⁸bringing redress to the fatherless and the oppressed, so that no one on earth may ever again inspire terror.

11 ¹For the leader: for David IN the LORD I take refuge. How can you say to me, Flee like a bird to the mountains;

²for see, the wicked string their bows and fit the arrow to the bowstring, to shoot from the darkness at honest folk?

³When foundations are undermined, what can the just person do?

⁴The LORD is in his holy temple; the LORD's throne is in heaven. His gaze is upon mankind, his searching eye tests them.

⁵The LORD weighs just and unjust, and he hates all who love violence.

⁶He will rain fiery coals and brimstone on the wicked; scorching winds will be the portion they drink.

⁷For the LORD is just and loves just dealing; his face is turned towards the upright.

12¹For the leader: according to the sheminith: a psalm: for David
SAVE us, LORD, for no one who is loyal remains; good faith between people has vanished.

²One lies to another: both talk with smooth words, but with duplicity in their hearts.

³May the LORD make an end of such smooth words and the tongue that talks so boastfully!

⁴They say, By our tongues we shall prevail. With words as our ally, who can master us?

⁵ Now I will arise, says the LORD, for the poor are plundered, the needy groan; I shall place them in the safety for which they long.

⁶ The words of the LORD are unalloyed: silver refined in a crucible, gold purified seven times over.

⁷ LORD, you are our protector and will for ever guard us from such people.

⁸ The wicked parade about, and what is of little worth wins general esteem.

13 ¹ For the leader: a psalm: for David HOW LONG, LORD, will you leave me forgotten, how long hide your face from me?

² How long must I suffer anguish in my soul, grief in my heart day after day? How long will my enemy lord it over me?

³ Look now, LORD my God, and answer me. Give light to my eyes lest I sleep the sleep of death,

⁴ lest my enemy say, I have overthrown him, and my adversaries rejoice at my downfall.

⁵ As for me, I trust in your unfailing love; my heart will rejoice when I am brought to safety.

⁶I shall sing to the LORD, for he has granted all my desire.

14¹For the leader: for David THE impious fool says in his heart, There is no God. Everyone is depraved, every deed is vile; no one does good!

²The LORD looks out from heaven on all the human race to see if any act wisely, if any seek God.

³But all are unfaithful, altogether corrupt; no one does good, no, not even one.

⁴Have they no understanding, all those evildoers who devour my people as if eating bread, and never call to the LORD?

⁵They will be in dire alarm, for God is in the assembly of the righteous.

⁶Though you would frustrate the counsel of the poor, the LORD is their refuge.

⁷If only deliverance for Israel might come from Zion! When the LORD restores his people's fortunes, let Jacob rejoice, let Israel be glad.

15¹A psalm: for David LORD, who may lodge in your tent? Who may dwell on your holy mountain?

² One of blameless life, who does what is right and speaks the truth from his heart;

³ who has no malice on his tongue, who never wrongs his fellow, and tells no tales against his neighbour;

⁴ who shows his scorn for those the LORD rejects, but honours those who fear the LORD; who holds to his oath even to his own hurt,

⁵ who does not put his money out to usury, and never accepts a bribe against the innocent. He who behaves in this way will remain unshaken.

16 ¹ A miktam: for David KEEP me, God, for in you have I found refuge.

² I have said to the LORD, You are my Lord; from you alone comes the good I enjoy.

³ All my delight is in the noble ones, the godly in the land.

⁴ Those who run after other gods find endless trouble; I shall never offer libations of blood to such gods, never take their names on my lips.

⁵ LORD, you are my allotted portion and my cup; you maintain my boundaries:

⁶ the lines fall for me in pleasant places;
I am well content with my inheritance.

⁷ I shall bless the LORD who has given
me counsel: in the night he imparts
wisdom to my inmost being.

⁸ I have set the LORD before me at
all times: with him at my right hand I
cannot be shaken.

⁹ Therefore my heart is glad and
my spirit rejoices, my body too rests
unafraid;

¹⁰ for you will not abandon me to Sheol
or suffer your faithful servant to see the
pit.

¹¹ You will show me the path of life;
in your presence is the fullness of joy,
at your right hand are pleasures for
evermore.

17 ¹ A prayer: for David LORD, hear
my plea for justice, give heed to
my cry; listen to the prayer from my lips,
for they are innocent of all deceit.

² Let your judgement be given in my
favour; let your eyes discern what is
right.

³ You have tested my heart and watched
me all night long; you have assayed me
and found no malice in me.

⁴ Guided by the words of your lips, I have observed the deeds of mortals, their violent ways.

⁵ My steps have held steadily to your paths; my feet have not faltered.

⁶ God, I call upon you, for you will answer me. Bend down your ear to me, listen to my words.

⁷ Show me how marvellous is your unfailing love: your right hand saves those who seek sanctuary from their assailants.

⁸ Guard me like the apple of your eye; hide me in the shadow of your wings

⁹ from the wicked who do me violence, from deadly foes who throng around me.

¹⁰ They have stifled all compassion; their mouths utter proud words;

¹¹ they press me hard, now they hem me in, on the watch to bring me to the ground.

¹² The enemy is like a lion hungry for prey, like a young lion crouching in ambush.

¹³ Arise, LORD, confront them and bring them down. Save my life from the wicked; make an end of them with your sword.

¹⁴With your hand, LORD, make an end of them; thrust them out of this world from among the living. May those whom you cherish have food in plenty, may their children be satisfied and their little ones inherit their wealth.

¹⁵My plea is just: may I see your face and be blest with a vision of you when I awake.

18¹For the leader: for the LORD's servant: for David (who recited the words of this song to the LORD on the day when the LORD rescued him from the power of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul. He said:) I LOVE you, LORD, my strength.

²The LORD is my lofty crag, my fortress, my champion, my God, my rock in whom I find shelter, my shield and sure defender, my strong tower.

³I shall call to the LORD to whom all praise is due; then I shall be made safe from my enemies.

⁴The bonds of death encompassed me and destructive torrents overtook me,

⁵the bonds of Sheol tightened about me, the snares of death were set to catch me.

⁶When in anguish of heart I cried to the LORD and called for help to my God, he heard me from his temple, and my cry reached his ears.

⁷The earth shook and quaked, the foundations of the mountains trembled, shaking because of his anger.

⁸Smoke went up from his nostrils, devouring fire from his mouth, glowing coals and searing heat.

⁹He parted the heavens and came down; thick darkness lay under his feet.

¹⁰He flew on the back of a cherub; he swooped on the wings of the wind.

¹¹He made darkness around him his covering, dense vapour his canopy.

¹²Thick clouds came from the radiance before him, hail and glowing coals.

¹³The LORD thundered from the heavens; the Most High raised his voice amid hail and glowing coals.

¹⁴He loosed arrows, he sped them far and wide, he hurled forth lightning shafts and sent them echoing.

¹⁵The channels of the waters were exposed, earth's foundations laid bare at the LORD's rebuke, at the blast of breath from his nostrils.

¹⁶He reached down from on high and took me, he drew me out of mighty waters,

¹⁷he delivered me from my enemies, strong as they were, from my foes when they grew too powerful for me.

¹⁸They confronted me in my hour of peril, but the LORD was my buttress.

¹⁹He brought me into untrammelled liberty; he rescued me because he delighted in me.

²⁰The LORD repaid me as my righteousness deserved; because my conduct was spotless he rewarded me,

²¹for I have kept to the ways of the LORD and have not turned from my God to wickedness.

²²All his laws I keep before me, and have never failed to follow his decrees.

²³In his sight I was blameless and kept myself from wrongdoing;

²⁴because my conduct was spotless in his eyes, the LORD rewarded me as my righteousness deserved.

²⁵To the loyal you show yourself loyal and blameless to the blameless.

²⁶To the pure you show yourself pure,
but skilful in your dealings with the
perverse.

²⁷You bring humble folk to safety, but
humiliate those who look so high and
mighty.

²⁸LORD, you make my lamp burn
bright; my God will lighten my darkness.

²⁹With your help I storm a rampart,
and by my God's aid I leap over a wall.

³⁰The way of God is blameless; the
LORD's word has stood the test; he is a
shield to all who take refuge in him.

³¹What god is there but the LORD?
What rock but our God?

³²It is God who girds me with strength
and makes my way free from blame,

³³who makes me swift as a hind and
sets me secure on the heights,

³⁴who trains my hands for battle so
that my arms can aim a bronze-tipped
bow.

³⁵You have given me the shield of your
salvation; your right hand sustains me;
you stoop down to make me great.

³⁶You made room for my steps; my
feet have not slipped.

³⁷ I pursue and overtake my enemies; until I have made an end of them I do not turn back.

³⁸ I strike them down and they can rise no more; they fall prostrate at my feet.

³⁹ You gird me with strength for the battle and subdue my assailants beneath me.

⁴⁰ You set my foot on my enemies' necks, and I wipe out those who hate me.

⁴¹ They cry, but there is no one to save them; they cry to the LORD, but he does not answer.

⁴² I shall beat them as fine as dust before the wind, like mud in the streets I shall trample them.

⁴³ You set me free from the people who challenge me, and make me master of nations. A people I never knew will be my subjects.

⁴⁴ Foreigners will come fawning to me; as soon as they hear tell of me they will submit.

⁴⁵ Foreigners will be disheartened and come trembling from their strongholds.

⁴⁶ The LORD lives! Blessed is my rock! High above all is God, my safe refuge.

⁴⁷ You grant me vengeance, God, laying nations prostrate at my feet;

⁴⁸ you free me from my enemies, setting me over my assailants; you are my deliverer from violent men.

⁴⁹ Therefore, LORD, I shall praise you among the nations and sing psalms to your name,

⁵⁰ to one who gives his king great victories and keeps faith with his anointed, with David and his descendants for ever.

19¹ For the leader: a psalm: for David THE heavens tell out the glory of God, heaven's vault makes known his handiwork.

² One day speaks to another, night to night imparts knowledge,

³ and this without speech or language or sound of any voice.

⁴ Their sign shines forth on all the earth, their message to the ends of the world. In the heavens an abode is fixed for the sun,

⁵ which comes out like a bridegroom from the bridal chamber, rejoicing like a strong man to run his course.

⁶Its rising is at one end of the heavens, its circuit reaches from one end to the other, and nothing is hidden from its heat.

⁷The law of the LORD is perfect and revives the soul. The LORD's instruction never fails; it makes the simple wise.

⁸The precepts of the LORD are right and give joy to the heart. The commandment of the LORD is pure and gives light to the eyes.

⁹The fear of the LORD is unsullied; it abides for ever. The LORD's judgements are true and righteous every one,

¹⁰more to be desired than gold, pure gold in plenty, sweeter than honey dripping from the comb.

¹¹It is through them that your servant is warned; in obeying them is great reward.

¹²Who is aware of his unwitting sins? Cleanse me of any secret fault.

¹³Hold back your servant also from wilful sins, lest they get the better of me. Then I shall be blameless, innocent of grave offence.

¹⁴ May the words of my mouth and the thoughts of my mind be acceptable to you, LORD, my rock and my redeemer!

20¹ For the leader: a psalm: for David MAY the LORD answer you in time of trouble. May the name of Jacob's God be your tower of strength.

² May he send you help from the sanctuary, and give you support from Zion.

³ May he remember all your offerings and look with favour on your sacrifices. [Selah]

⁴ May he give you your heart's desire, and grant success to all your plans.

⁵ Let us sing aloud in praise of your victory, let us do homage to the name of our God! May the LORD grant your every request!

⁶ Now I know that the LORD has given victory to his anointed one: he will answer him from his holy heaven with the victorious might of his right hand.

⁷ Some boast of chariots and some of horses, but our boast is the name of the LORD our God.

⁸ They totter and fall, but we rise up and stand firm.

⁹LORD, save the king, and answer us when we call.

21 ¹For the leader: a psalm: for David LORD, the king rejoices in your might: well may he exult in your victory.

²You have granted him his heart's desire and have not refused what he requested. [Selah]

³You welcome him with blessings and prosperity and place a crown of finest gold on his head.

⁴He asked of you life, and you gave it to him, length of days for ever and ever.

⁵Your victory has brought him great glory; you invest him with majesty and honour,

⁶for you bestow everlasting blessings on him, and make him glad with the joy of your presence,

⁷for the king puts his trust in the LORD; the loving care of the Most High keeps him unshaken.

⁸Your hand will reach all your enemies, your right hand all who hate you;

⁹at your coming you will set them in a fiery furnace; in his anger the LORD will engulf them, and fire will consume them.

¹⁰It will destroy their offspring from the earth and rid mankind of their posterity.

¹¹For they have aimed wicked blows at you; in spite of their plots they could not prevail;

¹²but you will aim at their faces with your bows and force them to turn in flight.

¹³Be exalted, LORD, in your might; we shall sing a psalm of praise to your power.

22¹For the leader: set to Hind of the Dawn: a psalm: for David MY God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from heeding my groans?

²My God, by day I cry to you, but there is no answer; in the night I cry with no respite.

³You, the praise of Israel, are enthroned in the sanctuary.

⁴In you our fathers put their trust; they trusted, and you rescued them.

⁵To you they cried and were delivered; in you they trusted and were not discomfited.

⁶But I am a worm, not a man, abused by everyone, scorned by the people.

⁷All who see me jeer at me, grimace at me, and wag their heads:

⁸He threw himself on the LORD for rescue; let the LORD deliver him, for he holds him dear!

⁹But you are he who brought me from the womb, who laid me at my mother's breast.

¹⁰To your care I was entrusted at birth; from my mother's womb you have been my God.

¹¹Do not remain far from me, for trouble is near and I have no helper.

¹²A herd of bulls surrounds me, great bulls of Bashan beset me.

¹³Lions ravening and roaring open their mouths wide against me.

¹⁴My strength drains away like water and all my bones are racked. My heart has turned to wax and melts within me.

¹⁵My mouth is dry as a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to my gums; I am laid low in the dust of death.

¹⁶Hounds are all about me; a band of ruffians rings me round, and they have bound me hand and foot.

¹⁷I tell my tale of misery, while they look on gloating.

¹⁸They share out my clothes among them and cast lots for my garments.

¹⁹But do not remain far away, LORD; you are my help, come quickly to my aid.

²⁰Deliver me from the sword, my precious life from the axe.

²¹Save me from the lion's mouth, this poor body from the horns of the wild ox.

²²I shall declare your fame to my associates, praising you in the midst of the assembly.

²³You that fear the LORD, praise him; hold him in honour, all you descendants of Jacob, revere him, you descendants of Israel.

²⁴For he has not scorned him who is downtrodden, nor shrunk in loathing from his plight, nor hidden his face from him, but he has listened to his cry for help.

²⁵You inspire my praise in the great assembly; I shall fulfil my vows in the sight of those who fear you.

²⁶Let the humble eat and be satisfied. Let those who seek the LORD praise him. May you always be in good heart!

²⁷Let all the ends of the earth remember and turn again to the LORD;

let all the families of the nations bow before him.

²⁸For kingly power belongs to the LORD; dominion over the nations is his.

²⁹How can those who sleep in the earth do him homage, how can those who go down to the grave do obeisance? But I shall live for his sake;

³⁰my descendants will serve him. The coming generation will be told of the LORD;

³¹they will make known his righteous deeds, declaring to a people yet unborn: The LORD has acted.

23¹ A psalm: for David THE LORD is my shepherd; I lack for nothing.

²He makes me lie down in green pastures, he leads me to water where I may rest;

³he revives my spirit; for his name's sake he guides me in the right paths.

⁴Even were I to walk through a valley of deepest darkness I should fear no harm, for you are with me; your shepherd's staff and crook afford me comfort.

⁵You spread a table for me in the presence of my enemies; you have richly

anointed my head with oil, and my cup
brims over.

⁶ Goodness and love unfailing will
follow me all the days of my life, and
I shall dwell in the house of the LORD
throughout the years to come.

24 ¹ For David: a psalm TO THE LORD
belong the earth and everything
in it, the world and all its inhabitants.

² For it was he who founded it on the
seas and planted it firm on the waters
beneath.

³ Who may go up the mountain of the
LORD? Who may stand in his holy place?

⁴ One who has clean hands and a pure
heart, who has not set his mind on what
is false or sworn deceitfully.

⁵ Such a one shall receive blessing from
the LORD, and be vindicated by God his
saviour.

⁶ Such is the fortune of those who seek
him, who seek the presence of the God
of Jacob. [Selah]

⁷ Lift up your heads, you gates, lift
yourselves up, you everlasting doors,
that the king of glory may come in.

⁸Who is this king of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle.

⁹Lift up your heads, you gates, lift them up, you everlasting doors, that the king of glory may come in.

¹⁰Who is he, this king of glory? The LORD of Hosts, he is the king of glory. [Selah]

25¹For David LORD my God, to you I lift my heart.

²In you I trust: do not let me be put to shame, do not let my enemies exult over me.

³No one whose hope is in you is put to shame; but shame comes to all who break faith without cause.

⁴Make your paths known to me, LORD; teach me your ways.

⁵Lead me by your faithfulness and teach me, for you are God my saviour; in you I put my hope all day long.

⁶Remember, LORD, your tender care and love unending, for they are from of old.

⁷Do not remember the sins and offences of my youth, but remember me

in your unfailing love, in accordance with your goodness, LORD.

⁸The LORD is good and upright; therefore he teaches sinners the way they should go.

⁹He guides the humble in right conduct, and teaches them his way.

¹⁰All the paths of the LORD are loving and sure to those who keep his covenant and his solemn charge.

¹¹LORD, for the honour of your name forgive my wickedness, great though it is.

¹²Whoever fears the LORD will be shown the path he should choose.

¹³He will enjoy lasting prosperity, and his descendants will inherit the land.

¹⁴The LORD confides his purposes to those who fear him; his covenant is for their instruction.

¹⁵My eyes are ever on the LORD, who alone can free my feet from the net.

¹⁶Turn to me and show me your favour, for I am lonely and oppressed.

¹⁷Relieve the troubles of my heart and lead me out of my distress.

¹⁸Look on my affliction and misery and forgive me every sin.

¹⁹Look at my enemies, see how many they are, how violent their hatred of me.

²⁰Defend me and deliver me; let me not be put to shame, for in you I find refuge.

²¹Let integrity and uprightness protect me; in you, LORD, I put my hope.

²²God, deliver Israel from all their troubles.

26 ¹For David LORD, uphold my cause, for I have led a blameless life, and put unfaltering trust in you.

²Test me, LORD, and try me, putting my heart and mind to the proof;

³for your constant love is before my eyes, and I live by your faithfulness.

⁴I have not sat among the worthless, nor do I associate with hypocrites;

⁵I detest the company of evildoers, nor shall I sit among the ungodly.

⁶I wash my hands free from guilt to go in procession round your altar, LORD,

⁷recounting your marvellous deeds, making them known with thankful voice.

⁸LORD, I love the house where you dwell, the place where your glory resides.

⁹Do not sweep me away with sinners,
nor cast me out with those who thirst for
blood,

¹⁰whose fingers are active in mischief,
whose right hands are full of bribes.

¹¹But I lead a blameless life; deliver
me and show me your favour.

¹²My feet are planted on firm ground; I
shall bless the LORD in the full assembly.

27 ¹For David THE LORD is my light
and my salvation; whom should I
fear? The LORD is the stronghold of my
life; of whom then should I go in dread?

²When evildoers close in on me to
devour me, it is my adversaries, my
enemies, who stumble and fall.

³Should an army encamp against me,
my heart would have no fear; if armed
men should fall upon me, even then I
would be undismayed.

⁴One thing I ask of the LORD, it is the
one thing I seek: that I may dwell in the
house of the LORD all the days of my
life, to gaze on the beauty of the LORD
and to seek him in his temple.

⁵For he will hide me in his shelter in the
day of misfortune; he will conceal me

under cover of his tent, set me high on a rock.

⁶Now my head will be raised high above the enemy all about me; so I shall acclaim him in his tent with sacrifice and sing a psalm of praise to the LORD.

⁷Hear, LORD, when I call aloud; show me favour and answer me.

⁸Come, my heart has said, seek his presence. I seek your presence, LORD;

⁹do not hide your face from me, nor in your anger turn away your servant, whose help you have been; God my saviour, do not reject me or forsake me.

¹⁰Though my father and my mother forsake me, the LORD will take me into his care.

¹¹Teach me your way, LORD; do not give me up to the greed of my enemies; lead me by a level path to escape the foes who beset me: liars breathing malice come forward to give evidence against me.

¹²(27:11)

¹³Well I know that I shall see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.

¹⁴Wait for the LORD; be strong and brave, and put your hope in the LORD.

28¹For David TO YOU, LORD, I call; my Rock, do not be deaf to my cry, lest, if you answer me with silence, I become like those who go down to the abyss.

²Hear my voice as I plead for mercy, as I call to you for help with hands uplifted towards your holy shrine.

³Do not drag me away with the ungodly, with evildoers who speak civilly to their fellows, though with malice in their hearts.

⁴Requite them for their works, their evil deeds; repay them for what their hands have done, because they do not discern the works of the LORD or what his hands have done. May they be given their deserts; may he strike them down and never restore them!

⁵(28: 4)

⁶Blessed be the LORD, for he has heard my voice as I plead for mercy.

⁷The LORD is my strength and my shield; in him my heart trusts. I am sustained, and my heart leaps for joy, and with my song I praise him.

⁸The LORD is strength to his people, a safe refuge for his anointed one.

⁹Save your people and bless those who belong to you, shepherd them and carry them for ever.

29¹ A psalm: for David ASCRIBE to the LORD, you angelic powers, ascribe to the LORD glory and might.

²Ascribe to the LORD the glory due to his name; in holy attire worship the LORD.

³The voice of the LORD echoes over the waters; the God of glory thunders; the LORD thunders over the mighty waters,

⁴the voice of the LORD in power, the voice of the LORD in majesty.

⁵The voice of the LORD breaks the cedar trees, the LORD shatters the cedars of Lebanon.

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

⁷The voice of the LORD makes flames of fire burst forth;

⁸the voice of the LORD makes the wilderness writhe in travail, the LORD makes the wilderness of Kadesh writhe.

⁹The voice of the LORD makes the hinds calve; he strips the forest bare, and in his temple all cry, Glory!

¹⁰The LORD is king above the flood, the LORD has taken his royal seat as king for ever.

¹¹The LORD will give strength to his people; the LORD will bless his people with peace.

30¹A psalm (a song for the dedication of the temple): for David I SHALL exalt you, LORD; you have lifted me up and have not let my enemies be jubilant over me.

²LORD my God, I cried to you and you healed me.

³You have brought me up, LORD, from Sheol, and saved my life as I was sinking into the abyss.

⁴Sing a psalm to the LORD, all you his loyal servants; give thanks to his holy name.

⁵In his anger is distress, in his favour there is life. Tears may linger at nightfall, but rejoicing comes in the morning.

⁶I felt secure and said, I can never be shaken.

⁷ LORD, by your favour you made my mountain strong; when you hid your face, I was struck with dismay.

⁸ To you, LORD, I called and pleaded with you for mercy:

⁹ What profit is there in my death, in my going down to the pit? Can the dust praise you? Can it proclaim your truth?

¹⁰ Hear, LORD, and be gracious to me; LORD, be my helper.

¹¹ You have turned my laments into dancing; you have stripped off my sackcloth and clothed me with joy,

¹² that I may sing psalms to you without ceasing. LORD my God, I shall praise you for ever.

31 ¹ For the leader: a psalm: for David IN you, LORD, I have found refuge; let me never be put to shame. By your saving power deliver me,

² bend down and hear me, come quickly to my rescue. Be to me a rock of refuge, a stronghold to keep me safe.

³ You are my rock and my stronghold; lead and guide me for the honour of your name.

⁴Set me free from the net that has been hidden to catch me; for you are my refuge.

⁵Into your hand I commit my spirit. You have delivered me, LORD, you God of truth.

⁶I hate all who worship worthless idols; I for my part put my trust in the LORD.

⁷I shall rejoice and be glad in your unfailing love, for you have seen my affliction and have cared for me in my distress.

⁸You have not abandoned me to the power of the enemy, but have set me where I have untrammelled liberty.

⁹Be gracious to me, LORD, for I am in distress and my eyes are dimmed with grief.

¹⁰My life is worn away with sorrow and my years with sighing; through misery my strength falters and my bones waste away.

¹¹I am scorned by all my enemies, my neighbours find me burdensome, my friends shudder at me; when they see me on the street they turn away quickly.

¹²Like the dead I have passed out of mind; I have become like some article thrown away.

¹³For I hear many whispering threats from every side, conspiring together against me and scheming to take my life.

¹⁴But in you, LORD, I put my trust; I say, You are my God.

¹⁵My fortunes are in your hand; rescue me from the power of my enemies and those who persecute me.

¹⁶Let your face shine on your servant; save me in your unfailing love.

¹⁷LORD, do not humiliate me when I call to you; let humiliation be for the wicked, let them sink into Sheol.

¹⁸May lying lips be struck dumb, lips speaking with contempt against the righteous in pride and arrogance.

¹⁹How great is your goodness, stored up for those who fear you, made manifest before mortal eyes for all who turn to you for shelter.

²⁰You will hide them under the cover of your presence from those who conspire together; you keep them in your shelter, safe from contentious tongues.

²¹ Blessed be the LORD, whose unfailing love for me was wonderful when I was in sore straits.

²² In sudden alarm I said, I am shut out from your sight. But you heard my plea when I called to you for help.

²³ Love the LORD, all you his loyal servants. The LORD protects the faithful, but the arrogant he repays in full.

²⁴ Be strong and stout-hearted, all you whose hope is in the LORD.

32 ¹ For David: a maskil HAPPY is he whose offence is forgiven, whose sin is blotted out!

² Happy is he to whom the LORD imputes no fault, in whose spirit there is no deceit.

³ While I refused to speak, my body wasted away with day-long moaning.

⁴ For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; the sap in me dried up as in summer drought. [Selah]

⁵ When I acknowledged my sin to you, when I no longer concealed my guilt, but said, I shall confess my offence to the LORD, then you for your part remitted the penalty of my sin. [Selah]

⁶So let every faithful heart pray to you in the hour of anxiety; when great floods threaten they shall not touch him.

⁷You are a hiding-place for me from distress; you guard me and enfold me in salvation. [Selah]

⁸I shall teach you and guide you in the way you should go. I shall keep you under my eye.

⁹Do not behave like a horse or a mule, unreasoning creatures whose mettle must be curbed with bit and bridle, so that they do not come near you.

¹⁰Many are the torments for the ungodly, but unfailing love enfolds those who trust in the LORD.

¹¹Rejoice in the LORD and be glad, you righteous ones; sing aloud, all you of honest heart.

33¹For David SHOUT for joy in the LORD, you that are righteous; praise comes well from the upright.

²Give thanks to the LORD on the lyre; make music to him on the ten-stringed harp.

³Sing to him a new song; strike up with all your skill and shout in triumph,

⁴ for the word of the LORD holds true, and all his work endures.

⁵ He is a lover of righteousness and justice; the earth is filled with the LORD's unfailing love.

⁶ The word of the LORD created the heavens; all the host of heaven was formed at his command.

⁷ He gathered into a heap the waters of the sea, he laid up the deeps in his store-chambers.

⁸ Let the whole world fear the LORD and all earth's inhabitants stand in awe of him.

⁹ For he spoke, and it was; he commanded, and there it stood.

¹⁰ The LORD frustrates the purposes of nations; he foils the plans of the peoples.

¹¹ But the LORD's own purpose stands for ever, and the plans he has in mind endure for all generations.

¹² Happy is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people he has chosen for his own.

¹³ The LORD looks out from heaven; he sees the whole race of mortals,

¹⁴ he surveys from his dwelling-place all the inhabitants of the earth.

¹⁵It is he who fashions the hearts of them all, who discerns everything they do.

¹⁶No king is saved by a great army, no warrior delivered by great strength.

¹⁷No one can rely on his horse to save him, nor for all its power can it be a means of escape.

¹⁸The LORD's eyes are turned towards those who fear him, towards those who hope for his unfailing love

¹⁹to deliver them from death, and in famine to preserve them alive.

²⁰We have waited eagerly for the LORD; he is our help and our shield.

²¹In him our hearts are glad, because we have trusted in his holy name.

²²LORD, let your unfailing love rest on us, as we have put our hope in you.

34¹For David (when he feigned madness in Abimelech's presence; Abimelech then drove him away, and he departed) I SHALL bless the LORD at all times; his praise will be ever on my lips.

²In the LORD I shall glory; the humble will hear and be glad.

³Glorify the LORD with me; let us exalt his name together.

⁴I sought the LORD's help; he answered me and set me free from all my fears.

⁵They who look to him are radiant with joy; they will never be put out of countenance.

⁶Here is one who cried out in his affliction; the LORD heard him and saved him from all his troubles.

⁷The angel of the LORD is on guard round those who fear him, and he rescues them.

⁸Taste and see that the LORD is good. Happy are they who find refuge in him!

⁹Fear the LORD, you his holy people; those who fear him lack for nothing.

¹⁰Princes may suffer want and go hungry, but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.

¹¹Come, children, listen to me; I shall teach you the fear of the LORD.

¹²Which of you delights in life and desires a long life to enjoy prosperity?

¹³Then keep your tongue from evil and your lips from telling lies;

¹⁴shun evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.

¹⁵The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous; his ears are open to their cry.

¹⁶The LORD sets his face against wrongdoers to cut off all memory of them from the earth.

¹⁷When the righteous cry for help, the LORD hears and sets them free from all their troubles.

¹⁸The LORD is close to those whose courage is broken; he saves those whose spirit is crushed.

¹⁹Though the misfortunes of one who is righteous be many, the LORD delivers him out of them all.

²⁰He guards every bone of his body, and not one of them will be broken.

²¹Misfortune will bring death to the wicked, and punishment befalls those who hate the righteous.

²²The LORD delivers the lives of his servants, and no punishment befalls those who seek refuge in him.

35 ¹For David STRIVE against those who strive against me, LORD; fight those who fight against me.

²Grasp shield and buckler, and rise to my aid.

³Brandish spear and axe against my pursuers. Let me hear you declare, I am your salvation.

⁴ May shame and disgrace cover those who seek my life; may those who plan my downfall retreat in dismay!

⁵ May they be like chaff before the wind, driven away by the angel of the LORD!

⁶ Let their path be dark and slippery with the angel of the LORD pursuing them!

⁷ For unprovoked they have hidden a net to catch me, unprovoked they have dug a pit to trap me.

⁸ May destruction unforeseen come upon them; may the net which they hid catch them; may they fall into the pit and be destroyed!

⁹ Then I shall rejoice in the LORD and delight in his salvation.

¹⁰ My whole frame cries out, LORD, who is there like you, saviour of the oppressed from those too strong for them, of the oppressed and poor from those who prey on them?

¹¹ Malicious witnesses come forward and question me on matters of which I know nothing.

¹² They return me evil for good, lying in wait to take my life.

¹³Yet when they were ill, I put on sackcloth, I mortified myself with fasting. When my prayer came back unanswered,

¹⁴I walked with head bowed in grief as if for a brother; as one in sorrow for his mother I lay prostrate in mourning.

¹⁵But when I stumbled, they crowded round rejoicing, they crowded about me; unknown assailants jeered at me and nothing would stop them.

¹⁶When I slipped, they mocked and derided me, grinding their teeth at me.

¹⁷Lord, how long will you look on? Rescue me from those who would destroy me, save my precious life from the powerful.

¹⁸Then I shall praise you in the great assembly, I shall extol you in a large congregation.

¹⁹Let no treacherous enemy gloat over me; let not those who hate me for no reason leer at me.

²⁰Their words are hostile and against the peaceful they hatch intrigues.

²¹They open their mouths and shout at me: Hurrah! What a sight for us to see!

²²You have seen all this, LORD; do not keep silence. Lord, be not far aloof from me.

²³Awake, rouse yourself, my God, my Lord, to vindicate me and plead my cause.

²⁴Judge me, LORD my God, as you are righteous; do not let them gloat over me.

²⁵Do not let them say to themselves, Hurrah! We have got our wish, we have swallowed him up!

²⁶Let all who rejoice at my downfall be discomfited and dismayed; let those who glory over me be covered with shame and dishonour.

²⁷But let all who want to see me vindicated shout for joy, let them cry continually, All glory to the LORD who wants to see his servant prosper!

²⁸And I shall declare your saving power and your praise all the day long.

36¹ For the leader: for the LORD's servant: for David A WICKED person's talk is prompted by sin in his heart; he sees no need to fear God.

²For it flatters and deceives him and, when his iniquity is found out, he does not change.

³Everything he says is mischievous and false; he has lost all understanding of right conduct;

⁴he lies in bed planning the mischief he will do. So set is he on his evil course that he rejects no wickedness.

⁵LORD, your unfailing love reaches to the heavens, your faithfulness to the skies.

⁶Your righteousness is like the lofty mountains, your justice like the great deep; LORD who saves man and beast,

⁷how precious is your unfailing love! Gods and frail mortals seek refuge in the shadow of your wings.

⁸They are filled with the rich plenty of your house, and you give them to drink from the stream of your delights;

⁹for with you is the fountain of life, and by your light we are enlightened.

¹⁰Continue your love unfailing to those who know you, and your saving power towards the honest of heart.

¹¹Let not the foot of the proud come near me, let no wicked hand disturb me.

¹²There they lie, the evildoers, flung down and not able to rise.

37 ¹For David DO NOT be vexed because of evildoers or envy those who do wrong.

²For like the grass they soon wither, and like green pasture they fade away.

³Trust in the LORD and do good; settle in the land and find safe pasture.

⁴Delight in the LORD, and he will grant you your heart's desire.

⁵Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him, and he will act.

⁶He will make your righteousness shine clear as the day and the justice of your cause like the brightness of noon.

⁷Wait quietly for the LORD, be patient till he comes; do not envy those who gain their ends, or be vexed at their success.

⁸Be angry no more, have done with wrath; do not be vexed: that leads to evil.

⁹For evildoers will be destroyed, while they who hope in the LORD will possess the land.

¹⁰A little while, and the wicked will be no more; however hard you look, you will find their place empty.

¹¹But the humble will possess the land and enjoy untold prosperity.

¹²The wicked plot against the righteous and grind their teeth at the sight of them.

¹³The Lord will laugh at the wicked, for he sees that their day of judgement is coming.

¹⁴They have drawn their swords and strung their bows to lay low the oppressed and poor, and to slaughter those who are honest.

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

¹⁶Better is the little which the righteous person has than all the wealth of the wicked;

¹⁷for the power of the wicked will be broken, but the LORD upholds the righteous.

¹⁸The LORD watches over the upright all their days, and their inheritance will last for ever.

¹⁹When times are bad, they will not be distressed, and in a period of famine they will have enough.

²⁰But the wicked will perish; the enemies of the LORD, like fuel in a furnace, will go up in smoke.

²¹The wicked borrow and do not repay; the righteous give generously.

²²Those whom the LORD has blessed will possess the land, and those who are cursed by him will be cut off.

²³It is the LORD who directs a person's steps; he holds him firm and approves of his conduct.

²⁴Though he may fall, he will not go headlong, for the LORD grasps him by the hand.

²⁵I have been young and now have grown old, but never have I seen the righteous forsaken or their children begging bread.

²⁶Day in, day out, such a one lends generously, and his children become a blessing.

²⁷If you shun evil and do good, you will live at peace for ever;

²⁸for the LORD is a lover of justice and will not forsake his loyal servants. The

lawless are banished for ever and the children of the wicked cut off,

²⁹ while the righteous will possess the land and live there for ever.

³⁰ A righteous person speaks words of wisdom and justice is always on his lips.

³¹ The law of his God is in his heart; his steps do not falter.

³² The wicked watch out for the righteous and seek to put them to death;

³³ but the LORD will not leave them in their power, nor let them be condemned if they are brought to trial.

³⁴ Wait for the LORD and hold to his way; he will raise you to be master of the land. When the wicked are destroyed, you will be there to watch.

³⁵ I have seen a wicked man inspiring terror, flourishing as a spreading tree in its native soil.

³⁶ But one day I passed by and he was gone; for all that I searched for him, he was not to be found.

³⁷ Observe the good man, watch him who is honest, for the man of peace leaves descendants;

³⁸but transgressors are wiped out one and all, and the descendants of the wicked are cut off.

³⁹Deliverance for the righteous comes from the LORD, their refuge in time of trouble.

⁴⁰The LORD will help them and deliver them, he will keep them safe from the wicked; he will save them because they seek shelter in him.

38¹A psalm: for David: for commemoration LORD, do not rebuke me in anger or punish me in your wrath.

²For your arrows have rained down on me, and your hand on me has been heavy.

³Your indignation has left no part of my body unscathed; because of my sin there is no health in my whole frame.

⁴For my iniquities tower above my head; they are a heavier load than I can bear.

⁵My wounds fester and stink because of my folly.

⁶I am bowed down and utterly prostrate. All day long I go about as if in mourning,

⁷ for my loins burn with fever, and there is no wholesome flesh in me.

⁸ Faint and badly crushed I groan aloud in anguish of heart.

⁹ All my longing lies open before you, Lord, and my sighing is no secret to you.

¹⁰ My heart throbs, my strength is spent, and the light has faded from my eyes.

¹¹ My friends and companions shun me in my sickness, and my kinsfolk keep far off.

¹² Those who seek my life set their traps, those who mean to injure me threaten my destruction; they plot all the day long.

¹³ But I am like a deaf man, hearing nothing, like a dumb man who cannot open his mouth.

¹⁴ I behave like one who does not hear, whose tongue offers no defence.

¹⁵ On you, LORD, I fix my hope; you, LORD my God, will answer.

¹⁶ I said, Let them never rejoice over me who exult when my foot slips.

¹⁷ I am on the brink of disaster, and pain is constantly with me.

¹⁸I make no secret of my iniquity; I am troubled because of my sin.

¹⁹But many are my enemies, all without cause, and numerous are those who hate me without reason,

²⁰who repay good with evil, opposing me because my purpose is good.

²¹But, LORD, do not forsake me; my God, be not far aloof from me.

²²Lord my deliverer, hasten to my aid.

39¹ For the leader: for Jeduthun: a psalm: for David I SAID: I shall keep watch over my conduct, that what I say may be free from sin. I shall keep a muzzle on my mouth, so long as the wicked confront me.

²I kept utterly silent, I refrained from speech. My agony was quickened,

³and my heart burned within me. As I pondered my mind was inflamed, and I began to speak:

⁴LORD, let me know my end and the number of my days; tell me how short my life is to be.

⁵I know you have made my days a mere span long, and my whole life is as nothing in your sight. A human being,

however firm he stands, is but a puff of wind, [Selah]

⁶his life but a passing shadow; the riches he piles up are no more than vapour, and there is no knowing who will enjoy them.

⁷Now, Lord, what do I wait for? My hope is in you.

⁸Deliver me from all who do me wrong; make me no longer the butt of fools.

⁹I am dumb, I shall not open my mouth, because it is your doing.

¹⁰Rain no more blows on me; I am exhausted by your hostility.

¹¹When you rebuke anyone to punish his sin, you make what he desires melt away; every mortal being is only a breath of wind. [Selah]

¹²Hear my prayer, LORD; listen to my cry, do not be deaf to my weeping; for I find shelter with you; I am a passing guest, as all my forefathers were.

¹³Frown on me no more; let me look cheerful before I depart and cease to be.

40¹For the leader: for David: a psalm PATIENTLY I waited for the LORD; he bent down to me and listened to my cry.

² He raised me out of the miry pit, out of the mud and clay; he set my feet on rock and gave me a firm footing.

³ On my lips he put a new song, a song of praise to our God. Many will look with awe and put their trust in the LORD.

⁴ Happy is he who puts his trust in the LORD and does not look to the arrogant and treacherous.

⁵ LORD my God, great things you have done; your wonders and your purposes are for our good; none can compare with you. I would proclaim them and speak of them, but they are more than I can tell.

⁶ You have not desired sacrifice or offering, you have not demanded whole-offerings or purifying offerings; you have given me receptive ears.

⁷ Then I said, Here I am, as is prescribed for me in a written scroll.

⁸ God, my desire is to do your will; your law is in my heart.

⁹ In the great assembly I have proclaimed what is right; I do not hold back my words, as you know, LORD.

¹⁰ I have not kept your goodness hidden in my heart; I have proclaimed your faithfulness and saving power, and have

not concealed your unfailing love and truth from the great assembly.

¹¹You, LORD, will not withhold your tender care from me; may your love and truth for ever guard me.

¹²For misfortunes beyond counting press on me from all sides; my iniquities have overtaken me, and I cannot see; they are more in number than the hairs of my head; my courage fails.

¹³Show me favour, LORD, and save me; LORD, come quickly to my help.

¹⁴Let all who seek to take my life be discomfited and dismayed; let those who desire my hurt be turned back in disgrace;

¹⁵let those who cry Hurrah! at my downfall be horrified at their shame.

¹⁶But let all who seek you be jubilant and rejoice in you; and may those who long for your saving aid for ever cry, All glory to the LORD!

¹⁷But I am poor and needy; may the Lord think of me. You are my help and my deliverer; my God, do not delay.

41 ¹For the leader: a psalm: for David HAPPY is anyone who has a

concern for the helpless! The LORD will save him in time of trouble;

² the LORD protects him and gives him life, making him secure in the land; the LORD never leaves him to the will of his enemies.

³ On his sick-bed he nurses him, transforming his every illness to health.

⁴ I said, LORD, be gracious to me! Heal me, for I have sinned against you.

⁵ His case is desperate, my enemies say; when will he die and his name perish?

⁶ All who visit me speak from hearts devoid of sincerity; they are keen to gather bad news and go out to spread it abroad.

⁷ All who hate me whisper together about me, imputing the worst to me:

⁸ An evil spell is cast on him, they say; he is laid on his bed, and will never rise again.

⁹ Even the friend whom I trusted, who ate at my table, exults over my misfortune.

¹⁰ LORD, be gracious and restore me that I may repay them in full.

¹¹ Then shall I know that you delight in me and that my enemy will not triumph over me.

¹² But I am upheld by you because of my innocence; you keep me for ever in your presence.

¹³ Praise be to the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. Amen and Amen.

42 ¹ For the leader: a maskil: for the Korahites AS A hind longs for the running streams, so I long for you, my God.

² I thirst for God, the living God; when shall I come to appear in his presence?

³ Tears are my food day and night, while all day long people ask me, Where is your God?

⁴ As I pour out my soul in distress, I call to mind how I marched in the ranks of the great to God's house, among exultant shouts of praise, the clamour of the pilgrims.

⁵ How deep I am sunk in misery, groaning in my distress! I shall wait for God; I shall yet praise him, my deliverer, my God.

⁶I am sunk in misery, therefore I shall remember you from the springs of Jordan and from the Hermons, and from the hill of Mizar.

⁷Deep calls to deep in the roar of your cataracts, and all your waves, all your breakers, sweep over me.

⁸By day the LORD grants his unfailing love; at night his praise is upon my lips, a prayer to the God of my life.

⁹I shall say to God, my Rock, Why have you forgotten me? Why must I go like a mourner because my foes oppress me?

¹⁰My enemies taunt me with crushing insults: the whole day long they ask, Where is your God?

¹¹How deep I am sunk in misery, groaning in my distress! I shall wait for God; I shall yet praise him, my deliverer, my God.

43¹ Uphold my cause, God, and give judgement for me against a godless nation; rescue me from liars and evil men.

²For you are my God, my refuge; why have you rejected me? Why must I go like a mourner, oppressed by my foes?

³Send out your light and your truth to be my guide; let them lead me to your holy hill, to your dwelling-place.

⁴Then I shall come to the altar of God, the God of my joy and delight, and praise you with the lyre, God my God.

⁵How deep I am sunk in misery, groaning in my distress! I shall wait for God; I shall yet praise him, my deliverer, my God.

44¹For the leader: for the Korahites: a maskil WE have heard for ourselves, God, our forefathers have told us what deeds you did in their time,

²all your hand accomplished in days of old. To plant them in the land, you drove out the nations; to settle them, you laid waste the inhabitants.

³It was not our fathers' swords that won them the land, nor did their strong arm give them victory, but your right hand and your arm and the light of your presence; such was your favour to them.

⁴God, you are my King; command victory for Jacob.

⁵By your help we shall throw back our enemies, in your name we shall trample down our assailants.

⁶My trust is not in my bow, nor will my victory be won by my sword;

⁷for you deliver us from our foes, you put to confusion those hostile to us.

⁸In God have we gloried all day long, and we shall praise your name for ever.

[Selah]

⁹Yet you have rejected and humbled us and no longer lead our armies to battle.

¹⁰You have forced us to retreat before the foe, and our enemies have plundered us at will.

¹¹You have given us up to be slaughtered like sheep and scattered us among the nations.

¹²You sold your people for next to nothing and had no profit from the sale.

¹³You have exposed us to the contempt of our neighbours, to the gibes and mockery of those about us.

¹⁴You have made us a byword among the nations, and the peoples toss their heads at us;

¹⁵so all day long my disgrace confronts me, and I am covered with shame

¹⁶at the shouts of those who taunt and abuse me as the enemy takes his revenge.

¹⁷ Though all this has befallen us, we do not forget you and have not been false to your covenant;

¹⁸ our hearts have not been unfaithful, nor have our feet strayed from your path.

¹⁹ Yet you have crushed us as the sea serpent was crushed, and covered us with deepest darkness.

²⁰ Had we forgotten the name of our God and spread our hands in prayer to alien gods,

²¹ would not God have found out, for he knows the secrets of the heart?

²² For your sake we are being done to death all day long, treated like sheep for slaughter.

²³ Rouse yourself, Lord; why do you sleep? Awake! Do not reject us for ever.

²⁴ Why do you hide your face, heedless of our misery and our sufferings?

²⁵ For we sink down to the dust and lie prone on the ground.

²⁶ Arise and come to our aid; for your love's sake deliver us.

45 ¹ For the leader: set to Lilies: for the Korahites: a maskil: a love song MY heart is astir with a noble

theme; in honour of a king I recite the song I have composed, and my tongue runs swiftly like the pen of an expert scribe.

²You surpass all others in beauty; gracious words flow from your lips, for you are blessed by God for ever.

³Gird on your sword at your side, you warrior king,

⁴advance in your pomp and splendour, ride on in the cause of truth and for justice. Your right hand will perform awesome deeds:

⁵your arrows are sharp; nations lie beneath your feet. The hearts of the king's enemies fail.

⁶God has enthroned you for all eternity; your royal sceptre is a sceptre of equity.

⁷You love right and hate wrong; therefore God, your God, has anointed you above your fellows with oil, the token of joy.

⁸Your robes are all fragrant with myrrh and powdered aloes, and you are made glad by string music from palaces panelled with ivory.

⁹Princesses are among your noble ladies, your consort takes her place at your right hand in gold of Ophir.

¹⁰Listen, my daughter, hear my words and consider them: forget your own people and your father's house;

¹¹let the king desire your beauty, for he is your lord.

¹²Do him obeisance, daughter of Tyre. The richest in the land will court you with gifts.

¹³Within the palace the royal bride is adorned, arrayed in cloth-of-gold.

¹⁴She will be brought to the king in all her finery. Virgins who are her companions will be brought to you in her retinue,

¹⁵escorted with the noise of revels and rejoicing as they enter the king's palace.

¹⁶You will have sons to succeed your forefathers, and you will make them princes throughout the land.

¹⁷I shall declare your fame through all generations; therefore nations will praise you for ever and ever.

46¹ For the leader: for the Korahites: according to alamoith: a song

GOD is our refuge and our stronghold, a timely help in trouble;

²so we are not afraid though the earth shakes and the mountains move in the depths of the sea,

³when its waters seethe in tumult and the mountains quake before his majesty. [Selah]

⁴There is a river whose streams bring joy to the city of God, the holy dwelling of the Most High;

⁵God is in her midst; she will not be overthrown, and at the break of day he will help her.

⁶Nations are in tumult, kingdoms overturned; when he thunders, the earth melts.

⁷The LORD of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. [Selah]

⁸Come, see what the LORD has done, the astounding deeds he has wrought on earth;

⁹in every part of the wide world he puts an end to war: he breaks the bow, he snaps the spear, he burns the shields in the fire.

¹⁰Let be then; learn that I am God, exalted among the nations, exalted in the earth.

¹¹The LORD of Hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. [Selah]

47 ¹For the leader: for the Korahites: a psalm CLAP your hands, all you nations, acclaim God with shouts of joy.

²How awesome is the LORD Most High, great King over all the earth!

³He subdues nations under us, peoples under our feet;

⁴he chooses for us our heritage, the pride of Jacob whom he loves. [Selah]

⁵To the shout of triumph God has gone up, the LORD has gone up at the sound of the horn.

⁶Praise God, praise him with psalms; praise our King, praise him with psalms,

⁷for God is King of all the earth; sing psalms with all your skill.

⁸Seated on his holy throne, God reigns over the nations.

⁹The princes of the nations assemble with the people of the God of Abraham; for the mighty ones of earth belong to God, and he is exalted on high.

48¹ A song: a psalm: for the Korahites GREAT is the LORD and most worthy of praise in the city of our God. His holy mountain

² is fair and lofty, the joy of the whole earth. The mountain of Zion, the far recesses of the north, is the city of the great King.

³ God in her palaces is revealed as a tower of strength.

⁴ See, the kings assemble; they advance together.

⁵ They look, and are astounded; filled with alarm they panic.

⁶ Trembling has seized them there; they toss in pain like a woman in labour,

⁷ like the ships of Tarshish when an east wind wrecks them.

⁸ What we had heard we saw now with our own eyes in the city of the LORD of Hosts, in the city of our God; God will establish it for evermore. [Selah]

⁹ God, within your temple we meditate on your steadfast love.

¹⁰ God, the praise your name deserves is heard at earth's farthest bounds. Your right hand is full of victory.

¹¹ The hill of Zion rejoices and Judah's cities are glad, for you redress their wrongs.

¹² Go round Zion in procession, count the number of her towers,

¹³ take note of her ramparts, pass her palaces in review, that you may tell generations yet to come

¹⁴ that such is God, our God for ever; he will be our guide for evermore.

49 ¹ For the leader: for the Korahites: a psalm HEAR this, all you peoples; listen, all you inhabitants of the world,

² both high and low, rich and poor,

³ for the words that I have to speak are wise; my thoughts provide understanding.

⁴ I listen with care to the parable and interpret a mystery to the music of the lyre.

⁵ Why should I be afraid in evil times when beset by the wickedness of treacherous foes,

⁶ trusting in their wealth and boasting of their great riches?

⁷ Alas! No one can ever ransom himself, nor pay God the price for his release;

⁸ the ransom would be too high, for ever beyond his power to pay,

⁹ the ransom that would let him live on for ever and not see death's pit.

¹⁰ For we see that the wise die, as the stupid and senseless all perish, leaving their wealth to others.

¹¹ Though they give their names to estates, the grave is their eternal home, their dwelling for all time to come.

¹² For human beings like oxen are short-lived; they are like beasts whose lives are cut short.

¹³ Such is the fate of the foolish and of those after them who approve their words. [Selah]

¹⁴ Like sheep they head for Sheol; with death as their shepherd, they go straight down to the grave. Their bodies, stripped of all honour, waste away in Sheol.

¹⁵ But God will ransom my life and take me from the power of Sheol. [Selah]

¹⁶ Do not envy anyone though he grows rich, when the wealth of his family increases;

¹⁷ at his death he can take nothing, for his wealth will not go down with him.

¹⁸Though in his lifetime he counts himself happy and he is praised in his prosperity,

¹⁹he will go to join the company of his forefathers who will never again see the light.

²⁰For human beings like oxen are short-lived; they are like beasts whose lives are cut short.

50¹A psalm: for Asaph GOD, the LORD God, has spoken and summoned the world from the rising of the sun to its setting.

²God shines out from Zion, perfect in beauty.

³Our God is coming and will not keep silence; consuming fire runs ahead of him and round him a great storm rages.

⁴The heavens above and the earth he summons to the judging of his people:

⁵Gather to me my loyal servants, those who by sacrifice made a covenant with me.

⁶The heavens proclaim his justice, for God himself is judge. [Selah]

⁷Listen, my people, and I shall speak; I shall bear witness against you, Israel: I am God, your God.

⁸Not for your sacrifices do I rebuke you, your whole-offerings always before me;

⁹I need take no young bull from your farmstead, no he-goat from your folds;

¹⁰for all the living creatures of the forest are mine and the animals in their thousands on my hills.

¹¹I know every bird on those mountains; the teeming life of the plains is my care.

¹²If I were hungry, I would not tell you, for the world and all that is in it are mine.

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

¹⁴Offer to God a sacrifice of thanksgiving and fulfil your vows to the Most High;

¹⁵then if you call to me in time of trouble, I shall come to your rescue, and you will honour me.

¹⁶God's word to a wicked person is this: What right have you to recite my statutes, to take the words of my covenant on your lips?

¹⁷For you hate correction and cast my words out of your sight.

¹⁸If you meet a thief, you choose him as your friend, and you make common cause with adulterers;

¹⁹freely you employ your mouth for evil and harness your tongue to deceit.

²⁰You are forever talking against your brother, imputing faults to your own mother's son.

²¹When you have done these things, and kept silence, you thought that I was someone like yourself; but I shall rebuke you and indict you to your face.

²²You forget God, but think well on this, lest I tear you in pieces and there be no one to save you:

²³he honours me who offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and to him who follows my way I shall show the salvation of God.

51 ¹For the leader: a psalm: for David (when Nathan the prophet came to him after he had taken Bathsheba) GOD, be gracious to me in your faithful love; in the fullness of your mercy blot out my misdeeds.

²Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.

³For well I know my misdeeds, and my sins confront me all the time.

⁴Against you only have I sinned and have done what displeases; you are right when you accuse me and justified in passing sentence.

⁵From my birth I have been evil, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.

⁶You desire faithfulness in the inmost being, so teach me wisdom in my heart.

⁷Sprinkle me with hyssop, so that I may be cleansed; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

⁸Let me hear the sound of joy and gladness; you have crushed me, but make me rejoice again.

⁹Turn away your face from my sins and wipe out all my iniquity.

¹⁰God, create a pure heart for me, and give me a new and steadfast spirit.

¹¹Do not drive me from your presence or take your holy spirit from me.

¹²Restore to me the joy of your deliverance and grant me a willing spirit to uphold me.

¹³I shall teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.

¹⁴ My God, God my deliverer, deliver me from bloodshed, and I shall sing the praises of your saving power.

¹⁵ Lord, open my lips, that my mouth may proclaim your praise.

¹⁶ You have no delight in sacrifice; if I were to bring a whole-offering you would not accept it.

¹⁷ God, my sacrifice is a broken spirit; you, God, will not despise a chastened heart.

¹⁸ Show favour to Zion and grant her prosperity; rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.

¹⁹ Then you will delight in the appointed sacrifices; then young bulls will be offered on your altar.

52¹ For the leader: a maskil: for David (when Doeg the Edomite came and told Saul that David had gone to Abimelech's house) YOU MIGHTY man, why do you boast all the day of your infamy against God's loyal servant?

² You plan destruction; your slanderous tongue is sharp as a razor.

³ You love evil rather than good, falsehood rather than truthful speech; [Selah]

⁴you love all malicious talk and slander.

⁵So may God fling you to the ground, sweep you away, leave you ruined and homeless, uprooted from the land of the living. [Selah]

⁶The righteous will look on, awestruck, then laugh at his plight:

⁷This is the man, they say, who would not make God his refuge, but trusted in his great wealth and took refuge in his riches.

⁸But I am like a spreading olive tree in God's house, for I trust in God's faithful love for ever and ever.

⁹I shall praise you for ever for what you have done, and glorify your name among your loyal servants, for that is good.

53¹ For the leader: set to Mahalath: a maskil: for David THE impious fool says in his heart, There is no God. Everyone is depraved, every deed is vile; no one does good!

²God looks out from heaven on all the human race to see if any act wisely, if any seek God.

³But all are unfaithful, altogether corrupt; no one does good, no, not even one.

⁴ Have they no understanding, those evildoers who devour my people as if eating bread, and never call to God?

⁵ They will be in dire alarm when God scatters the bones of the godless, confounded when God rejects them.

⁶ If only deliverance for Israel might come from Zion! When God restores his people's fortunes, let Jacob rejoice, let Israel be glad.

54 ¹ For the leader: with stringed instruments: a maskil: for David (when the Ziphites came and said to Saul, David is in hiding among us.) SAVE me, God, by the power of your name, and vindicate me through your might.

² God, hear my prayer, listen to my supplication.

³ Violent men rise to attack me, ruthless men seek my life; they give no thought to God. [Selah]

⁴ But God is my helper, the Lord the sustainer of my life.

⁵ May their own malice recoil on the foes who beset me! Show yourself faithful and destroy them.

⁶Freely I shall offer you a sacrifice and praise your name, LORD, as is most seemly;

⁷God has rescued me from every trouble; I look with delight on the downfall of my enemies.

55 ¹For the leader: on stringed instruments: a maskil: for David LISTEN, God, to my prayer: do not hide yourself from my pleading.

²Hear me and give me an answer, for my cares leave me no peace.

³I am panic-stricken at the hostile shouts, at the shrill clamour of the wicked; for they heap trouble on me and revile me in their fury.

⁴My heart is torn with anguish and the terrors of death bear down on me.

⁵Fear and trembling assail me and my whole frame shudders.

⁶I say: Oh that I had the wings of a dove to fly away and find rest!

⁷I would escape far away to a refuge in the wilderness. [Selah]

⁸Soon I would find myself a shelter from raging wind and tempest.

⁹Frustrate and divide their counsels,
Lord! I have seen violence and strife in
the city;

¹⁰day and night they encircle it, all
along its walls; it is filled with trouble
and mischief,

¹¹destruction is rife within it; its public
square is never free from oppression and
deceit.

¹²It was no enemy that taunted me, or
I should have avoided him; no foe that
treated me with scorn, or I should have
kept out of his way.

¹³It was you, a man of my own sort, a
comrade, my own dear friend;

¹⁴we held pleasant converse together
walking with the throng in the house of
God.

¹⁵May death strike them, may they go
down alive into Sheol; for their homes
are haunts of evil!

¹⁶But I appeal to God, and the LORD
will save me.

¹⁷Evening and morning and at noonday
I make my complaint and groan.

¹⁸He will hear my cry and deliver me
and give me security so that none may
attack me, for many are hostile to me.

¹⁹ God hears, and he humbles them, he who is enthroned from of old. [Selah] They have no respect for an oath, nor any fear of God.

²⁰ Such men do violence to those at peace with them and break their solemn word;

²¹ their speech is smoother than butter, but their thoughts are of war; their words are softer than oil, but they themselves are like drawn swords.

²² Commit your fortunes to the LORD, and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous be shaken.

²³ But you will cast them down, God, into the pit of destruction; bloodthirsty and treacherous, they will not live out half their days. For my part, LORD, I shall put my trust in you.

56¹ For the leader: set to The Dove of the Distant Oaks: for David: a miktam (when the Philistines seized him in Gath) BE gracious to me, God, for I am trampled underfoot; assailants harass me all the day.

² All day long foes beset and oppress me, for numerous are those who assail me.

³In my day of fear I put my trust in you, the Most High,

⁴in God, whose promise is my boast, in God I trust and shall not be afraid; what can mortals do to me?

⁵All day long they wound me with words; every plan they make is aimed at me.

⁶In malice they band together and watch for me, they dog my footsteps; but, while they lie in wait for me,

⁷there is no escape for them because of their iniquity. God, in your anger overthrow the nations.

⁸You have noted my grief; store my tears in your flask. Are they not recorded in your book?

⁹Then my enemies will turn back on the day when I call to you. This I know, that God is on my side.

¹⁰In God, whose promise is my boast, in the LORD, whose promise is my boast,

¹¹in God I trust and shall not be afraid; what can mortals do to me?

¹²I have bound myself with vows made to you, God, and will redeem them with due thank-offerings;

¹³ for you have rescued me from death and my feet from stumbling, to walk in the presence of God, in the light of life.

57 ¹ For the leader: set to Destroy not: for David: a miktam (when he was a fugitive from Saul in the cave) GOD, be gracious to me; be gracious, for I have made you my refuge. I shall seek refuge in the shadow of your wings until the storms are past.

² I shall call to God Most High, to the God who will fulfil his purpose for me.

³ He will send from heaven and save me, and my persecutors he will put to scorn. [Selah] May God send his love, unfailing and sure.

⁴ I lie prostrate among lions, man-eaters whose teeth are spears and arrows, whose tongues are sharp swords.

⁵ God, be exalted above the heavens; let your glory be over all the earth.

⁶ Some have prepared a net to catch me as I walk, but they themselves were brought low; they have dug a pit in my path but have themselves fallen into it. [Selah]

⁷ My heart is steadfast, God, my heart is steadfast. I shall sing and raise a psalm.

⁸Awake, my soul, awake, harp and lyre; I shall awake at dawn.

⁹I shall praise you among the peoples, Lord, among the nations I shall raise a psalm to you,

¹⁰for your unfailing love is as high as the heavens; your faithfulness reaches to the skies.

¹¹God, be exalted above the heavens; let your glory be over all the earth.

58¹For the leader: set to Destroy not: for David: a miktam YOU RULERS, are your decisions really just? Do you judge your people with equity?

²No! Your hearts devise wickedness and your hands mete out violence in the land.

³The wicked go astray from birth: liars, no sooner born than they take to wrong ways.

⁴Venomous with the venom of serpents, they are like the deaf asp which stops its ears

⁵and will not listen to the sound of the charmer, however skilfully he may play.

⁶God, break the teeth in their mouths; LORD, shatter the fangs of the oppressors.

⁷ May they vanish like water that runs away; may he aim his arrows, may they perish by them;

⁸ may they be like an abortive birth which melts away or a stillborn child which never sees the sun!

⁹ Before they know it, may they be rooted up like a thorn bush, like weeds which a man angrily clears away!

¹⁰ The righteous will rejoice at the sight of vengeance done; they will bathe their feet in the blood of the wicked.

¹¹ It will be said, There is after all reward for the righteous; there is after all a God who dispenses justice on earth.

59¹ For the leader: set to Destroy not: for David: a miktam (when Saul sent men to keep watch on David's house to kill him) RESCUE me, my God, from my enemies; be my strong tower against those who assail me.

² Rescue me from evildoers; deliver me from the bloodthirsty.

³ Violent men lie in wait for me, they lie in ambush ready to attack me; for no fault or guilt of mine, LORD,

⁴ innocent though I am, they rush to oppose me. But you, LORD God of Hosts,

Israel's God, arouse yourself to come to me and keep watch: awake, and punish all the nations. Have no mercy on these treacherous evildoers, [Selah]

⁵ (59: 4)

⁶ who come out at nightfall, snarling like dogs as they prowl about the city.

⁷ From their mouths comes a stream of abuse, and words that wound are on their lips; for they say, Who will hear us?

⁸ But you laugh at them, LORD, mocking all the nations.

⁹ My strength, I look to you; for God is my strong tower.

¹⁰ My God, in his unfailing love, will go before me; with God's help, I shall gloat over the foes who beset me.

¹¹ Will you not kill them, lest my people be tempted to forget? Scatter them by your might and bring them to ruin, Lord, my shield.

¹² Their every word is a sinful utterance. Let them be taken in their pride, by the curses and falsehoods they utter.

¹³ In wrath bring them to an end, and they will be no more; then it will be known to earth's farthest limits that God is ruler in Jacob. [Selah]

¹⁴They come out at nightfall, snarling like dogs as they prowl about the city;

¹⁵they roam here and there in search of food, and howl if they are not satisfied.

¹⁶But I shall sing of your strength, and acclaim your love when morning comes; for you have been my strong tower and a refuge in my day of trouble.

¹⁷I shall raise a psalm to you, my strength; for God is my strong tower. He is my gracious God.

60¹For the leader: set to The Lily of Testimony: a miktam: for David: for instruction (when he fought against Aram-naharaim and Aram-zobah, and Joab returned and struck twelve thousand Edomites in the valley of Salt) YOU HAVE rejected and crushed us, God. You have been angry; restore us.

²You have made the land quake and caused it to split open; repair its ruins, for it is shattered.

³You have made your people drunk with a bitter draught, you have given us wine that makes us stagger.

⁴But to those who fear you, you have raised a banner to which they may escape from the bow. [Selah]

⁵Save with your right hand and respond, that those dear to you may be delivered.

⁶God has spoken from his sanctuary: I will go up now and divide Shechem; I will measure off the valley of Succoth;

⁷Gilead and Manasseh are mine; Ephraim is my helmet, Judah my sceptre;

⁸Moab is my washbowl, on Edom I fling my sandals; Philistia, shout and acclaim me.

⁹Who will bring me to the fortified city? Who will guide me to Edom?

¹⁰Have you rejected us, God, and do you no longer lead our armies to battle?

¹¹Grant us help against the foe; in vain we look to any mortal for deliverance.

¹²With God's help we shall fight valiantly, and God himself will tread our foes under foot.

61 ¹For the leader: on stringed instruments: for David GOD, hear my cry; listen to my prayer.

²From the end of the earth I call to you with fainting heart; lift me up and set me high on a rock.

³For you have been my shelter, a tower of strength against the enemy.

⁴In your tent I shall make my home for ever and find shelter under the cover of your wings. [Selah]

⁵For you, God, will hear my vows and grant the wish of those who revere your name.

⁶To the king's life add length of days; prolong his years for many generations.

⁷May he abide in God's presence for ever; may true and constant love preserve him.

⁸So I shall ever sing psalms in honour of your name as I fulfil my vows day after day.

62¹For the leader: according to Jeduthun: a psalm: for David FOR God alone I wait silently; my deliverance comes from him.

²He only is my rock of deliverance, my strong tower, so that I stand unshaken.

³How long will you assail with your threats, all beating against your prey as if he were a leaning wall, a toppling fence?

⁴They aim to topple him from his height. They take delight in lying; they

bless him with their lips, but curse him in their hearts. [Selah]

⁵For God alone I wait silently; my hope comes from him.

⁶He alone is my rock of deliverance, my strong tower, so that I am unshaken.

⁷On God my safety and my honour depend, God who is my rock of refuge and my shelter.

⁸Trust in him at all times, you people; pour out your hearts before him; God is our shelter. [Selah]

⁹The common people are mere empty air, while people of rank are a sham; when placed on the scales they rise, all of them lighter than air.

¹⁰Put no trust in extortion, no false confidence in robbery; though wealth increases, do not set your heart on it.

¹¹One thing God has spoken, two things I have learnt: Power belongs to God

¹²and Unfailing love is yours, Lord; you reward everyone according to what he has done.

63¹ A psalm: for David (when he was in the wilderness of Judah) GOD, you are my God; I seek you eagerly with a heart that thirsts for you and a body

wasted with longing for you, like a dry land, parched and devoid of water.

²With such longing I see you in the sanctuary and behold your power and glory.

³Your unfailing love is better than life; therefore I shall sing your praises.

⁴Thus all my life I bless you; in your name I lift my hands in prayer.

⁵I am satisfied as with a rich feast and there is a shout of praise on my lips.

⁶I call you to mind on my bed and meditate on you in the night watches,

⁷for you have been my help and I am safe in the shadow of your wings.

⁸I follow you closely and your right hand upholds me.

⁹May those who seek my life themselves be destroyed, may they sink into the depths of the earth;

¹⁰may they be given over to the sword, and become carrion for jackals.

¹¹The king will rejoice in God; all who swear by God's name will exult, while the mouths of liars will be stopped.

64¹For the leader: a psalm: for David GOD, hear me as I make

my lament; keep me safe from the terror of the enemy.

²Protect me from the intrigues of the wicked, from the mob of evildoers.

³They sharpen their tongues like swords and aim venomous words like arrows

⁴to shoot down the innocent from cover, shooting suddenly, themselves unseen.

⁵They confirm their wicked resolves; they talk of hiding snares and say, Who will see us?

⁶They hatch their evil plots; they conceal the schemes they have devised, deep in their inmost heart.

⁷But God with his arrow shoots them down, and sudden is their overthrow.

⁸He will make them fall, using their own words against them. All who see them will flee in horror,

⁹every one terrified. This is God's work, they declare; they understand what he has done.

¹⁰The righteous rejoice and seek refuge in the LORD, and all the upright in heart exult.

65 ¹For the leader: a psalm: for David: a song IT is fitting to praise you in Zion, God; vows should be paid to you.

²Hearer of prayer, to you everyone should come.

³Evil deeds are too heavy for me; only you can wipe out our offences.

⁴Happy are those whom you choose and bring near to remain in your courts. Grant us in abundance the bounty of your house, of your holy temple.

⁵Through dread deeds you answer us with victory, God our deliverer, in whom all put their trust at the ends of the earth and on distant seas.

⁶By your might you fix the mountains in place; you are girded with strength;

⁷you calm the seas and their raging waves, and the tumult of the nations.

⁸The dwellers at the ends of the earth are overawed by your signs; you make east and west sing aloud in triumph.

⁹You care for the earth and make it fruitful; you enrich it greatly, filling its great channels with rain. In this way you prepare the earth and provide grain for its people.

¹⁰You water its furrows, level its ridges, soften it with showers, and bless its growth.

¹¹You crown the year with your good gifts; places where you have passed drip with plenty;

¹²the open pastures are lush and the hills wreathed in happiness;

¹³the meadows are clothed with sheep and the valleys decked with grain, so that with shouts of joy they break into song.

66 ¹For the leader: a song: a psalm
LET all the earth acclaim God.

²Sing to the glory of his name, make his praise glorious.

³Say to God, How awesome are your deeds! Your foes cower before the greatness of your strength.

⁴The whole world bows low in your presence; they praise your name in song. [Selah]

⁵Come and see what God has done, his awesome dealings with mankind.

⁶He changed the sea into dry land; his people passed over the river on foot; there we rejoiced in him

⁷ who rules for ever by his power. His eyes keep watch on the nations; let no rebel rise in defiance. [Selah]

⁸ Bless our God, you nations; let the sound of his praise be heard.

⁹ He preserves us in life; he keeps our feet from stumbling.

¹⁰ For you, God, have put us to the test and refined us like silver.

¹¹ You have brought us into the net, you have bound our bodies fast;

¹² you have let men ride over our heads. We went through fire and water, but you have brought us out into a place of plenty.

¹³ I shall bring whole-offerings into your house and fulfil to you vows

¹⁴ which my lips have made and my mouth promised on oath during my distress.

¹⁵ I shall offer you fat beasts as whole-offerings and burn rams as a soothing offering; I shall make ready bulls and he-goats. [Selah]

¹⁶ Come, listen, all who fear God, and I shall tell you what he has done for me;

¹⁷ I lifted up my voice in prayer, his praise was on my tongue.

¹⁸If I had cherished evil thoughts, the Lord would not have listened;

¹⁹but in truth God did listen and paid heed to my plea.

²⁰Blessed is God who has not withdrawn from me his love and care.

67 ¹For the leader: on stringed instruments: a psalm: a song MAY God be gracious to us and bless us, may he cause his face to shine on us, [Selah]

²that your purpose may be known on earth, your saving power among all nations.

³Let the peoples praise you, God; let all peoples praise you.

⁴Let nations rejoice and shout in triumph; for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations of the earth. [Selah]

⁵Let the peoples praise you, God; let all peoples praise you.

⁶The earth has yielded its harvest. May God, our God, bless us.

⁷God grant us his blessing, that all the ends of the earth may fear him.

68 ¹For the leader: for David: a psalm: a song MAY God arise and

his enemies be scattered, and those hostile to him flee at his approach.

²You disperse them like smoke; you melt them like wax near fire. The wicked perish at the presence of God,

³but the righteous are joyful; they exult before God with gladness and rejoicing.

⁴Sing the praises of God, raise a psalm to his name; extol him who rides on the clouds. The LORD is his name, exult before him,

⁵a father to the fatherless, the widow's defender -- God in his holy dwelling-place.

⁶God gives the friendless a home and leads the prisoner out in all safety, but rebels must remain in the scorching desert.

⁷God, when at the head of your people you marched out through the barren waste, [Selah]

⁸earth trembled, rain poured from the heavens before God the Lord of Sinai, before God the God of Israel.

⁹You, God, send plenteous rain; when your own land languishes you restore it.

¹⁰There your people settled; in your goodness, God, you provide for the poor.

¹¹ The Lord speaks the word; the women with the good news are a mighty host.

¹² Kings with their armies are in headlong flight, while the women at home divide the spoil.

¹³ Though you linger among the sheepfolds the dove's wings are covered with silver and its pinions with yellow gold.

¹⁴ When the Almighty routs the kings in the land snow falls on Zalmon.

¹⁵ The hill of Bashan is a lofty hill, a hill of many peaks is Bashan's hill.

¹⁶ But, you hill of many peaks, why gaze so enviously at the hill where the LORD delights to dwell, where the LORD himself will stay for ever?

¹⁷ There were myriads of God's chariots, thousands upon thousands, when the Lord came in holiness from Sinai.

¹⁸ You went up to your dwelling-place on high taking captives into captivity; everyone brought you tribute; no rebel could live in the presence of the LORD God.

¹⁹ Blessed is the Lord: he carries us day by day, God our salvation. [Selah]

²⁰Our God is a God who saves; to the LORD God belongs all escape from death.

²¹God himself smites the heads of his enemies, those proud sinners with their flowing locks.

²²The Lord says, I shall fetch them back from Bashan, I shall fetch them from the depths of the sea,

²³that you may bathe your feet in blood, while the tongues of your dogs are eager for it.

²⁴Your processions, God, come into view, the processions of my God, my King in the sanctuary:

²⁵in front the singers, with minstrels following, and in their midst girls beating tambourines.

²⁶Bless God in the great congregation; let the assembly of Israel bless the LORD.

²⁷There is the little tribe of Benjamin leading them, there the company of Judah's princes, the princes of Zebulun and of Naphtali.

²⁸God, set your might to work, the divine might which you have wielded for us.

²⁹ Kings will bring you gifts for the honour of your temple in Jerusalem.

³⁰ Rebuke those wild beasts of the reeds, that herd of bulls, the bull-calf warriors of the nations, who bring bars of silver and prostrate themselves. Scatter these nations which delight in war.

³¹ Envoys will come from Egypt; Nubia will stretch out her hands to God.

³² You kingdoms of the world, sing praises to God, make music to the Lord, [Selah]

³³ to him who rides on the heavens, the ancient heavens. Listen! He speaks in the mighty thunder.

³⁴ Ascribe might to God, whose majesty is over Israel, Israel's pride and might throned in the skies.

³⁵ Awesome is God in your sanctuary; he is Israel's God. He gives might and power to his people. Praise be to God.

69 ¹ For the leader: set to Lilies: for David SAVE me, God, for the water has risen to my neck.

² I sink in muddy depths where there is no foothold; I have come into deep water, and the flood sweeps me away.

³I am exhausted with crying, my throat is sore, my eyes are worn out with waiting for God.

⁴Those who hate me without reason are more than the hairs of my head; my persecutors are strong, my foes are treacherous. How can I restore what I have not stolen?

⁵God, you know how foolish I am, and my guilty deeds are not hidden from you.

⁶Lord GOD of Hosts, let none of those who hope in you be discouraged through me; God of Israel, let none who seek you be humiliated through me.

⁷For your sake I have suffered reproach; I dare not show my face for shame.

⁸I have become a stranger to my brothers, an alien to my mother's sons.

⁹Zeal for your house has consumed me; the insults aimed at you have landed on me.

¹⁰I wept bitterly while I fasted and I exposed myself to insults.

¹¹I have made sackcloth my clothing and become a byword among the people.

¹²Those who sit by the town gate gossip about me; I am the theme of drunken songs.

¹³At an acceptable time I lift my prayer to you, LORD. In your great and enduring love answer me, God, with sure deliverance.

¹⁴Rescue me from the mire, do not let me sink; let me be rescued from my enemies and from the watery depths.

¹⁵Let no billows sweep me away, no abyss swallow me up, no deep close over me.

¹⁶Answer me, LORD, in the goodness of your unfailing love, in your great compassion turn towards me.

¹⁷Do not hide your face from me, your servant; answer me without delay, for I am in dire straits.

¹⁸Come near to me and redeem me; deliver me from my enemies.

¹⁹You know what insults I bear, my shame and my ignominy; all who distress me are well known to you.

²⁰Insults have broken my heart and I am in despair; I looked for consolation, but received none, for comfort, but did not find any.

²¹ They put poison in my food and when I was thirsty they gave me vinegar to drink.

²² May their table be a snare to them and a trap when they feel secure!

²³ May their eyes be darkened so that they do not see; let a continual ague shake their loins!

²⁴ Vent your indignation on them and let your burning anger overtake them.

²⁵ Let their settlements be desolate, their tents without inhabitant,

²⁶ for they pursue him whom you have struck down and multiply the torments of those whom you have wounded.

²⁷ Heap punishment after punishment on them; grant them no vindication;

²⁸ let them be blotted out from the book of the living; let them not be enrolled among the innocent.

²⁹ I am afflicted and in pain; let your saving power, God, set me securely on high.

³⁰ I shall praise God's name in song and glorify him with thanksgiving;

³¹ that will please the LORD more than the offering of a bull, a young bull with horns and cloven hoofs.

³²When the humble see this let them rejoice. Take heart, you seekers after God,

³³for the LORD listens to the poor and does not despise his captive people.

³⁴Let sky and earth praise him, the seas and all that moves in them,

³⁵for God will deliver Zion and rebuild the cities of Judah; his people will settle there and possess it.

³⁶The children of those who serve him will inherit it, and those who love his name will live there.

70¹For the leader: for David: for commemoration MAKE haste and save me, God; LORD, come quickly to my help.

²Let those who seek my life be discomfited and dismayed, let those who desire my hurt be turned back in disgrace;

³let those who cry Hurrah! withdraw in their shame.

⁴But let all who seek you be jubilant and rejoice in you; and may those who long for your saving aid forever cry, All glory to God!

⁵But I am oppressed and poor; God, come quickly to me. You are my help and my deliverer; LORD, do not delay.

71 ¹IN you, LORD, I have found refuge; let me never be put to shame.

²By your saving power rescue and deliver me; hear me and save me!

³Be to me a rock of refuge to which at all times I may come; you have decreed my deliverance, for you are my rock and stronghold.

⁴Keep me safe, my God, from the power of the wicked, from the clutches of the pitiless and unjust.

⁵You are my hope, Lord GOD, my trust since my childhood.

⁶On you I have leaned from birth; you brought me from my mother's womb; to you I offer praise at all times.

⁷I have become like a portent to many; but you are my strong refuge.

⁸My mouth will be full of your praises, I shall tell of your splendour all day long.

⁹Do not cast me off when old age comes or forsake me as my strength fails,

¹⁰for my enemies whisper against me and those who spy on me intrigue together,

¹¹saying, God has forsaken him; harry him and seize him; there is no one to come to his rescue.

¹²God, do not stand aloof from me; come quickly, my God, to my help.

¹³Let my accusers be put to shame and perish; let those intent on harming me be covered with scorn and dishonour.

¹⁴But as for me, I shall wait in continual hope, I shall praise you again and yet again;

¹⁵I shall declare your vindicating power, declare all day long your saving acts, although I lack the skill to recount them.

¹⁶I shall come declaring your mighty acts, Lord GOD, and proclaim your sole power to vindicate.

¹⁷You have taught me from childhood, God, and all my life I have proclaimed your marvellous works.

¹⁸Now that I am old and my hair is grey, do not forsake me, God, until I have extolled your strength to generations yet to come,

¹⁹your might and vindicating power to highest heaven; for great are the things you have done. Who is there like you, my God?

²⁰You have made me suffer many grievous hardships, yet you revive me once more and lift me again from earth's watery depths.

²¹Restore me to honour, and comfort me again;

²²then I shall praise you on the harp for your faithfulness, my God; on the lyre I shall sing to you, the Holy One of Israel.

²³Songs of joy will be on my lips; I shall sing to you because you have redeemed me.

²⁴All day long my tongue will tell of your vindicating power, for those who seek my hurt are shamed and disgraced.

72¹For Solomon GOD, endow the king with your own justice, his royal person with your righteousness,

²that he may govern your people rightly and deal justly with your oppressed ones.

³May hills and mountains provide your people with prosperity in righteousness.

⁴ May he give judgement for the oppressed among the people and help to the needy; may he crush the oppressor.

⁵ May he fear you as long as the sun endures, and as the moon throughout the ages.

⁶ May he be like rain falling on early crops, like showers watering the earth.

⁷ In his days may righteousness flourish, prosperity abound until the moon is no more.

⁸ May he hold sway from sea to sea, from the Euphrates river to the ends of the earth.

⁹ May desert tribes bend low before him, his enemies lick the dust.

¹⁰ May the kings of Tarshish and of the isles bring gifts, the kings of Sheba and Seba present their tribute.

¹¹ Let all kings pay him homage, all nations serve him.

¹² For he will rescue the needy who appeal for help, the distressed who have no protector.

¹³ He will have pity on the poor and the needy, and deliver the needy from death;

¹⁴ he will redeem them from oppression and violence and their blood will be precious in his eyes.

¹⁵ May the king live long! May gifts of gold from Sheba be given him. May prayer be made for him continually; blessings be his all the day long.

¹⁶ May there be grain in plenty throughout the land, growing thickly over the heights of the hills; may its crops flourish like Lebanon, and the sheaves be plenteous as blades of grass.

¹⁷ Long may the king's name endure, may it remain for ever like the sun; then all will pray to be blessed as he was; all nations will tell of his happiness.

¹⁸ Blessed be the LORD God, the God of Israel, who alone does marvellous things;

¹⁹ blessed be his glorious name for ever; may his glory fill the whole earth. Amen and Amen.

²⁰ Here end the prayers of David son of Jesse.

73¹ A psalm: for Asaph ASSUREDLY God is good to the upright, to those who are pure in heart!

²My feet had almost slipped, my foothold had all but given way,

³because boasters roused my envy when I saw how the wicked prosper.

⁴No painful suffering for them! They are sleek and sound in body;

⁵they are not in trouble like ordinary mortals, nor are they afflicted like other folk.

⁶Therefore they wear pride like a necklace and violence like a robe that wraps them round.

⁷Their eyes gleam through folds of fat, while vain fancies flit through their minds.

⁸Their talk is all mockery and malice; high-handedly they threaten oppression.

⁹Their slanders reach up to heaven, while their tongues are never still on earth.

¹⁰So the people follow their lead and find in them nothing blameworthy.

¹¹They say, How does God know? Does the Most High know or care?

¹²Such are the wicked; unshakeably secure, they pile up wealth.

¹³ Indeed it was all for nothing I kept my heart pure and washed my hands free from guilt!

¹⁴ For all day long I suffer affliction and every morning brings new punishment.

¹⁵ Had I thought to speak as they do, I should have been false to your people.

¹⁶ I set my mind to understand this but I found it too hard for me,

¹⁷ until I went into God's sanctuary, where I saw clearly what their destiny would be.

¹⁸ Indeed you place them on slippery ground and drive them headlong into utter ruin!

¹⁹ In a moment they are destroyed, disasters making an end of them,

²⁰ like a dream when one awakes, Lord, like images dismissed when one rouses from sleep!

²¹ My mind was embittered, and I was pierced to the heart.

²² I was too brutish to understand, in your sight, God, no better than a beast.

²³ Yet I am always with you; you hold my right hand.

²⁴You guide me by your counsel and afterwards you will receive me with glory.

²⁵Whom have I in heaven but you? And having you, I desire nothing else on earth.

²⁶Though heart and body fail, yet God is the rock of my heart, my portion for ever.

²⁷Those who are far from you will perish; you will destroy all who are unfaithful to you.

²⁸But my chief good is to be near you, God; I have chosen you, Lord GOD, to be my refuge, and I shall recount all your works.

74¹ A maskil: for Asaph GOD, why have you cast us off? And is it for ever? Why do you fume with anger at the flock you used to shepherd?

²Remember the assembly of your people, taken long since for your own, redeemed to be your own tribe. Remember Mount Zion, which you made your dwelling-place.

³Restore now what has been altogether ruined, all the destruction that the foe has brought on your sanctuary.

⁴The shouts of your enemies filled your temple; they planted their standards there as tokens of victory.

⁵They brought it crashing down, like woodmen plying their axes in the forest;

⁶they ripped out the carvings, they smashed them with hatchet and pick.

⁷They set fire to your sanctuary, tore down and polluted the abode of your name.

⁸They said to themselves, Let us together oppress them, and they burnt every holy place throughout the land.

⁹We cannot see any sign for us, we have no prophet now; no one amongst us knows how long this is to last.

¹⁰How long, God, will the foe utter his taunts? Will the enemy pour scorn on your name for ever?

¹¹Why do you hold back your hand, why keep your right hand within your bosom?

¹²God, my King from of old, whose saving acts are wrought on earth,

¹³by your power you cleft the sea monster in two and broke the sea serpent's heads in the waters;

¹⁴you crushed the heads of Leviathan and threw him to the sharks for food.

¹⁵You opened channels for spring and torrent; you dried up streams never known to fail.

¹⁶The day is yours, yours also is the night; you ordered the light of moon and sun.

¹⁷You have fixed all the regions of the earth; you created both summer and winter.

¹⁸Remember, LORD, the taunts of the enemy, the scorn a barbarous nation pours on your name.

¹⁹Do not cast to the beasts the soul that confesses you; do not forget for ever the sufferings of your servants.

²⁰Look upon your creatures: they are filled with dark thoughts, and the land is a haunt of violence.

²¹Let not the oppressed be shamed and turned away; may the poor and the downtrodden praise your name.

²²Rise up, God, defend your cause; remember how fools mock you all day long.

²³ Ignore no longer the uproar of your assailants, the ever-rising clamour of those who defy you.

75 ¹ For the leader: set to Destroy
not: a psalm: for Asaph: a song
WE give thanks to you, God, we give you
thanks; your name is brought very near
to us in the account of your wonderful
deeds.

² I shall seize the appointed time and
then judge mankind with equity.

³ When the earth quakes, and all who
live on it, it is I who hold its pillars firm.
[Selah]

⁴ To the boastful I say, Boast no more,
and to the wicked, Do not vaunt your
strength:

⁵ do not vaunt yourself against heaven
or speak arrogantly against the Rock.

⁶ No power from the east or from the
west, no power from the wilderness, can
raise anyone up.

⁷ For God is ruler; he puts one down,
another he raises up.

⁸ For the LORD holds a cup in his hand,
and the wine foams in it, richly spiced;
he pours out this wine, and all the wicked
on earth must drain it to the dregs.

⁹But I shall confess him for ever; I shall sing praises to the God of Jacob.

¹⁰He will break down the strength of the wicked, but the strength of the righteous will be raised high.

76¹For the leader: on stringed instruments: a psalm: for Asaph: a song IN Judah God is known, his name is great in Israel;

²his tent is in Salem, his dwelling in Zion.

³There he has broken the flashing arrows, shield and sword and weapons of war. [Selah]

⁴You are awesome, Lord, more majestic than the everlasting mountains.

⁵The bravest are despoiled, they sleep their last sleep, and the strongest cannot lift a hand.

⁶At your rebuke, God of Jacob, rider and horse lie prostrate.

⁷You are awesome, Lord; when you are angry, who can stand in your presence?

⁸You gave sentence out of heaven; the earth was afraid and kept silence

⁹when you rose in judgement, God, to deliver all the afflicted in the land. [Selah]

¹⁰Edom, for all his fury, will praise you and the remnant left in Hamath will dance in worship.

¹¹Make vows to the LORD your God, and keep them; let the peoples all around him bring their tribute;

¹²for he curbs the spirit of princes, he fills the kings of the earth with awe.

77 ¹For the leader: according to Jeduthun: for Asaph: a psalm I CRIED aloud to God, I cried to God and he heard me.

²In the day of my distress I sought the Lord, and by night I lifted my hands in prayer. My tears ran unceasingly, I refused all comfort.

³When I called God to mind, I groaned; as I pondered, faintness overwhelmed me. [Selah]

⁴My eyelids were tightly closed; I was distraught and could not speak.

⁵My thoughts went back to times long past, I remembered distant years;

⁶all night long I meditated, I pondered and examined my heart.

⁷Will the Lord always reject me and never again show favour?

⁸Has his love now failed utterly? Will his promise never be fulfilled?

⁹Has God forgotten to be gracious? Has he in anger withheld his compassion?
[Selah]

¹⁰Has his right hand grown weak? I said. Has the right hand of the Most High changed?

¹¹I call to mind the deeds of the LORD; I recall your wonderful acts of old;

¹²I reflect on all your works and consider what you have done.

¹³Your way, God, is holy; what god is as great as our God?

¹⁴You are a God who works miracles; you have shown the nations your power.

¹⁵With your strong arm you rescued your people, the descendants of Jacob and Joseph. [Selah]

¹⁶The waters saw you, God, they saw you and writhed in anguish; the ocean was troubled to its depths.

¹⁷The clouds poured down water, the skies thundered, your arrows flashed hither and thither.

¹⁸The sound of your thunder was in the whirlwind, lightning-flashes lit up the world, the earth shook and quaked.

¹⁹Your path was through the sea, your way through mighty waters, and none could mark your footsteps.

²⁰You guided your people like a flock shepherded by Moses and Aaron.

78¹ A maskil: for Asaph MY people, mark my teaching, listen to the words I am about to speak.

²I shall tell you a meaningful story; I shall expound the riddle of things past,

³things that we have heard and know, things our forefathers have recounted to us.

⁴They were not hidden from their descendants, who will repeat them to the next generation: the praiseworthy acts of the LORD and the wonders he has done.

⁵He laid on Jacob a solemn charge and established a rule in Israel, which he commanded our forefathers to teach their descendants,

⁶so that it might be known to a future generation, to children yet to be born, and they in turn would repeat it to their children.

⁷They were charged to put their trust in God, to hold his great acts ever in mind and to keep his commandments,

⁸and not to do as their forefathers did, a disobedient and rebellious generation, a generation with no firm purpose, with hearts not fixed steadfastly on God.

⁹The Ephraimites, bowmen all and marksmen, turned tail in the hour of battle.

¹⁰They had not kept God's covenant; they had refused to live by his law;

¹¹they forgot the things he had done, the wonders he had shown them.

¹²As their fathers witnessed he performed wonderful deeds in Egypt, the region of Zoan:

¹³he divided the sea and brought them through; he heaped up the waters on either side.

¹⁴He led them with a cloud by day, and all night long with a glowing fire.

¹⁵He split the rock in the wilderness and gave them water to drink, abundant as the deep;

¹⁶he brought streams out of the crag and made water run down like torrents.

¹⁷ But they sinned against him yet again: in the desert they defied the Most High,

¹⁸ trying God's patience wilfully by demanding the food they craved.

¹⁹ They spoke against God and said, Can God spread a table in the wilderness?

²⁰ When he struck a rock, water gushed out until the wadis overflowed; But can he give bread as well? they demanded. Can he provide meat for his people?

²¹ When the LORD heard this, he was infuriated: fire raged against Jacob, anger blazed up against Israel,

²² because they put no faith in God, no trust in his power to save.

²³ Then he gave orders to the skies above and threw open heaven's doors;

²⁴ he rained down manna for them to eat and gave them the grain of heaven.

²⁵ So everyone ate the bread of angels; he sent them food in plenty.

²⁶ He let loose the east wind from heaven and drove the south wind by his power;

²⁷ he rained meat down on them like a dust storm, birds flying thick as the sand of the seashore.

²⁸ He made them fall within the camp,
all around their tents.

²⁹ The people ate and were well filled,
for he had given them what they wanted.

³⁰ But still they wanted more, even
while the food was in their mouths.

³¹ Then the anger of God blazed up
against them; he spread death among
their strongest men and laid low the
young men of Israel.

³² In spite of all, they persisted in their
sin and had no faith in his wonders.

³³ So he made their days end in
emptiness and their years in terror.

³⁴ When he brought death among them,
they began to seek him, and look eagerly
for God once more;

³⁵ they remembered that God was their
rock, that God Most High was their
redeemer.

³⁶ But still they sought to beguile him
with words and deceive him with their
tongues;

³⁷ but they were not loyal to him in
their hearts, nor were they faithful to his
covenant.

³⁸ Yet he was merciful, wiping out guilt
and not destroying. Time and again he

restrained his wrath and did not give vent to his anger.

³⁹He remembered that they were but mortal, a breath of air which passes by and does not return.

⁴⁰How often they defied him in the wilderness and grieved him in the desert!

⁴¹Again and again they tried God's patience and provoked the Holy One of Israel.

⁴²They did not keep in mind his power or the day when he delivered them from the enemy,

⁴³how he displayed his signs in Egypt, his portents in the region of Zoan.

⁴⁴He turned their streams into blood, and they could not drink the running water.

⁴⁵He sent swarms of flies which devoured them, and frogs which brought devastation;

⁴⁶he gave their harvest over to locusts, their produce to the grubs;

⁴⁷he devastated their vines with hailstones, their fig trees with torrents of rain;

⁴⁸ he abandoned their cattle to the plague, their animals to attacks of pestilence.

⁴⁹ He unleashed his blazing anger on them, wrath and enmity and rage, launching those messengers of evil.

⁵⁰ He opened a way for his fury; he did not spare them from death, but gave them up to the plague.

⁵¹ He struck down all the firstborn in Egypt, the firstfruits of their manhood in the tents of Ham.

⁵² He led out his own people like sheep and guided them like a flock in the wilderness.

⁵³ He led them in safety and they were not afraid, but their enemies were engulfed by the sea.

⁵⁴ He brought his people to his holy land, to the hill-country which his right hand had won.

⁵⁵ He drove out nations before them, allotting their lands to Israel as a possession and settling the tribes in their dwellings.

⁵⁶ Yet they provoked and defied God Most High, refusing to keep his solemn charges;

⁵⁷ they were renegades, faithless like their fathers, unreliable like a bow gone slack.

⁵⁸ They provoked him to anger with their shrines and roused his jealousy with their carved images.

⁵⁹ God heard and was enraged; he utterly rejected Israel.

⁶⁰ He forsook his dwelling at Shiloh, the tabernacle in which he dwelt among mortals;

⁶¹ he surrendered his strength to captivity, his pride into enemy hands;

⁶² he gave his people to the sword, he was enraged with his own possession.

⁶³ Fire devoured their young men, and their maidens could raise no lament for them;

⁶⁴ their priests fell by the sword, and the widows among them could not weep.

⁶⁵ Then the Lord awoke as a sleeper wakes or a warrior flushed with wine;

⁶⁶ he struck his foes and drove them back, bringing perpetual shame upon them.

⁶⁷ He rejected the clan of Joseph and did not choose the tribe of Ephraim;

⁶⁸but he chose the tribe of Judah,
Mount Zion which he loved.

⁶⁹He built his sanctuary high as the
mountains, founded like the earth to last
for ever.

⁷⁰He chose David to be his servant and
took him from the sheepfolds;

⁷¹he brought him from minding the
ewes to be the shepherd of his people
Jacob and of Israel his possession;

⁷²he shepherded them in singleness
of heart and guided them with a skilful
hand.

79¹ A psalm: for Asaph THE heathen
have invaded your domain, God;
they have defiled your holy temple and
laid Jerusalem in ruins.

²The dead bodies of your servants they
have thrown out as food for the birds;
everyone loyal to you they have made
carrion for wild beasts.

³All round Jerusalem their blood is spilt
like water, and there is no one to give
them burial.

⁴We suffer the taunts of our neighbours,
the gibes and mockery of those about
us.

⁵ How long, LORD, will you be roused to such fury? How long will your indignation blaze like a fire?

⁶ Pour out your wrath on nations that do not acknowledge you, on kingdoms that do not call on you by name,

⁷ for they have devoured Jacob and left his homeland a waste.

⁸ Do not remember against us the guilt of past generations; rather let your compassion come swiftly to meet us, for we have been brought so low.

⁹ Help us, God our saviour, for the honour of your name; for your name's sake rescue us and wipe out our sins.

¹⁰ Why should the nations ask, Where is their God? Before our very eyes may those nations know your vengeance for the slaughter of your servants.

¹¹ Let the groaning of the captives reach your presence and in your great might save those under sentence of death.

¹² Turn back sevenfold on their own heads, Lord, the contempt our neighbours pour on you.

¹³ Then we, your people, the flock which you shepherd, will give you thanks

for ever and repeat your praise to all generations.

80¹ For the leader: set to Lilies: a testimony: for Asaph: a psalm HEAR us, Shepherd of Israel, leading Joseph like a flock. Shine forth, as you sit enthroned on the cherubim.

² Leading Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh, rouse your might and come to our rescue.

³ God, restore us, and make your face shine on us, that we may be saved.

⁴ LORD God of Hosts, how long will you fume at your people's prayer?

⁵ You have made sorrow their daily bread and copious tears their drink.

⁶ You have made us an object of contempt to our neighbours, and a laughing-stock to our enemies.

⁷ God of Hosts, restore us, and make your face shine on us, that we may be saved.

⁸ You brought a vine from Egypt; you drove out nations and planted it;

⁹ you cleared the ground for it, so that it struck root and filled the land.

¹⁰The mountains were covered with its shade, and its branches were like those of mighty cedars.

¹¹It put out boughs all the way to the sea, its shoots as far as the river.

¹²Why have you broken down the vineyard wall so that every passer-by can pluck its fruit?

¹³The wild boar from the thicket gnaws it, and wild creatures of the countryside feed on it.

¹⁴God of Hosts, turn to us, we pray; look down from heaven and see. Tend this vine,

¹⁵this stock which your right hand has planted.

¹⁶May those who set it on fire and cut it down perish before your angry look.

¹⁷Let your hand rest on the one at your right side, the one whom you have made strong for your service.

¹⁸Then we shall not turn back from you; grant us new life, and we shall invoke you by name.

¹⁹LORD God of Hosts, restore us, and make your face shine on us, that we may be saved.

81 ¹For the leader: according to the gittith: for Asaph SING out in praise of God our refuge, acclaim the God of Jacob.

²Raise a melody; beat the drum, play the tuneful lyre and harp.

³At the new moon blow the ram's horn, and blow it at the full moon on the day of our pilgrim-feast.

⁴This is a law for Israel, an ordinance of the God of Jacob,

⁵laid as a solemn charge on Joseph at the exodus from Egypt. I hear an unfamiliar voice:

⁶I lifted the load from his shoulders; his hands let go the builder's basket.

⁷When you cried to me in distress, I rescued you; I answered you from the thunder-cloud. I put you to the test at the waters of Meribah. [Selah]

⁸Listen, my people, while I give you a solemn charge -- O that you would listen to me, Israel:

⁹you shall have no foreign god nor bow down to an alien deity;

¹⁰I am the LORD your God who brought you up from Egypt. Open your mouth, and I shall fill it.

¹¹ But my people did not listen to my voice, Israel would have none of me;

¹² so I let them go with their stubborn hearts to follow their own devices.

¹³ If my people would but listen to me, if Israel would only conform to my ways,

¹⁴ I should soon bring their enemies to their knees and turn my hand against their foes.

¹⁵ Those hostile to the LORD would come cringing to him, and meet with everlasting punishment,

¹⁶ while Israel would be fed with the finest flour and satisfied with honey from the rocks.

82¹ A psalm: for Asaph GOD takes his place in the court of heaven to pronounce judgement among the gods:

² How much longer will you judge unjustly and favour the wicked? [Selah]

³ Uphold the cause of the weak and the fatherless, and see right done to the afflicted and destitute.

⁴ Rescue the weak and the needy, and save them from the clutches of the wicked.

⁵ But these gods know nothing and understand nothing, they walk about in

darkness; meanwhile earth's foundations are all giving way.

⁶This is my sentence: Though you are gods, all sons of the Most High,

⁷yet you shall die as mortals die, and fall as any prince does.

⁸God, arise and judge the earth, for all the nations are yours.

83 ¹A song: a psalm: for Asaph DO NOT keep silent, God; be neither quiet, God, nor still,

²for your enemies raise an uproar, and those who are hostile to you carry their heads high.

³They devise a cunning plot against your people and conspire against those whom you treasure:

⁴Let us wipe them out as a nation, they say; let the name of Israel be remembered no more.

⁵With one mind they have conspired to form a league against you:

⁶the families of Edom, the Ishmaelites, Moabites and Hagar's people,

⁷Gebal, Ammon, and Amalek, Philistia and the citizens of Tyre.

⁸Asshur too is their ally, lending aid to the descendants of Lot. [Selah]

⁹Deal with them as with Sisera, as with Jabin by the wadi of Kishon,

¹⁰who were vanquished and fell, as Midian fell at En-harod, and became manure on the ground.

¹¹Make their princes like Oreb and Zeeb, make all their nobles like Zebah and Zalmunna,

¹²who said, We will seize for ourselves the territory of God's people.

¹³Scatter them, my God, like thistledown, like chaff blown before the wind.

¹⁴As a fire raging through the forest, as flames which blaze across the hills,

¹⁵so pursue them with your tempest, terrify them with your storm-wind.

¹⁶Heap shame on their heads until, LORD, they seek your name.

¹⁷Let them be humiliated, and live in constant terror; let them suffer disgrace and perish.

¹⁸So let it be known that you, whose name is the LORD, are alone Most High over all the earth.

84¹For the leader: according to the gittith: for the Korahites: a psalm

LORD of Hosts, how dearly loved is your dwelling-place!

²I pine and faint with longing for the courts of the LORD's temple; my whole being cries out with joy to the living God.

³Even the sparrow finds a home, and the swallow has her nest where she rears her brood beside your altars, LORD of Hosts, my King and God.

⁴Happy are those who dwell in your house; they never cease to praise you! [Selah]

⁵Happy those whose refuge is in you, whose hearts are set on the pilgrim ways!

⁶As they pass through the waterless valley the LORD fills it with springs, and the early rain covers it with pools.

⁷So they pass on from outer wall to inner, and the God of gods shows himself in Zion

⁸LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer; God of Jacob, listen. [Selah]

⁹God, look upon our shield the king and accept your anointed one with favour.

¹⁰Better one day in your courts than a thousand days in my home; better to linger by the threshold of God's house

than to live in the dwellings of the wicked.

¹¹The LORD God is a sun and shield; grace and honour are his to bestow. The LORD withholds no good thing from those whose life is blameless.

¹²O LORD of Hosts, happy are they who trust in you!

85 ¹For the leader: for the Korahites: a psalm LORD, you have been gracious to your land and turned the tide of Jacob's fortunes.

²You have forgiven the guilt of your people and put all their sins away.
[Selah]

³You have withdrawn all your wrath and turned from your hot anger.

⁴God our saviour, restore us and abandon your displeasure towards us.

⁵Will you be angry with us for ever? Must your wrath last for all generations?

⁶Will you not give us new life that your people may rejoice in you?

⁷LORD, show us your love and grant us your deliverance.

⁸Let me hear the words of God the LORD: he proclaims peace to his people

and loyal servants; let them not go back to foolish ways.

⁹Deliverance is near to those who worship him, so that glory may dwell in our land.

¹⁰Love and faithfulness have come together; justice and peace have embraced.

¹¹Faithfulness appears from earth and justice looks down from heaven.

¹²The LORD will grant prosperity, and our land will yield its harvest.

¹³Justice will go in front of him, and peace on the path he treads.

86 ¹A prayer: for David LISTEN, LORD, and give me an answer, for I am oppressed and poor.

²Guard me, for I am faithful; save your servant who puts his trust in you. You are my God.

³Show me your favour, Lord; I call to you all day long.

⁴Fill your servant's heart with joy, for to you, Lord, I lift up my heart.

⁵Lord, you are kind and forgiving, full of love towards all who cry to you.

⁶LORD, listen to my prayer and hear my pleading.

⁷In the day of my distress I call to you, for you will answer me.

⁸Among the gods not one is like you, Lord; no deeds compare with yours.

⁹All the nations you have made will come to bow before you, Lord, and honour your name,

¹⁰for you are great, and your works are wonderful; you alone are God.

¹¹LORD, teach me your way, that I may walk in your truth. Let me worship your name with undivided heart.

¹²I shall praise you, Lord my God, with all my heart and give honour to your name for ever.

¹³For your love towards me is great, and you have rescued me from the depths of Sheol.

¹⁴Violent men rise to attack me, a band of ruthless men seeks my life; they give no thought to you, my God.

¹⁵But you, Lord, are God, compassionate and gracious, long-suffering, ever faithful and true.

¹⁶Turn to me and show me your favour; grant your servant protection and rescue your slave-girl's son.

¹⁷ Give me a sign of your favour;
let those who hate me see it and be
abashed, for you, LORD, have been my
help and comfort.

87 ¹ For the Korahites: a psalm: a
song THE city the LORD founded
stands on the holy hills.

² He loves the gates of Zion more than
all the dwellings of Jacob.

³ Glorious things are spoken about you,
city of God. [Selah]

⁴ I shall count Rahab and Babylon
among those who acknowledge me; of
Philistines, Tyrians, and Nubians it will
be said, Such a one was born there.

⁵ Of Zion it will be said, This one and
that one were born there. The Most High
himself establishes her.

⁶ The LORD will record in the register
of the peoples: this one was born there.
[Selah]

⁷ Singers and dancers alike say, The
source of all good is in you.

88 ¹ A song: a psalm: for the
Korahites: for the leader: set
to Mahalath le-annoth: a maskil: for
Heman the Ezrahite LORD, my God, by

day I call for help, by night I cry aloud in your presence.

²Let my prayer come before you, hear my loud entreaty;

³for I have had my fill of woes, which have brought me to the brink of Sheol.

⁴I am numbered with those who go down to the abyss; I have become like a man beyond help,

⁵abandoned among the dead, like the slain lying in the grave whom you hold in mind no more, who are cut off from your care.

⁶You have plunged me into the lowest abyss, into the darkest regions of the depths.

⁷Your wrath bears heavily on me, you have brought on me all your fury. [Selah]

⁸You have removed my friends far from me and made me utterly loathsome to them. I am shut in with no escape;

⁹my eyes are dim with anguish. LORD, every day I have called to you and stretched out my hands in prayer.

¹⁰Will it be for the dead you work wonders? Or can the shades rise up and praise you? [Selah]

¹¹ Will they speak in the grave of your love, of your faithfulness in the tomb?

¹² Will your wonders be known in the region of darkness, your victories in the land of oblivion?

¹³ But as for me, LORD, I cry to you, my prayer comes before you in the morning.

¹⁴ LORD, why have you cast me off, why do you hide your face from me?

¹⁵ From childhood I have suffered and been near to death; I have borne your terrors, I am numb.

¹⁶ Your burning fury has swept over me, your onslaughts have overwhelmed me;

¹⁷ all the day long they surge round me like a flood, from every side they close in on me.

¹⁸ You have taken friend and neighbour far from me; darkness is now my only companion.

89¹ A maskil: for Ethan the Ezrahite
I SHALL sing always of the loving deeds of the LORD; throughout every generation I shall proclaim your faithfulness.

² I said: Your love will stand firm for ever; in the heavens you have established your faithfulness.

³I have made a covenant with the one I have chosen, I have sworn on oath to my servant David:

⁴I shall establish your line for ever, I shall make your throne endure for all generations. [Selah]

⁵Let the heavens praise your wonders, LORD; let the assembly of the angels exalt your faithfulness.

⁶In the skies who is there like the LORD, who like the LORD in the court of heaven,

⁷a God dreaded in the council of the angels, great and terrible above all who stand about him?

⁸LORD God of Hosts, who is like you? Your strength and faithfulness, LORD, are all around you.

⁹You rule the raging of the sea, calming the turmoil of its waves.

¹⁰You crushed and slew the monster Rahab and scattered your enemies with your strong arm.

¹¹The heavens are yours, the earth yours also; you founded the world and all that is in it.

¹²You created the north and the south; Tabor and Hermon echo your name.

¹³Strength of arm and valour are yours; your hand is mighty, your right hand lifted high;

¹⁴your throne is founded on righteousness and justice; love and faithfulness are in attendance on you.

¹⁵Happy the people who have learnt to acclaim you, who walk in the light of your countenance, LORD!

¹⁶In your name they rejoice all day long; your righteousness will lift them up.

¹⁷You are yourself the strength in which they glory; through your favour we hold our heads high.

¹⁸To the LORD belongs our shield, to the Holy One of Israel our king.

¹⁹A time came when you spoke in a vision, declaring to your faithful servant: I have granted help to a warrior; I have exalted one chosen from the people.

²⁰I have found David my servant and anointed him with my sacred oil.

²¹My hand will be ready to help him, my arm to give him strength.

²²No enemy will outwit him, no wicked person will oppress him;

²³ I shall crush his adversaries before him and strike down those who are hostile to him.

²⁴ My faithfulness and love will be with him and through my name he will hold his head high.

²⁵ I shall establish his rule over the sea, his dominion over the rivers.

²⁶ He will call to me, You are my father, my God, my rock where I find safety.

²⁷ I shall give him the rank of firstborn, highest among the kings of the earth.

²⁸ I shall maintain my love for him for ever and be faithful in my covenant with him.

²⁹ I shall establish his line for ever and his throne as long as the heavens endure.

³⁰ If his children forsake my law and do not conform to my judgements,

³¹ if they violate my statutes and do not observe my commandments,

³² then I shall punish their disobedience with the rod, their iniquity with lashes.

³³ Yet I shall not deprive him of my love, nor swerve from my faithfulness;

³⁴ I shall not violate my covenant, nor alter what I have promised.

³⁵ I have sworn by my holiness once and for all, I shall not break my word to David:

³⁶ his posterity will continue for ever, his throne before me like the sun;

³⁷ like the moon it will endure for ever, a faithful witness in the sky. [Selah]

³⁸ Yet you have spurned your anointed one, you have rejected him and raged against him,

³⁹ you have renounced the covenant with your servant, defiled his crown and flung it to the ground.

⁴⁰ You have breached all his walls and laid his fortresses in ruins;

⁴¹ every passer-by plunders him, and he suffers his neighbours' taunts.

⁴² You have increased the power of his adversaries and brought joy to all his foes;

⁴³ you have driven back his drawn sword and left him without support in battle.

⁴⁴ You have put an end to his splendour and hurled his throne to the ground;

⁴⁵ you have cut short the days of his youth and covered him as with a cloak of shame. [Selah]

⁴⁶How long, LORD, will you hide yourself from sight? How long will your wrath blaze like a fire?

⁴⁷Remember how fleeting is our life! Have you created all mankind to no purpose?

⁴⁸Who can live and not see death? Who can save himself from the power of Sheol? [Selah]

⁴⁹Where are your former loving deeds, Lord, which you promised faithfully to David?

⁵⁰Remember, Lord, the taunts hurled at your servant, how I have borne in my heart the calumnies of the nations;

⁵¹for your enemies have taunted us, LORD, taunted your anointed king at every step.

⁵²Blessed be the LORD for ever. Amen and Amen.

90¹A prayer: ascribed to Moses, the man of God LORD, you have been our refuge throughout all generations.

²Before the mountains were brought forth or the earth and the world were born, from age to age you are God.

³You turn mortals back to dust, saying, Turn back, you children of mortals,

⁴ for in your sight a thousand years are as the passing of one day or as a watch in the night.

⁵ You cut them off; they are asleep in death. They are like grass which shoots up;

⁶ though in the morning it flourishes and shoots up, by evening it droops and withers.

⁷ We are brought to an end by your anger, terrified by your wrath.

⁸ You set out our iniquities before you, our secret sins in the light of your presence.

⁹ All our days pass under your wrath; our years die away like a murmur.

¹⁰ Seventy years is the span of our life, eighty if our strength holds; at their best they are but toil and sorrow, for they pass quickly and we vanish.

¹¹ Who feels the power of your anger, who feels your wrath like those who fear you?

¹² So make us know how few are our days, that our minds may learn wisdom.

¹³ LORD, how long? Turn and show compassion to your servants.

¹⁴ Satisfy us at daybreak with your love, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days.

¹⁵ Grant us days of gladness for the days you have humbled us, for the years when we have known misfortune.

¹⁶ May your saving acts appear to your servants, and your glory to their children.

¹⁷ May the favour of the Lord our God be on us. Establish for us all that we do, establish it firmly.

91 ¹ HE who lives in the shelter of the Most High, who lodges under the shadow of the Almighty,

² says of the LORD, He is my refuge and fortress, my God in whom I put my trust.

³ He will rescue you from the fowler's snare and from deadly pestilence.

⁴ He will cover you with his wings; you will find refuge beneath his pinions. His truth will be a shield and buckler.

⁵ You will not fear the terrors abroad at night or the arrow that flies by day,

⁶ the pestilence that stalks in darkness or the plague raging at noonday.

⁷ A thousand may fall at your side, ten thousand close at hand, but you it will not touch.

⁸ With your own eyes you will observe this; you will see the retribution on the wicked.

⁹ Surely you are my refuge, LORD. You have made the Most High your dwelling-place;

¹⁰ no disaster will befall you, no calamity touch your home.

¹¹ For he will charge his angels to guard you wherever you go,

¹² to lift you on their hands for fear you strike your foot against a stone.

¹³ You will tread on asp and cobra, you will trample on snake and serpent.

¹⁴ Because his love holds fast to me, I shall deliver him; I shall lift him to safety, for he knows my name.

¹⁵ When he calls to me, I shall answer; I shall be with him in time of trouble; I shall rescue him and bring him to honour.

¹⁶ I shall satisfy him with long life and show him my salvation.

92 ¹ A psalm: a song: for the sabbath day IT is good to give thanks to

the LORD, to sing psalms to your name,
Most High,

² to declare your love in the morning
and your faithfulness every night

³ to the music of a ten-stringed harp, to
the sounding chords of the lyre.

⁴ Your acts, LORD, fill me with
exultation; I shout in triumph at your
mighty deeds.

⁵ How great are your deeds, LORD, how
very deep are your thoughts!

⁶ Anyone who does not grasp this is
a stupid person, and a fool does not
understand it:

⁷ that though the wicked grow like grass
and every evildoer prospers, they will be
finally destroyed,

⁸ while you, LORD, reign for ever.

⁹ Your enemies, LORD, your enemies
will perish; all evildoers will be scattered.

¹⁰ You have raised my head high like
the horns of a wild ox; I am anointed
richly with oil.

¹¹ I look on my enemies' ruin, I hear
the downfall of my wicked foes.

¹² The righteous flourish like a palm
tree, they grow tall as a cedar on
Lebanon;

¹³planted in the house of the LORD,
and flourishing in the courts of our God,

¹⁴they still bear fruit in old age; they
are luxuriant, wide-spreading trees.

¹⁵They declare that the Lord is just: my
rock, in him there is no unrighteousness.

93 ¹THE LORD has become King,
clothed with majesty; the LORD is
robed, girded with might. The earth is
established immovably;

²your throne is established from of old;
from all eternity you are God.

³LORD, the great deep lifts up, the
deep lifts up its voice; the deep lifts up
its crashing waves.

⁴Mightier than the sound of great
waters, mightier than the breakers of
the sea, mighty on high is the LORD.

⁵Your decrees stand firm, and holiness
befits your house, LORD, throughout the
ages.

94 ¹GOD of vengeance, LORD, God
of vengeance, show yourself!

²Rise, judge of the earth; repay the
arrogant as they deserve.

³LORD, how long will the wicked, how
long will the wicked exult?

⁴ Evildoers are all full of bluster,
boasting and bragging.

⁵ They crush your people, LORD, and
oppress your chosen nation;

⁶ they murder the widow and the
stranger and put the fatherless to death.

⁷ They say, The LORD does not see, the
God of Jacob pays no heed.

⁸ Take heed yourselves, most stupid of
people; you fools, when will you be wise?

⁹ Can he who implanted the ear not
hear, he who fashioned the eye not see?

¹⁰ Will he who instructs the nations not
correct them? The teacher of mankind,
has he no knowledge?

¹¹ The LORD knows that the thoughts of
everyone are but a puff of wind.

¹² Happy the one whom you, LORD,
instruct and teach from your law,

¹³ giving him respite from misfortune
until a pit is dug for the wicked.

¹⁴ The LORD will not abandon his people
or forsake his chosen nation;

¹⁵ for justice will again be joined to
right, and all who are upright in heart
will follow it.

¹⁶Who is on my side against the wicked? Who will stand up for me against the evildoers?

¹⁷Had the LORD not been my helper, I should soon have dwelt in the silent grave.

¹⁸If I said that my foot was slipping, your love, LORD, continued to hold me up.

¹⁹When anxious thoughts filled my heart, your comfort brought me joy.

²⁰Will corrupt justice win you as an ally, contriving mischief under cover of law?

²¹They conspire to take the life of the righteous and condemn the innocent to death.

²²But the LORD has been my strong tower, and my God is my rock and refuge.

²³He will repay the wicked for their injustice; the LORD our God will destroy them for their misdeeds.

95 ¹COME! Let us raise a joyful song to the LORD, a shout of triumph to the rock of our salvation.

²Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving and sing psalms of triumph to him.

³For the LORD is a great God, a great King above all gods.

⁴The depths of the earth are in his hands, and the peaks of the mountains belong to him;

⁵the sea is his, for he made it, and the dry land which his hands fashioned.

⁶Enter in! Let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD who made us,

⁷for he is our God, we the people he shepherds, the flock in his care. If only you would listen to him now!

⁸Do not be stubborn, as you were at Meribah, as on that day at Massah in the wilderness,

⁹when your forefathers made trial of me, tested me, though they had seen what I did.

¹⁰For forty years I abhorred that generation and said: They are a people whose hearts are astray, who do not discern my ways.

¹¹Therefore I vowed in my anger: They shall never enter my rest.

96 ¹SING a new song to the LORD.
Sing to the LORD, all the earth.

² Sing to the LORD and bless his name;
day by day proclaim his victory.

³ Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvellous deeds to every people.

⁴ Great is the LORD and most worthy of
praise; he is more to be feared than all
gods.

⁵ For the gods of the nations are idols
every one; but the LORD made the
heavens.

⁶ Majesty and splendour attend him,
might and beauty are in his sanctuary.

⁷ Ascribe to the LORD, you families of
nations, ascribe to the LORD glory and
might;

⁸ ascribe to the LORD the glory due to
his name. Bring an offering and enter his
courts;

⁹ in holy attire worship the LORD;
tremble before him, all the earth.

¹⁰ Declare among the nations, The
LORD is King; the world is established
immovably; he will judge the peoples
with equity.

¹¹ Let the heavens rejoice and the
earth be glad, let the sea resound and
everything in it,

¹²let the fields exult and all that is in them; let all the trees of the forest shout for joy

¹³before the LORD when he comes, when he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world with justice and peoples by his faithfulness.

97 ¹THE LORD has become King; let the earth be glad, let coasts and islands all rejoice.

²Cloud and thick mist enfold him, righteousness and justice are the foundation of his throne.

³Fire goes ahead of him and consumes his enemies all around.

⁴His lightning-flashes light up the world; the earth sees and trembles.

⁵Mountains melt like wax at the LORD's approach, the Lord of all the earth.

⁶The heavens proclaim his righteousness, and all peoples see his glory.

⁷May those who worship images, those who vaunt their idols, may they all be put to shame. Bow down, all you gods, before him!

⁸Zion heard and rejoiced, LORD;
Judah's cities were glad at your
judgements.

⁹For you, LORD, are Most High over all
the earth, far exalted above all gods.

¹⁰The LORD loves those who hate evil;
he keeps his loyal servants safe and
rescues them from the power of the
wicked.

¹¹A harvest of light has arisen for the
righteous, and joy for the upright in
heart.

¹²You that are righteous, rejoice in the
LORD and praise his holy name.

98¹ A psalm SING a new song to the
LORD, for he has done marvellous
deeds; his right hand and his holy arm
have won him victory.

²The LORD has made his victory
known; he has displayed his saving
righteousness to all the nations.

³He has remembered his love for Jacob,
his faithfulness towards the house of
Israel. All the ends of the earth have
seen the victory of our God.

⁴Acclaim the LORD, all the earth; break
into songs of joy, sing psalms.

⁵ Sing psalms in the LORD's honour with the lyre, with the lyre and with resounding music,

⁶ with trumpet and echoing horn acclaim the presence of the LORD our King.

⁷ Let the sea resound and everything in it, the world and those who dwell there.

⁸ Let the rivers clap their hands, let the mountains sing aloud together

⁹ before the LORD; for he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world with justice and the peoples with equity.

99 ¹ THE LORD has become King; let peoples tremble. He is enthroned on the cherubim; let the earth shake.

² The LORD is great in Zion; he is exalted above all the peoples.

³ Let them extol your great and terrible name. Holy is he.

⁴ The King in his might loves justice. You have established equity; you have dealt justly and righteously in Jacob.

⁵ Exalt the LORD our God and bow down at his footstool. Holy is he.

⁶ Moses and Aaron were among his priests, and Samuel was among those who invoked his name; they called to the LORD, and he answered them.

⁷ He spoke to them in a pillar of cloud; they kept his decrees and the statute he gave them.

⁸ O LORD our God, you answered them; you were a God who forgave them, yet you called them to account for their misdeeds.

⁹ Exalt the LORD our God, and bow down towards his holy mountain; for holy is the LORD our God.

100¹ A psalm: for thanksgiving
LET all the earth acclaim the LORD!

² Worship the LORD in gladness; enter his presence with joyful songs.

³ Acknowledge that the LORD is God; he made us and we are his, his own people, the flock which he shepherds.

⁴ Enter his gates with thanksgiving, his courts with praise. Give thanks to him and bless his name;

⁵ for the LORD is good and his love is everlasting, his faithfulness endures to all generations.

101¹ For David: a psalm I SHALL sing of loyalty and justice, as I raise a psalm to you, LORD.

²I shall lead a wise and blameless life; when will you come to me? My conduct among my household will be blameless.

³I shall not set before my eyes any shameful thing; I hate apostasy, and will have none of it.

⁴I shall banish all crooked thoughts, and will have no dealings with evil.

⁵I shall silence those who whisper slanders; I cannot endure the proud and the arrogant.

⁶I shall choose for my companions the faithful in the land; my servants will be those whose lives are blameless.

⁷No treacherous person will live in my household; no liar will establish himself in my presence.

⁸Morning after morning I shall reduce all the wicked to silence, ridding the LORD's city of all evildoers.

102¹ A prayer: for the afflicted one when he is faint and pours out his complaint before the LORD LORD, hear my prayer and let my cry for help come to you.

²Do not hide your face from me when I am in dire straits. Listen to my prayer and, when I call, be swift to reply;

³for my days vanish like smoke, my body is burnt up as in an oven.

⁴I am stricken, withered like grass; I neglect to eat my food.

⁵I groan aloud; I am just skin and bone.

⁶I am like a desert-owl in the wilderness, like an owl that lives among ruins.

⁷I lie awake and have become like a bird solitary on a rooftop.

⁸My enemies taunt me the whole day long; mad with rage, they conspire against me.

⁹I have eaten ashes for bread and mingled tears with my drink.

¹⁰In furious anger you have taken me up only to fling me aside.

¹¹My days decline like shadows lengthening; I wither away like grass.

¹²But you, LORD, are enthroned for ever; your fame will endure to all generations.

¹³You will arise and have mercy on Zion, for it is time to pity her; the appointed time has come.

¹⁴ Her very stones are dear to your servants, and even her dust moves them to pity.

¹⁵ The nations will revere your name, LORD, and all earthly kings your glory,

¹⁶ when the LORD builds Zion again and shows himself in his glory,

¹⁷ when he turns to hear the prayer of the destitute and does not spurn their prayer.

¹⁸ This will be written down for future generations, that people yet unborn may praise the LORD:

¹⁹ The LORD looks down from his sanctuary on high; from heaven he surveys the earth

²⁰ to hear the groaning of the prisoners and set free those under sentence of death.

²¹ So shall the LORD's name be declared in Zion and his praise told in Jerusalem,

²² when peoples are assembled together, and kingdoms, to serve the LORD.

²³ He has broken my strength before my course is run; he has cut short the time allotted me.

²⁴I say, Do not carry me off before half my days are done, for your years extend through all generations.

²⁵Long ago you laid earth's foundations, and the heavens were your handiwork.

²⁶They will pass away, but you remain; like clothes they will all wear out; you will cast them off like a cloak and they will vanish.

²⁷But you are the same and your years will have no end.

²⁸The children of those who serve you will continue, and their descendants will be established in your presence.

103¹ For David BLESS the LORD, my soul; with all my being I bless his holy name.

²Bless the LORD, my soul, and forget none of his benefits.

³He pardons all my wrongdoing and heals all my ills.

⁴He rescues me from death's pit and crowns me with love and compassion.

⁵He satisfies me with all good in the prime of life, and my youth is renewed like an eagle's.

⁶The LORD is righteous in all he does; he brings justice to all who have been wronged.

⁷He revealed his ways to Moses, his mighty deeds to the Israelites.

⁸The LORD is compassionate and gracious, long-suffering and ever faithful;

⁹he will not always accuse or nurse his anger for ever.

¹⁰He has not treated us as our sins deserve or repaid us according to our misdeeds.

¹¹As the heavens tower high above the earth, so outstanding is his love towards those who fear him.

¹²As far as east is from west, so far from us has he put away our offences.

¹³As a father has compassion on his children, so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him;

¹⁴for he knows how we were made, he remembers that we are but dust.

¹⁵The days of a mortal are as grass; he blossoms like a wild flower in the meadow:

¹⁶a wind passes over him, and he is gone, and his place knows him no more.

¹⁷ But the LORD's love is for ever on those who fear him, and his righteousness on their posterity,

¹⁸ on those who hold fast to his covenant, who keep his commandments in mind.

¹⁹ The LORD has established his throne in heaven, his kingly power over the whole world.

²⁰ Bless the LORD, you his angels, mighty in power, who do his bidding and obey his command.

²¹ Bless the LORD, all you his hosts, his ministers who do his will.

²² Bless the LORD, all created things, everywhere in his dominion. Bless the LORD, my soul.

104 ¹ BLESS the LORD, my soul.
LORD my God, you are very great, clothed in majesty and splendour,
² and enfolded in a robe of light. You have spread out the heavens like a tent,
³ and laid the beams of your dwelling on the waters; you take the clouds for your chariot, riding on the wings of the wind;
⁴ you make the winds your messengers, flames of fire your servants;

⁵you fixed the earth on its foundation so that it will never be moved.

⁶The deep covered it like a cloak, and the waters stood above the mountains.

⁷At your rebuke they fled, at the sound of your thunder they rushed away,

⁸flowing over the hills, pouring down into the valleys to the place appointed for them.

⁹You fixed a boundary which they were not to pass; they were never to cover the earth again.

¹⁰You make springs break out in the wadis, so that water from them flows between the hills.

¹¹The wild beasts all drink from them, the wild donkeys quench their thirst;

¹²the birds of the air nest on their banks and sing among the foliage.

¹³From your dwelling you water the hills; the earth is enriched by your provision.

¹⁴You make grass grow for the cattle and plants for the use of mortals, producing grain from the earth, food to sustain their strength, wine to gladden the hearts of the people, and oil to make their faces shine.

¹⁵ (104: 14)

¹⁶ The trees of the LORD flourish, the cedars of Lebanon which he planted;

¹⁷ birds build their nests in them, the stork makes her home in their tops.

¹⁸ High hills are the haunt of the mountain goat, and crags a cover for the rock-badger.

¹⁹ He created the moon to mark the seasons, and makes the sun know when to set.

²⁰ You bring darkness, and it is night, when all the beasts of the forest go prowling;

²¹ the young lions roar for prey, seeking their food from God;

²² when the sun rises, they slink away and seek rest in their lairs.

²³ Man goes out to his work and his labours until evening.

²⁴ Countless are the things you have made, LORD; by your wisdom you have made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.

²⁵ Here is the vast immeasurable sea, in which move crawling things beyond number, living creatures great and small.

²⁶Here ships sail to and fro; here is Leviathan which you have made to sport there.

²⁷All of them look to you in hope to give them their food when it is due.

²⁸What you give them they gather up; when you open your hand, they eat their fill of good things.

²⁹When you hide your face, they are dismayed. When you take away their spirit, they die and return to the dust from which they came.

³⁰When you send forth your spirit, they are created, and you give new life to the earth.

³¹May the glory of the LORD stand for ever, and may the LORD rejoice in his works!

³²When he looks at the earth, it quakes; when he touches the mountains, they pour forth smoke.

³³As long as I live I shall sing to the LORD; I shall sing psalms to my God all my life long.

³⁴May my meditation be acceptable to him; I shall delight in the LORD.

³⁵May sinners be banished from the earth and may the wicked be no more!

Bless the LORD, my soul. Praise the LORD.

105 ¹GIVE thanks to the LORD, invoke him by name; make known his deeds among the peoples.

²Pay him honour with song and psalm and tell of all his marvellous deeds.

³Exult in his hallowed name; let those who seek the LORD be joyful in heart.

⁴Look to the LORD and be strong; at all times seek his presence.

⁵You offspring of Abraham his servant, the children of Jacob, his chosen ones, remember the marvels he has wrought, his portents, and the judgements he has given.

⁶(105: 5)

⁷He is the LORD our God; his judgements cover the whole world.

⁸He is ever mindful of his covenant, the promise he ordained for a thousand generations,

⁹the covenant made with Abraham, his oath given to Isaac,

¹⁰and confirmed as a statute for Jacob, as an everlasting covenant for Israel:

¹¹I shall give you the land of Canaan, he said, as your allotted holding.

¹²A small company it was, few in number, strangers in that land,

¹³roaming from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another;

¹⁴but he let no one oppress them; on their account he rebuked kings:

¹⁵Do not touch my anointed servants, he said; do no harm to my prophets.

¹⁶He called down famine on the land and cut off their daily bread.

¹⁷But he had sent on a man before them, Joseph, who was sold into slavery,

¹⁸where they thrust his feet into fetters and clamped an iron collar round his neck.

¹⁹He was tested by the LORD's command until what he foretold took place.

²⁰The king sent and had him released, the ruler of peoples set him free

²¹and made him master of his household, ruler over all his possessions,

²²to correct his officers as he saw fit and teach his counsellors wisdom.

²³Then Israel too went down into Egypt, Jacob came to live in the land of Ham.

²⁴There God made his people very fruitful, too numerous for their enemies,

²⁵ whose hearts he turned to hatred of his people, to double-dealing with his servants.

²⁶ He sent his servant Moses and Aaron whom he had chosen.

²⁷ They were appointed to announce his signs, his portents in the land of Ham.

²⁸ He sent darkness, and all was dark, but still the Egyptians resisted his commands.

²⁹ He turned all the water to blood, so causing the fish to die.

³⁰ Their land swarmed with frogs, even in the royal apartments.

³¹ At his command there came swarms of flies and maggots throughout their land.

³² He sent showers of hail, and lightning flashing over their country.

³³ He blasted their vines and their fig trees and shattered the trees throughout their territory.

³⁴ At his command the locusts came, hoppers past all numbering;

³⁵ they devoured every green thing in the land, eating up all the produce of the soil.

³⁶ Then he struck down all the firstborn in the land, the firstfruits of all their manhood.

³⁷ He led his people out, laden with silver and gold, and among all their tribes not one person fell.

³⁸ The Egyptians were glad to see them go, for fear of Israel had seized them.

³⁹ He spread a cloud as a screen for them, and fire to light up the night.

⁴⁰ When they asked, he sent them quails; he gave them bread of heaven in plenty.

⁴¹ He opened a rock and water gushed out, flowing in a stream through a parched land;

⁴² for he was mindful of his solemn promise to his servant Abraham.

⁴³ He led out his people rejoicing, his chosen ones in triumph.

⁴⁴ He gave them the lands of heathen nations; they took possession where others had toiled,

⁴⁵ so that they might keep his statutes and obey his laws. Praise the LORD.

106 ¹ PRAISE the LORD. It is good to give thanks to the LORD, for his love endures for ever.

²Who can tell of the LORD's mighty acts and make all his praises heard?

³Happy are they who act justly, who do what is right at all times!

⁴Remember me, LORD, when you show favour to your people; look on me when you save them,

⁵that I may see the prosperity of your chosen ones, that I may rejoice in your nation's joy and exult with your own people.

⁶Like our forefathers we have sinned, we have gone astray and done wrong.

⁷Our forefathers in Egypt disregarded your marvels; they were not mindful of your many acts of love, and on their journey they rebelled by the Red Sea.

⁸Yet the LORD delivered them for his name's sake and so made known his mighty power.

⁹He rebuked the Red Sea, and it dried up; he led his people through the deep as through a desert.

¹⁰He delivered them from those who hated them, and rescued them from the enemy's hand.

¹¹The waters closed over their adversaries; not one of them survived.

¹²Then they believed what he had said and sang his praises.

¹³But they soon forgot all he had done and would not wait to hear his counsel;

¹⁴their greed was insatiable in the wilderness, there in the desert they tried God's patience.

¹⁵He gave them what they asked, but followed it with a wasting sickness.

¹⁶In the camp they were envious of Moses, and of Aaron, who was consecrated to the LORD.

¹⁷The earth opened and swallowed Dathan; it closed over the company of Abiram.

¹⁸Fire raged through their company; the wicked perished in flames.

¹⁹At Horeb they made a calf and worshipped this image;

²⁰they exchanged their God for the image of a bull that feeds on grass.

²¹They forgot God their deliverer, who had done great things in Egypt,

²²such marvels in the land of Ham, awesome deeds at the Red Sea.

²³So he purposed to destroy them, but Moses, the man he had chosen, stood

before him in the breach to prevent his wrath from destroying them.

²⁴Disbelieving his promise, they rejected the pleasant land.

²⁵They muttered treason in their tents, and would not obey the LORD.

²⁶So with hand uplifted against them he made an oath to strike them down in the wilderness,

²⁷to scatter their descendants among the nations and disperse them throughout the lands.

²⁸They joined in worshipping the Baal of Peor and ate meat sacrificed to lifeless gods.

²⁹Their deeds provoked the LORD to anger, and plague broke out amongst them;

³⁰but Phinehas stood up and intervened, and the plague was checked.

³¹This was counted to him as righteousness throughout the generations ever afterwards.

³²They roused the LORD's anger at the waters of Meribah, and it went ill with Moses because of them;

³³for when they had embittered his spirit he spoke rashly.

³⁴ They did not destroy the nations as the LORD had commanded them to do,

³⁵ but they associated with the people and learnt their ways;

³⁶ they worshipped their idols and were ensnared by them.

³⁷ Their sons and their daughters they sacrificed to foreign deities;

³⁸ they shed innocent blood, the blood of sons and daughters offered to the gods of Canaan, and the land was polluted with blood.

³⁹ Thus they defiled themselves by their actions and were faithless in their conduct.

⁴⁰ Then the LORD became angry with his people and, though they were his own chosen nation, he loathed them;

⁴¹ he handed them over to the nations, and they were ruled by their foes;

⁴² their enemies oppressed them and kept them in subjection to their power.

⁴³ Time and again he came to their rescue, but they were rebellious in their designs, and so were brought low by their wrongdoing.

⁴⁴ Yet when he heard them wail and cry aloud he looked with pity on their distress;

⁴⁵ he called to mind his covenant with them and, in his boundless love, relented;

⁴⁶ he roused compassion for them in the hearts of all their captors.

⁴⁷ Deliver us, LORD our God, and gather us in from among the nations, that we may give thanks to your holy name and make your praise our pride.

⁴⁸ Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, from everlasting to everlasting. Let all the people say Amen. Praise the LORD.

107 ¹ IT is good to give thanks to the LORD, for his love endures for ever.

² So let them say who were redeemed by the Lord, redeemed by him from the power of the enemy

³ and gathered out of the lands, from east and west, from north and south.

⁴ Some lost their way in desert waste lands; they found no path to a city to live in.

⁵They were hungry and thirsty, and their spirit was faint within them.

⁶So they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he rescued them from their distress;

⁷he led them by a straight and easy path until they came to a city where they might live.

⁸Let them give thanks to the LORD for his love and for the marvellous things he has done for mankind;

⁹he has satisfied the thirsty and filled the hungry with good things.

¹⁰Some sat in the dark, in deepest darkness, prisoners bound fast in iron fetters,

¹¹because they had defied God's commands and flouted the purpose of the Most High.

¹²Their spirit was subdued by hard labour; they stumbled and fell with none to help.

¹³So they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress;

¹⁴he brought them out of the dark, the deepest darkness, and burst their chains.

¹⁵Let them give thanks to the LORD for his love and for the marvellous things he has done for mankind;

¹⁶he has shattered bronze gates, and cut through iron bars.

¹⁷Some were fools, who took to rebellious ways, and for their transgression suffered punishment.

¹⁸Revulsion seized them at the sight of food; they were at the very gates of death.

¹⁹So they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress;

²⁰he sent his word to heal them and snatch them out of the pit of death.

²¹Let them give thanks to the LORD for his love and for the marvellous things he has done for mankind.

²²Let them offer sacrifices of thanksgiving and tell of his deeds with joyful shouts.

²³Others there are who go to sea in ships, plying their trade on the wide ocean.

²⁴These have seen what the LORD has done, his marvellous actions in the deep.

²⁵ At his command the storm-wind rose and lifted the waves high.

²⁶ The seamen were carried up to the skies, then plunged down into the depths; they were tossed to and fro in peril,

²⁷ they reeled and staggered like drunkards, and all their skill was of no avail.

²⁸ So they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he brought them out of their distress.

²⁹ The storm sank to a murmur and the waves of the sea were stilled.

³⁰ They rejoiced because it was calm, and he guided them to the harbour they were making for.

³¹ Let them give thanks to the LORD for his enduring love and for the marvellous things he has done for mankind.

³² Let them exalt him in the assembly of the people and praise him in the elders' council.

³³ He turns rivers into desert, springs of water into parched ground;

³⁴ he turns fruitful land into salt-marsh, because the people who live there are so wicked.

³⁵ Desert he changes to standing pools,
arid land into springs of water.

³⁶ There he gives the hungry a home
and they build themselves a town to live
in;

³⁷ they sow fields and plant vineyards
which yield a good harvest.

³⁸ He blesses them and their numbers
grow, and he does not let their herds
decrease.

³⁹ Tyrants lose their strength and are
brought low in the grip of misfortune and
sorrow;

⁴⁰ he brings princes into contempt and
leaves them to wander in a trackless
waste.

⁴¹ But the poor man he lifts clear of his
troubles and makes families increase like
flocks of sheep.

⁴² The upright see it and are glad, while
evildoers are reduced to silence.

⁴³ Whoever is wise, let him lay these
things to heart, and ponder the loving
deeds of the LORD.

108¹ A song: a psalm: for David
MY heart is steadfast, God, my
heart is steadfast. I shall sing and raise
a psalm. Awake, my soul.

²Awake, harp and lyre; I shall awake at dawn.

³I shall praise you among the peoples, LORD, among the nations I shall raise a psalm to you;

⁴for your unfailing love is high above the heavens; your faithfulness reaches to the skies.

⁵God, be exalted above the heavens; let your glory be over all the earth.

⁶Save with your right hand and respond, that those dear to you may be delivered.

⁷God has spoken from his sanctuary: I will go up now and divide Shechem; I will measure off the valley of Succoth;

⁸Gilead and Manasseh are mine; Ephraim is my helmet, Judah my sceptre;

⁹Moab is my washbowl, on Edom I fling my sandals; I shout my war cry against Philistia.

¹⁰Who will bring me to the impregnable city? Who will guide me to Edom?

¹¹Have you rejected us, God, and do you no longer lead our armies to battle?

¹²Grant us help against the foe;
for in vain we look to any mortal for
deliverance.

¹³With God's help we shall fight
valiantly, and God himself will tread our
foes under foot.

109¹For the leader: for David: a
psalm GOD to whom I offer
praise, do not be silent,

²for the wicked have heaped calumnies
upon me. They have lied to my face

³and encompassed me on every side
with words of hatred. They have assailed
me without cause;

⁴in return for my love they denounced
me, though I have done nothing wrong.

⁵They have repaid me evil for good,
hatred in return for my love.

⁶They say, Put up some rogue to
denounce him, an accuser to confront
him.

⁷But when judgement is given
that rogue will be exposed and his
wrongdoing accounted a sin.

⁸May his days be few; may his hoarded
wealth be seized by another!

⁹May his children be fatherless, his wife
a widow!

¹⁰ May his children be vagrants and beggars, driven from their ruined homes!

¹¹ May the creditor distraint on all his goods and strangers run off with his earnings!

¹² May none remain loyal to him, and none pity his fatherless children!

¹³ May his line be doomed to extinction, may his name be wiped out within a generation!

¹⁴ May the sins of his forefathers be remembered and his own mother's wickedness never be wiped out!

¹⁵ May they remain on record before the LORD, but may he cut off all memory of them from the earth!

¹⁶ For that man never set himself to be loyal to his friend, but persecuted the downtrodden and the poor and hounded the broken-hearted to their death.

¹⁷ He loved to curse: may the curse recoil on him! He took no pleasure in blessing: may no blessing be his!

¹⁸ He clothed himself in cursing like a garment: may it seep into his body like water and into his bones like oil!

¹⁹ May it wrap him round like the clothes he puts on, like the belt which he wears every day!

²⁰ May the LORD so repay my accusers, those who speak evil against me!

²¹ You, LORD my God, deal with me as befits your honour; in the goodness of your love deliver me,

²² for I am downtrodden and poor, and my heart within me is distraught.

²³ I fade like a passing shadow, I am shaken off like a locust.

²⁴ My knees are weak for want of food and my flesh wastes away, so meagre is my fare.

²⁵ I have become the object of their taunts; when they see me they wag their heads.

²⁶ Help me, LORD my God; save me by your love,

²⁷ that all may know this is your doing and you alone, LORD, have done it.

²⁸ They may curse, but you will bless; let my opponents be put to shame, but may your servant rejoice!

²⁹ May my accusers be clothed with dishonour, wrapped in their shame as in a cloak!

³⁰I shall lift up my voice to extol the LORD, before a great company I shall praise him.

³¹For he stands at the right hand of the poor to save them from those who bring them to trial.

110¹For David: a psalm THIS is the LORD's oracle to my lord: Sit at my right hand, and I shall make your enemies your footstool.

²The LORD extends the sway of your powerful sceptre, saying, From Zion reign over your enemies.

³You gain the homage of your people on the day of your power. Arrayed in holy garments, a child of the dawn, you have the dew of your youth.

⁴The LORD has sworn an oath and will not change his mind: You are a priest for ever, a Melchizedek in my service.

⁵The Lord is at your right hand; he crushes kings on the day of his wrath.

⁶In glorious majesty he judges the nations, shattering heads throughout the wide earth.

⁷He will drink from the stream on his way; therefore he will hold his head high.

111 ¹PRAISE the LORD. With all my heart I shall give thanks to the LORD in the congregation, in the assembly of the upright.

²Great are the works of the LORD, pondered over by all who delight in them.

³His deeds are full of majesty and splendour; his righteousness stands sure for ever.

⁴He has won renown for his marvellous deeds; the LORD is gracious and compassionate.

⁵He provides food for those who fear him; he keeps his covenant always in mind.

⁶He showed his people how powerfully he worked by bestowing on them the lands of the nations.

⁷His works are truth and justice; all his precepts are trustworthy,

⁸established to endure for ever, enacted in faithfulness and truth.

⁹He sent and redeemed his people; he decreed that his covenant should endure for ever. Holy and awe-inspiring is his name.

¹⁰The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and they who live by it grow in understanding. Praise will be his for ever.

112¹ PRAISE the LORD. Happy is he who fears the LORD, who finds deep delight in obeying his commandments.

²His descendants will be powerful in the land, a blessed generation of upright people.

³His house will be full of riches and wealth; his righteousness will stand sure for ever.

⁴A beacon in darkness for the upright, he is gracious, compassionate, good.

⁵It is well with one who is gracious in his lending, ordering his affairs with equity.

⁶Nothing will ever shake him; his goodness will be remembered for all time.

⁷News of misfortune will have no terrors for him, because his heart is steadfast, trusting in the LORD.

⁸His confidence is well established, he has no fears, and in the end he will see the downfall of his enemies.

⁹He lavishes his gifts on the needy; his righteousness will stand sure for ever; in honour he carries his head high.

¹⁰The wicked will see it with rising anger and grind their teeth in despair; the hopes of the wicked will come to nothing.

113¹PRAISE the LORD. Praise the LORD, you that are his servants, praise the name of the LORD.

²Blessed be the name of the LORD now and evermore.

³From the rising of the sun to its setting may the LORD's name be praised!

⁴High is the LORD above all nations, high his glory above the heavens.

⁵There is none like the LORD our God in heaven or on earth, who sets his throne so high but deigns to look down so low;

⁶(113: 5)

⁷who lifts the weak out of the dust and raises the poor from the rubbish heap,

⁸giving them a place among princes, among the princes of his people;

⁹who makes the woman in a childless house a happy mother of children.

114 ¹PRAISE the LORD. When Israel came out of Egypt, the house of Jacob from a barbaric people,
²Judah became God's sanctuary, Israel his domain.

³The sea fled at the sight; Jordan turned back.

⁴The mountains skipped like rams, the hills like lambs of the flock.

⁵What made you, the sea, flee away? Jordan, what made you turn back?

⁶Why did you skip like rams, you mountains, and like lambs, you hills?

⁷Earth, dance at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob,

⁸who turned the rock into a pool of water, the flinty cliff into a welling spring.

115 ¹NOT to us, LORD, not to us, but to your name give glory for your love, for your faithfulness!

²Why should the nations ask, Where, then, is their God?

³Our God is high in heaven; he does whatever he wills.

⁴Their idols are silver and gold, made by human hands.

⁵They have mouths, but cannot speak,
eyes, but cannot see;

⁶they have ears, but cannot hear,
nostrils, but cannot smell;

⁷with their hands they cannot feel,
with their feet they cannot walk, and no
sound comes from their throats.

⁸Their makers become like them, and
so do all who put their trust in them.

⁹But Israel trusts in the LORD: he is
their help and their shield.

¹⁰The house of Aaron trusts in the
LORD: he is their help and their shield.

¹¹Those who fear the LORD trust in the
LORD: he is their help and their shield.

¹²The LORD who has been mindful of
us will bless us, he will bless the house of
Israel, he will bless the house of Aaron.

¹³The LORD will bless those who fear
him, both high and low.

¹⁴May the LORD give you increase,
both you and your children.

¹⁵You are blessed by the LORD, the
maker of heaven and earth.

¹⁶The heavens belong to the LORD, but
the earth he has given to mankind.

¹⁷It is not the dead who praise the LORD, not those who go down to the silent grave;

¹⁸but we, the living, shall bless the LORD now and for evermore. Praise the LORD.

116¹I LOVE the LORD, for he has heard me and listened to my prayer;

²he has given me a hearing and all my days I shall cry to him.

³The cords of death bound me, Sheol held me in its grip. Anguish and torment held me fast;

⁴then I invoked the LORD by name, LORD, deliver me, I pray.

⁵Gracious is the LORD and righteous; our God is full of compassion.

⁶The LORD preserves the simple-hearted; when I was brought low, he saved me.

⁷My heart, be at peace once more, for the LORD has granted you full deliverance.

⁸You have rescued me from death, my eyes from weeping, my feet from stumbling.

⁹I shall walk in the presence of the LORD in the land of the living.

¹⁰I was sure I should be swept away; my distress was bitter.

¹¹In my alarm I cried, How faithless are all my fellow-creatures!

¹²How can I repay the LORD for all his benefits to me?

¹³I shall lift up the cup of salvation and call on the LORD by name.

¹⁴I shall pay my vows to the LORD in the presence of all his people.

¹⁵A precious thing in the LORD's sight is the death of those who are loyal to him.

¹⁶Indeed, LORD, I am your slave, I am your slave, your slave-girl's son; you have loosed my bonds.

¹⁷To you I shall bring a thank-offering and call on the LORD by name.

¹⁸I shall pay my vows to the LORD in the presence of all his people,

¹⁹in the courts of the LORD's house, in the midst of you, Jerusalem. Praise the LORD.

117 ¹PRAISE the LORD, all nations,
²extol him, all you peoples;
for his love protecting us is strong, the

LORD's faithfulness is everlasting. Praise the LORD.

118¹ IT is good to give thanks to the LORD, for his love endures for ever.

² Let Israel say: His love endures for ever.

³ Let the house of Aaron say: His love endures for ever.

⁴ Let those who fear the LORD say: His love endures for ever.

⁵ When in distress I called to the LORD, he answered me and gave me relief.

⁶ With the LORD on my side, I am not afraid; what can mortals do to me?

⁷ With the LORD on my side, as my helper, I shall see the downfall of my enemies.

⁸ It is better to seek refuge in the LORD than to trust in any mortal,

⁹ better to seek refuge in the LORD than to trust in princes.

¹⁰ The nations all surrounded me, but in the LORD's name I drove them off.

¹¹ They surrounded me on every side, but in the LORD's name I drove them off.

¹² They swarmed round me like bees; they attacked me, as fire attacks

brushwood, but in the LORD's name I drove them off.

¹³They thrust hard against me so that I nearly fell, but the LORD came to my help.

¹⁴The LORD is my refuge and defence, and he has become my deliverer.

¹⁵Listen! Shouts of triumph in the camp of the victors: With his right hand the LORD does mighty deeds;

¹⁶the right hand of the LORD raises up, with his right hand the LORD does mighty deeds.

¹⁷I shall not die; I shall live to proclaim what the LORD has done.

¹⁸The LORD did indeed chasten me, but he did not surrender me to death.

¹⁹Open to me the gates of victory; I shall go in by them and praise the LORD.

²⁰This is the gate of the LORD; the victors will enter through it.

²¹I shall praise you, for you have answered me and have become my deliverer.

²²The stone which the builders rejected has become the main corner-stone.

²³This is the LORD's doing; it is wonderful in our eyes.

²⁴This is the day on which the LORD has acted, a day for us to exult and rejoice.

²⁵LORD, deliver us, we pray; LORD, grant us prosperity.

²⁶Blessed is he who enters in the name of the LORD; we bless you from the house of the LORD.

²⁷The LORD is God; he has given us light. Link the pilgrims with cords as far as the horns of the altar.

²⁸You are my God and I shall praise you; my God, I shall exalt you.

²⁹It is good to give thanks to the LORD, for his love endures for ever.

119¹ HAPPY are they whose way of life is blameless, who conform to the law of the LORD.

²Happy are they who obey his instruction, who set their heart on finding him;

³who have done no wrong, but have lived according to his will.

⁴You, Lord, have laid down your precepts that are to be kept faithfully.

⁵If only I might hold a steady course, keeping your statutes!

⁶Then, if I fixed my eyes on all your commandments, I should never be put to shame.

⁷I shall praise you in sincerity of heart as I learn your just decrees.

⁸I shall observe your statutes; do not leave me forsaken!

⁹How may a young man lead a clean life? By holding to your words.

¹⁰With all my heart I seek you; do not let me stray from your commandments.

¹¹I treasure your promise in my heart, for fear that I might sin against you.

¹²Blessed are you, LORD; teach me your statutes.

¹³I say them over, one by one, all the decrees you have announced.

¹⁴I have rejoiced in the path of your instruction as one rejoices over wealth of every kind.

¹⁵I shall meditate on your precepts and keep your paths before my eyes.

¹⁶In your statutes I find continual delight; I shall not forget your word.

¹⁷Grant this to me, your servant: let me live so that I may keep your word.

¹⁸Take the veil from my eyes, that I may see the wonders to be found in your law.

¹⁹Though I am but a passing stranger here on earth, do not hide your commandments from me.

²⁰My heart pines continually with longing for your decrees.

²¹The proud have felt your censure; cursed are those who turn from your commandments.

²²Set me free from scorn and insult, for I have obeyed your instruction.

²³Rulers sit scheming together against me; but I, your servant, shall study your statutes.

²⁴Your instruction is my continual delight; I turn to it for counsel.

²⁵I lie prone in the dust; revive me according to your word.

²⁶I tell you of my plight and you answer me; teach me your statutes.

²⁷Show me the way set out in your precepts, and I shall meditate on your wonders.

²⁸Because of misery I cannot rest; renew my strength in accordance with your promise.

²⁹ Keep falsehood far from me and grant me the grace of living by your law.

³⁰ I have chosen the path of faithfulness; I have set your decrees before me.

³¹ I hold fast to your instruction; LORD, do not let me be put to shame.

³² I shall run the course made known in your commandments, for you set free my heart.

³³ Teach me, LORD, the way of your statutes, and in keeping them I shall find my reward.

³⁴ Give me the insight to obey your law and to keep it wholeheartedly.

³⁵ Make me walk in the path of your commandments, for that is my desire.

³⁶ Dispose my heart towards your instruction, not towards love of gain;

³⁷ turn my eyes away from all that is futile; grant me life by your word.

³⁸ Fulfil your promise for your servant, the promise made to those who fear you.

³⁹ Turn away the taunts which I dread, for your decrees are good.

⁴⁰ How I long for your precepts! By your righteousness grant me life.

⁴¹ Let your love descend on me, LORD, your deliverance as you have promised;

⁴² then I shall have an answer to the taunts aimed at me, because I trust in your word.

⁴³ Do not rob me of my power to speak the truth, for I put my hope in your decrees.

⁴⁴ I shall heed your law continually, for ever and ever;

⁴⁵ I walk in freedom wherever I will, because I have studied your precepts.

⁴⁶ I shall speak of your instruction before kings and shall not be ashamed;

⁴⁷ in your commandments I find continuing delight; I love them with all my heart.

⁴⁸ I am devoted to your commandments; I love them, and meditate on your statutes.

⁴⁹ Keep in mind the word spoken to me, your servant, on which you have taught me to fix my hope.

⁵⁰ In my time of trouble my consolation is this: your promise has given me life.

⁵¹ Proud people treat me with insolent scorn, but I do not swerve from your commandments.

⁵² I have cherished your decrees from of old, and in them I find comfort, LORD.

⁵³ Fury seizes me as I think of the wicked who forsake your law.

⁵⁴ Your statutes are the theme of my song throughout my earthly life.

⁵⁵ In the night I remember your name, LORD, and dwell upon your instruction.

⁵⁶ This has been my lot, for I have kept your precepts.

⁵⁷ You are my portion, LORD; I have promised to keep your words.

⁵⁸ With all my heart I have tried to please you; fulfil your promise and be gracious to me.

⁵⁹ I have considered my way of life and turned back to your instruction;

⁶⁰ I have never delayed, but always made haste to keep your commandments.

⁶¹ The wicked in crowds close round me, but I do not forget your law.

⁶² At midnight I rise to give you thanks for the justice of your decrees.

⁶³ I keep company with all who fear you, with all who follow your precepts.

⁶⁴ LORD, the earth is filled with your unfailing love; teach me your statutes.

⁶⁵ You have dealt kindly with your servant, fulfilling your word, LORD.

⁶⁶Give me insight, give me knowledge, for I put my trust in your commandments.

⁶⁷Before I was chastened I went astray, but now I pay heed to your promise.

⁶⁸You are good, and you do what is good; teach me your statutes.

⁶⁹I follow your precepts wholeheartedly, though those who are proud blacken my name with lies;

⁷⁰they are arrogant and unfeeling, but I find my delight in your instruction.

⁷¹How good for me to have been chastened, so that I might be schooled in your statutes!

⁷²The law you have ordained means more to me than a fortune in gold and silver.

⁷³Your hands made me and formed me; give me insight that I may learn your commandments.

⁷⁴May all who fear you see me and be glad, because I put my hope in your word.

⁷⁵I know, LORD, that your decrees are just and even in chastening you keep faith with me.

⁷⁶Let your love comfort me, as you have promised me, your servant.

⁷⁷Extend your compassion to me, that I may live, for your law is my delight.

⁷⁸Put the proud to shame, for they wrong me with lies; but I shall meditate on your precepts.

⁷⁹Let those who fear you turn to me, that they may understand your instruction.

⁸⁰Let me give my whole heart to your statutes, so that I am not put to shame.

⁸¹I long with all my heart for your deliverance; I have put my hope in your word.

⁸²My sight grows dim with looking for your promise and I cry, When will you comfort me?

⁸³Though I shrivel like a wineskin in the smoke, I do not forget your statutes.

⁸⁴How long must I, your servant, wait? When will you execute judgement on my persecutors?

⁸⁵The proud who flout your law spread tales about me.

⁸⁶All your commandments stand sure; but the proud hound me with falsehood. Come to my help!

⁸⁷ They had almost swept me from the earth, but I did not forsake your precepts.

⁸⁸ In your love grant me life, that I may follow your instruction.

⁸⁹ Your word is everlasting, LORD; it is firmly fixed in heaven.

⁹⁰ Your faithfulness endures for all generations, and the earth which you have established stands firm.

⁹¹ Even to this day your decrees stand fast, for all things serve you.

⁹² Had your law not been my delight, I should have perished in my distress;

⁹³ never shall I forget your precepts, for through them you have given me life.

⁹⁴ I am yours; save me, for I have sought your precepts.

⁹⁵ The wicked lie in wait to destroy me; but I shall ponder your instruction.

⁹⁶ I see that all things have an end, but your commandment has no limit.

⁹⁷ How I love your law! It is my study all day long.

⁹⁸ Your commandment makes me wiser than my enemies, for it is my possession for ever.

⁹⁹I have more insight than all my teachers, for your instruction is my study;

¹⁰⁰I have more wisdom than those who are old, because I have kept your precepts.

¹⁰¹I do not set foot on any evil path in my obedience to your word;

¹⁰²I do not swerve from your decrees, for you have been my teacher.

¹⁰³How sweet is your promise to my palate, sweeter on my tongue than honey!

¹⁰⁴From your precepts I learn wisdom; therefore I hate every path of falsehood.

¹⁰⁵Your word is a lamp to my feet, a light on my path;

¹⁰⁶I have bound myself by oath and solemn vow to keep your just decrees.

¹⁰⁷I am cruelly afflicted; LORD, revive me as you have promised.

¹⁰⁸Accept, LORD, the willing tribute of my lips, and teach me your decrees.

¹⁰⁹Every day I take my life in my hands, yet I never forget your law.

¹¹⁰The wicked have set a trap for me, but I do not stray from your precepts.

¹¹¹Your instruction is my everlasting heritage; it is the joy of my heart.

¹¹²I am resolved to fulfil your statutes; they are a reward that never fails.

¹¹³I hate those who are not single-minded, but I love your law.

¹¹⁴You are my hiding-place and my shield; in your word I put my hope.

¹¹⁵Leave me alone, you evildoers, that I may keep the commandments of my God.

¹¹⁶Support me as you have promised, that I may live; do not disappoint my hope.

¹¹⁷Sustain me, that I may see deliverance; then I shall always be occupied with your statutes.

¹¹⁸You reject all who stray from your statutes, for their whole talk is malice and lies.

¹¹⁹In your sight the wicked are all scum of the earth; therefore I love your instruction.

¹²⁰The dread of you makes my flesh creep; I stand in awe of your decrees.

¹²¹I have done what is just and right; you will not abandon me to my oppressors.

¹²² Stand surety for the welfare of your servant; do not let the proud oppress me.

¹²³ My eyes grow weary looking for your deliverance, with waiting for the victory you have promised.

¹²⁴ In your dealings with me, LORD, show your love and teach me your statutes.

¹²⁵ I am your servant; give me insight to understand your instruction.

¹²⁶ It is time for you to act, LORD, for your law has been broken.

¹²⁷ Truly I love your commandments more than gold, even the finest gold.

¹²⁸ It is by your precepts that I find the right way; I hate the paths of falsehood.

¹²⁹ Your instruction is wonderful; therefore I gladly keep it.

¹³⁰ Your word is revealed, and all is light; it gives understanding even to the untaught.

¹³¹ I pant, I thirst, longing for your commandments.

¹³² Turn to me and show me favour, just as you have decreed for those who love your name.

¹³³ Make my step firm according to your promise, and let no wrong have the mastery over me.

¹³⁴ Deliver me from oppression by my fellows, that I may observe your precepts.

¹³⁵ Let your face shine on your servant and teach me your statutes.

¹³⁶ My eyes stream with tears because your law goes unheeded.

¹³⁷ How just you are, LORD! How straight and true are your decrees!

¹³⁸ How just is the instruction you give! It is firm and sure.

¹³⁹ I am speechless with indignation at my enemies' neglect of your words.

¹⁴⁰ Your promise has been well tested, and I love it, LORD.

¹⁴¹ I may be despised and of little account, but I do not forget your precepts.

¹⁴² Your justice is an everlasting justice, and your law is steadfast.

¹⁴³ Though I am overtaken by trouble and anxiety, your commandments are my delight.

¹⁴⁴ Your instruction is ever just; give me understanding that I may live.

¹⁴⁵With my whole heart I call; answer me, LORD. I shall keep your statutes.

¹⁴⁶I call to you; save me that I may heed your instruction.

¹⁴⁷Before dawn I rise to cry for help; I put my hope in your word.

¹⁴⁸Before the midnight watch my eyes are open for meditation on your promise.

¹⁴⁹In your love hear me, and give me life, LORD, by your decree.

¹⁵⁰My pursuers in their malice are close behind me, but they are far from your law.

¹⁵¹Yet you are near, LORD, and all your commandments are steadfast.

¹⁵²I have long known from your instruction that you have given it everlasting foundations.

¹⁵³See in what trouble I am and set me free, for I do not forget your law.

¹⁵⁴Be my advocate and gain my acquittal; as you promised, give me life.

¹⁵⁵Such deliverance is beyond the reach of the wicked, because they do not ponder your statutes.

¹⁵⁶Great is your compassion, LORD; by your decree grant me life.

¹⁵⁷ Though my persecutors and my foes are many, I have not swerved from your instruction.

¹⁵⁸ I was cut to the quick when I saw traitors who had no regard for your word.

¹⁵⁹ See how I love your precepts! In your love, LORD, grant me life.

¹⁶⁰ Your word is founded in steadfastness, and all your just decrees are everlasting.

¹⁶¹ Rulers persecute me without cause, but it is your word that fills me with awe.

¹⁶² I am jubilant over your promise, like someone who finds much booty.

¹⁶³ Falsehood I abhor and detest, but I love your law.

¹⁶⁴ Seven times each day I praise you for the justice of your decrees.

¹⁶⁵ Peace is the reward of those who love your law; no pitfalls beset their path.

¹⁶⁶ I hope for your deliverance, LORD, and I fulfil your commandments;

¹⁶⁷ gladly I heed your instruction and love it dearly.

¹⁶⁸I heed your precepts and your instruction, for all my life lies open before you.

¹⁶⁹Let my cry of joy reach you, LORD; give me insight as you have promised.

¹⁷⁰Let my prayers for favour reach you; be true to your promise and save me.

¹⁷¹Let your praise pour from my lips, for you teach me your statutes;

¹⁷²let the music of your promises be on my tongue, for your commandments are justice itself.

¹⁷³May your hand be prompt to help me, for I have chosen your precepts;

¹⁷⁴I long for your deliverance, LORD, and your law is my delight.

¹⁷⁵Let me live to praise you; let your decrees be my help.

¹⁷⁶I have strayed like a lost sheep; come, search for your servant, for I have not forgotten your commandments.

120¹A song of the ascents I CALLED to the LORD in my distress, and he answered me.

²LORD, I cried, save me from lying lips and from the deceitful tongue.

³What has he in store for you, deceitful tongue? What more has he for you?

⁴ Nothing but a warrior's sharp arrows
and red-hot charcoal.

⁵ Wretched is my lot, exiled in Meshech,
dwelling by the tents of Kedar.

⁶ Too long have I lived among those
who hate peace.

⁷ I am for peace, but whenever I speak
of it, they are for war.

121 ¹ A song of the ascents IF I lift
up my eyes to the hills, where
shall I find help?

² My help comes only from the LORD,
maker of heaven and earth.

³ He will not let your foot stumble; he
who guards you will not sleep.

⁴ The guardian of Israel never slumbers,
never sleeps.

⁵ The LORD is your guardian, your
protector at your right hand;

⁶ the sun will not strike you by day nor
the moon by night.

⁷ The LORD will guard you against all
harm; he will guard your life.

⁸ The LORD will guard you as you come
and go, now and for evermore.

122 ¹ A song of the ascents: for
David I REJOICED when they

said to me, Let us go to the house of the LORD.

²Now we are standing within your gates, Jerusalem:

³Jerusalem, a city built compactly and solidly.

⁴There the tribes went up, the tribes of the LORD, to give thanks to the name of the LORD, the duty laid on Israel.

⁵For there the thrones of justice were set, the thrones of the house of David.

⁶Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: May those who love you prosper;

⁷peace be within your ramparts and prosperity in your palaces.

⁸For the sake of these my brothers and my friends, I shall say, Peace be within you.

⁹For the sake of the house of the LORD our God I shall pray for your wellbeing.

123 ¹A song of the ascents I LIFT my eyes to you whose throne is in heaven.

²As the eyes of slaves follow their master's hand or the eyes of a slave-girl the hand of her mistress, so our eyes are turned to the LORD our God, awaiting his favour.

³Show us your favour, LORD, show us favour, for we have suffered insult enough.

⁴Too long have we had to suffer the insults of the arrogant, the contempt of the proud.

124¹A song of the ascents: for David IF the LORD had not been on our side -- let Israel now say --

²if the LORD had not been on our side when our foes attacked,

³then they would have swallowed us alive in the heat of their anger against us.

⁴Then the waters would have carried us away and the torrent swept over us;

⁵then over us would have swept the raging waters.

⁶Blessed be the LORD, who did not leave us a prey for their teeth.

⁷We have escaped like a bird from the fowler's trap; the trap is broken, and we have escaped.

⁸Our help is in the name of the LORD, maker of heaven and earth.

125¹A song of the ascents THOSE who trust in the LORD are

like Mount Zion: it cannot be shaken; it stands fast for ever.

²As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the LORD surrounds his people both now and evermore.

³Surely wicked rulers will not continue to hold sway in the land allotted to the righteous, or the righteous may put their hands to injustice.

⁴Do good, LORD, to the good, to those who are upright in heart.

⁵But those who turn aside into crooked ways, may the LORD make them go the way of evildoers! Peace be on Israel!

126¹ A song of the ascents WHEN the LORD restored the fortunes of Zion, we were like people renewed in health.

²Our mouths were full of laughter and our tongues sang aloud for joy. Then among the nations it was said, The LORD has done great things for them.

³Great things indeed the LORD did for us, and we rejoiced.

⁴Restore our fortunes, LORD, as streams return in the Negeb.

⁵Those who sow in tears will reap with songs of joy.

⁶He who goes out weeping, carrying his bag of seed, will come back with songs of joy, carrying home his sheaves.

127 ¹A song of the ascents: for Solomon UNLESS the LORD builds the house, its builders labour in vain. Unless the LORD keeps watch over the city, the watchman stands guard in vain.

²In vain you rise early and go late to rest, toiling for the bread you eat; he supplies the need of those he loves.

³Sons are a gift from the LORD and children a reward from him.

⁴Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the sons of one's youth.

⁵Happy is he who has his quiver full of them; someone like that will not have to back down when confronted by an enemy in court.

128 ¹A song of the ascents HAPPY are all who fear the LORD, who conform to his ways.

²You will enjoy the fruit of your labours, you will be happy and prosperous.

³Within your house your wife will be like a fruitful vine; your sons round your table will be like olive saplings.

⁴Such is the blessing in store for him who fears the LORD.

⁵May the LORD bless you from Zion; may you rejoice in the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life.

⁶And may you live to see your children's children! Peace be on Israel!

129 ¹A song of the ascents OFTEN since I was young have I been attacked -- let Israel now say --

²often since I was young have I been attacked, but never have my attackers prevailed.

³They scored my back with scourges, like ploughmen driving long furrows.

⁴The LORD is victorious; he has cut me free from the bonds of the wicked.

⁵Let all who hate Zion be thrown back in confusion;

⁶let them be like grass growing on the roof, which withers before it can shoot,

⁷which will never fill a mower's hand nor yield an armful for the harvester,

⁸so that passers-by will never say to them, The blessing of the LORD be on you! We bless you in the name of the LORD.

130¹ A song of the ascents LORD,
out of the depths I have called
to you;

²hear my cry, Lord; let your ears be
attentive to my supplication.

³If you, LORD, should keep account of
sins, who could hold his ground?

⁴But with you is forgiveness, so that
you may be revered.

⁵I wait for the LORD with longing; I put
my hope in his word.

⁶My soul waits for the Lord more
eagerly than watchmen for the morning.
Like those who watch for the morning,

⁷let Israel look for the LORD. For in the
LORD is love unfailing, and great is his
power to deliver.

⁸He alone will set Israel free from all
their sins.

131¹ A song of the ascents: for
David LORD, my heart is not
proud, nor are my eyes haughty; I do
not busy myself with great affairs or
things too marvellous for me.

²But I am calm and quiet like a weaned
child clinging to its mother.

³Israel, hope in the LORD, now and for
evermore.

132¹ A song of the ascents LORD,
remember David and all the
adversity he endured,

² how he swore an oath to the LORD
and made this vow to the Mighty One of
Jacob:

³ I will not live in my house nor will I go
to my bed,

⁴ I will give myself no rest, nor allow
myself sleep,

⁵ until I find a sanctuary for the LORD,
a dwelling for the Mighty One of Jacob.

⁶ We heard of the Ark in Ephrathah; we
found it in the region of Jaar.

⁷ Let us enter his dwelling; let us bow
down at his footstool.

⁸ Arise, LORD, and come to your
resting-place, you and your powerful
Ark.

⁹ Let your priests be clothed in
righteousness and let your loyal servants
shout for joy.

¹⁰ For your servant David's sake do not
reject your anointed one.

¹¹ The LORD swore this oath to David,
an oath which he will not break: A prince
of your own line I will set on your throne.

¹²If your sons keep my covenant and heed the teaching that I give them, their sons in turn for all time will occupy your throne.

¹³For the LORD has chosen Zion, desired her for his home:

¹⁴This is my resting-place for ever; here I shall make my home, for that is what I want.

¹⁵I shall bless her with food in plenty and satisfy her needy with bread.

¹⁶I shall clothe her priests with victory; her loyal servants will shout for joy.

¹⁷There I shall make a king of David's line appear and prepare a lamp for my anointed one;

¹⁸I shall cover his enemies with shame, but on him there will be a shining crown.

133¹A song of the ascents: for David HOW GOOD and how pleasant it is to live together as brothers in unity!

²It is like fragrant oil poured on the head and falling over the beard, Aaron's beard, when the oil runs down over the collar of his vestments.

³It is as if the dew of Hermon were falling on the mountains of Zion. There

the LORD bestows his blessing, life for evermore.

134 ¹A song of the ascents COME, bless the LORD, all you his servants, who minister night after night in the house of the LORD.

²Lift up your hands towards the sanctuary and bless the LORD.

³May the LORD, maker of heaven and earth, bless you from Zion!

135 ¹PRAISE the LORD. Praise the name of the LORD; give praise, you servants of the LORD,

²who minister in the house of the LORD, in the temple courts of our God.

³Praise the LORD, for he is good; sing psalms to his name, for that is pleasing.

⁴For the LORD has chosen Jacob to be his own, Israel as his treasured possession.

⁵I know that the LORD is great, that our God is above all gods.

⁶Whatever the LORD wills, that he does, in heaven and on earth, in the sea and all the great deep.

⁷He brings up the mist from the ends of the earth, makes clefts for the rain, and brings the wind out of his storehouses.

⁸He struck down all the firstborn in Egypt, both of humans and of animals.

⁹In Egypt he sent signs and portents against Pharaoh and all his subjects.

¹⁰He struck down mighty nations and slew powerful kings:

¹¹Sihon king of the Amorites, King Og of Bashan, and all the kingdoms of Canaan.

¹²He gave their land as a heritage to his people Israel.

¹³LORD, your name endures for ever; your renown, LORD, will last to all generations,

¹⁴for the LORD will give his people justice; he has compassion on his servants.

¹⁵The gods of the nations are idols of silver and gold, fashioned by human hands.

¹⁶They have mouths that cannot speak and eyes that cannot see;

¹⁷they have ears that cannot hear, and there is no breath in their mouths.

¹⁸Their makers become like them, and so do all who put their trust in them.

¹⁹House of Israel, bless the LORD; house of Aaron, bless the LORD.

²⁰House of Levi, bless the LORD; you that fear the LORD, bless the LORD.

²¹Blessed from Zion be the LORD, he who dwells in Jerusalem. Praise the LORD.

136 ¹IT is good to give thanks to the LORD, for his love endures for ever.

²Give thanks to the God of gods; his love endures for ever.

³Give thanks to the Lord of lords -- his love endures for ever;

⁴who alone works great marvels -- his love endures for ever;

⁵who made the heavens in wisdom -- his love endures for ever;

⁶who spread out the earth on the waters -- his love endures for ever.

⁷He made the great luminaries -- his love endures for ever:

⁸the sun to rule the day -- his love endures for ever;

⁹the moon and the stars to rule the night -- his love endures for ever.

¹⁰Give thanks to him who struck down the firstborn of the Egyptians -- his love endures for ever --

¹¹ and brought Israel out from among them; his love endures for ever.

¹² With strong hand and outstretched arm -- his love endures for ever --

¹³ he divided the Red Sea in two -- his love endures for ever --

¹⁴ and made Israel pass through it; his love endures for ever.

¹⁵ But Pharaoh and his host he swept into the Red Sea; his love endures for ever.

¹⁶ He led his people through the wilderness; his love endures for ever.

¹⁷ He struck down great kings; his love endures for ever.

¹⁸ He slew powerful kings; his love endures for ever:

¹⁹ Sihon king of the Amorites -- his love endures for ever --

²⁰ and Og the king of Bashan; his love endures for ever.

²¹ He gave their land to Israel -- his love endures for ever --

²² a heritage to Israel his servant; his love endures for ever.

²³ He remembered us when our fortunes were low -- his love endures for ever --

²⁴ and rescued us from our enemies;
his love endures for ever.

²⁵ He gives food to all mankind; his love
endures for ever.

²⁶ Give thanks to the God of heaven, for
his love endures for ever.

137 ¹ BY the rivers of Babylon we
sat down and wept as we
remembered Zion.

² On the willow trees there we hung up
our lyres,

³ for there those who had carried us
captive asked us to sing them a song,
our captors called on us to be joyful:
Sing us one of the songs of Zion.

⁴ How could we sing the LORD's song in
a foreign land?

⁵ If I forget you, Jerusalem, may my
right hand wither away;

⁶ let my tongue cling to the roof of my
mouth if I do not remember you, if I do
not set Jerusalem above my chief joy.

⁷ Remember, LORD, against the
Edomites the day when Jerusalem fell,
how they shouted, Down with it, down
with it, down to its very foundations!

⁸Babylon, Babylon the destroyer, happy is he who repays you for what you did to us!

⁹Happy is he who seizes your babes and dashes them against a rock.

138¹ For David I SHALL give praise to you, LORD, with my whole heart; in the presence of the gods I shall sing psalms to you.

²I shall bow down towards your holy temple; for your love and faithfulness I shall praise your name, for you have exalted your promise above the heavens.

³When I called, you answered me and made me bold and strong.

⁴Let all the kings of the earth praise you, LORD, when they hear the words you have spoken;

⁵let them sing of the LORD's ways, for great is the glory of the LORD.

⁶The LORD is exalted, yet he cares for the lowly and from afar he takes note of the proud.

⁷Though I am compassed about by trouble, you preserve my life, putting forth your power against the rage of my enemies, and with your right hand you save me.

⁸The LORD will accomplish his purpose for me. Your love endures for ever, LORD; do not abandon what you have made.

139¹ For the leader: for David:
a psalm LORD, you have examined me and you know me.

²You know me at rest and in action; you discern my thoughts from afar.

³You trace my journeying and my resting-places, and are familiar with all the paths I take.

⁴For there is not a word that I speak but you, LORD, know all about it.

⁵You keep close guard behind and before me and place your hand upon me.

⁶Knowledge so wonderful is beyond my grasp; it is so lofty I cannot reach it.

⁷Where can I escape from your spirit, where flee from your presence?

⁸If I climb up to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.

⁹If I travel to the limits of the east, or dwell at the bounds of the western sea,

¹⁰even there your hand will be guiding me, your right hand holding me fast.

¹¹ If I say, Surely darkness will steal over me, and the day around me turn to night,

¹² darkness is not too dark for you and night is as light as day; to you both dark and light are one.

¹³ You it was who fashioned my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb.

¹⁴ I praise you, for you fill me with awe; wonderful you are, and wonderful your works. You know me through and through:

¹⁵ my body was no mystery to you, when I was formed in secret, woven in the depths of the earth.

¹⁶ Your eyes foresaw my deeds, and they were all recorded in your book; my life was fashioned before it had come into being.

¹⁷ How mysterious, God, are your thoughts to me, how vast in number they are!

¹⁸ Were I to try counting them, they would be more than the grains of sand; to finish the count, my years must equal yours.

¹⁹If only, God, you would slay the wicked! If those murderers would but leave me in peace!

²⁰They rebel against you with evil intent and as your adversaries they rise in malice.

²¹How I hate those that hate you, LORD! I loathe those who defy you;

²²I hate them with undying hatred; I reckon them my own enemies.

²³Examine me, God, and know my mind; test me, and understand my anxious thoughts.

²⁴Watch lest I follow any path that grieves you; lead me in the everlasting way.

140¹For the leader: a psalm: for David RESCUE me, LORD, from evildoers; keep me safe from those who use violence,

²whose hearts are bent on wicked schemes; day after day they stir up bitter strife.

³Their tongues are as deadly as serpents' fangs; on their lips is spiders' poison. [Selah]

⁴Guard me, LORD, from the clutches of the wicked; keep me safe from those

who use violence, who plan to thrust me out of the way.

⁵The arrogant set hidden traps for me; villains spread their nets and lay snares for me along my path. [Selah]

⁶I say to the LORD, You are my God; LORD, hear my plea for mercy.

⁷LORD God, my strong deliverer, you shield my head on the day of battle.

⁸LORD, frustrate the desires of the wicked; do not let their plans succeed. [Selah]

⁹When those who beset me raise their heads, may their conspiracies engulf them.

¹⁰Let burning coals be rained on them; let them be plunged into the miry depths, never to rise again.

¹¹The slanderer will find no home in the land; disaster will hound the violent to destruction.

¹²I know that the LORD will give to the needy their rights and justice to the downtrodden.

¹³The righteous will surely give thanks to your name; the upright will continue in your presence.

141 ¹ A psalm: for David LORD, I call to you, come to my aid quickly; listen to me when I call.

² May my prayer be like incense set before you, the lifting up of my hands like the evening offering.

³ LORD, set a guard on my mouth; keep watch at the door of my lips.

⁴ Let not my thoughts incline to evil, to the pursuit of evil courses with those who are evildoers; let me not partake of their delights.

⁵ I would rather be beaten by the righteous and reproved by those who are good. My head will not be anointed with the oil of the wicked, for while I live my prayer is against their wickedness.

⁶ When they are brought down through the power of their rulers they will learn how acceptable are my words.

⁷ As when one ploughs and breaks up the ground, our bones are scattered at the mouth of Sheol.

⁸ But my eyes are fixed on you, LORD God; you are my refuge; do not leave me unprotected.

⁹ Keep me from the trap set for me, from the snares of evildoers.

¹⁰Let the wicked fall into their own nets, whilst all alone I pass on my way.

142¹A maskil: for David (when he was in the cave): a prayer I CRY aloud to the LORD; to the LORD I plead aloud for mercy.

²I pour out my complaint before him and unfold my troubles in his presence.

³When my spirit is faint within me, you are there to watch over my steps. In the path that I should take they have hidden a snare for me.

⁴I look to my right hand, I find no friend by my side; no way of escape is in sight, no one comes to rescue me.

⁵I cry to you, LORD, and say, You are my refuge; you are my portion in the land of the living.

⁶Give me a hearing when I cry, for I am brought very low. Save me from those who harass me, for they are too strong for me.

⁷Set me free from prison that I may praise your name. The righteous will place a crown on me, when you give me my due reward.

143¹A psalm: for David LORD, hear my prayer; listen to

my plea; in your faithfulness and righteousness answer me.

²Do not bring your servant to trial, for no person living is innocent before you.

³An enemy has hunted me down, has crushed me underfoot, and left me to lie in darkness like those long dead.

⁴My spirit fails me and my heart is numb with despair.

⁵I call to mind times long past; I think over all you have done; the wonders of your creation fill my mind.

⁶Athirst for you like thirsty land, I lift my outspread hands to you. [Selah]

⁷LORD, answer me soon; my spirit faints. Do not hide your face from me or I shall be like those who go down to the abyss.

⁸In the morning let me know of your love, for I put my trust in you. Show me the way that I must take, for my heart is set on you.

⁹Deliver me, LORD, from my enemies; with you I seek refuge.

¹⁰Teach me to do your will, for you are my God; by your gracious spirit guide me on level ground.

¹¹ Revive me, LORD, for the honour of your name; be my deliverer; release me from distress.

¹² In your love for me, destroy my enemies and wipe out all who oppress me, for I am your servant.

144 ¹ For David BLESSED be the LORD, my rock, who trains my hands for battle, my fingers for fighting; ² my unfailing help, my fortress, my strong tower and refuge, my shield in whom I trust, he who subdues nations under me.

³ LORD, what are human beings that you should care for them? What are frail mortals that you should take thought for them?

⁴ They are no more than a puff of wind, their days like a fleeting shadow.

⁵ LORD, part the heavens and come down; touch the mountains so that they pour forth smoke.

⁶ Discharge your lightning-flashes far and wide, and send your arrows humming.

⁷ Reach out your hands from on high; rescue me and snatch me from mighty waters, from the power of aliens

⁸ whose every word is worthless, whose every oath is false.

⁹ I shall sing a new song to you, my God, psalms to the music of a ten-stringed harp.

¹⁰ God who gave victory to kings and deliverance to your servant David, rescue me from the cruel sword;

¹¹ snatch me from the power of aliens whose every word is worthless, whose every oath is false.

¹² Our sons in their youth will be like thriving plants, our daughters like sculptured corner pillars of a palace.

¹³ Our barns will be filled with every kind of provision; our sheep will bear lambs in thousands upon thousands;

¹⁴ the cattle in our fields will be fat and sleek. There will be no miscarriage or untimely birth, no cries of distress in our public places.

¹⁵ Happy the people who are so blessed! Happy the people whose God is the LORD!

145¹ A psalm of praise: for David I SHALL extol you, my God and King, and bless your name for ever and ever.

²Every day I shall bless you and praise your name for ever and ever.

³Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; his greatness is beyond all searching out.

⁴One generation will commend your works to the next and set forth your mighty deeds.

⁵People will speak of the glorious splendour of your majesty; I shall meditate on your wonderful deeds.

⁶People will declare your mighty and terrible acts, and I shall tell of your greatness.

⁷They will recite the story of your abounding goodness and sing with joy of your righteousness.

⁸The LORD is gracious and compassionate, long-suffering and ever faithful.

⁹The LORD is good to all; his compassion rests upon all his creatures.

¹⁰All your creatures praise you, LORD, and your loyal servants bless you.

¹¹They talk of the glory of your kingdom and tell of your might,

¹²to make known to mankind your mighty deeds, the glorious majesty of your kingdom.

¹³Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations.

¹⁴In all his promises the LORD keeps faith, he is unchanging in all his works; the LORD supports all who stumble and raises all who are bowed down.

¹⁵All raise their eyes to you in hope, and you give them their food when it is due.

¹⁶You open your hand and satisfy every living creature with your favour.

¹⁷The LORD is righteous in all his ways, faithful in all he does;

¹⁸the LORD is near to all who call to him, to all who call to him in sincerity.

¹⁹He fulfils the desire of those who fear him; he hears their cry for help and saves them.

²⁰The LORD watches over all who love him, but the wicked he will utterly destroy.

²¹My tongue will declare the praises of the LORD, and all people will bless his holy name for ever and ever.

146 ¹PRAISE the LORD. My soul,
praise the LORD.

²As long as I live I shall praise the LORD; I shall sing psalms to my God all my life long.

³Put no trust in princes or in any mortal, for they have no power to save.

⁴When they breathe their last breath, they return to the dust, and on that day their plans come to nothing.

⁵Happy is he whose helper is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the LORD his God,

⁶maker of heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them; who maintains faithfulness for ever

⁷and deals out justice to the oppressed. The LORD feeds the hungry and sets the prisoner free.

⁸The LORD restores sight to the blind and raises those who are bowed down; the LORD loves the righteous

⁹and protects the stranger in the land; the LORD gives support to the fatherless and the widow, but thwarts the course of the wicked.

¹⁰The LORD will reign for ever, Zion, your God for all generations. Praise the LORD.

147 ¹PRAISE the LORD. How good it is to sing psalms to our God! How pleasant and right to praise him!

²The LORD rebuilds Jerusalem; he gathers in the scattered Israelites.

³It is he who heals the broken in spirit and binds up their wounds,

⁴who numbers the stars one by one and calls each by name.

⁵Mighty is our Lord and great his power; his wisdom is beyond all telling.

⁶The LORD gives support to the humble and brings evildoers to the ground.

⁷Sing to the LORD a song of thanksgiving, sing psalms to the lyre in honour of our God.

⁸He veils the sky in clouds and provides rain for the earth; he clothes the hills with grass.

⁹He gives food to the cattle and to the ravens when they cry.

¹⁰The LORD does not delight in the strength of a horse and takes no pleasure in a runner's fleetness;

¹¹ his pleasure is in those who fear him,
who wait for his steadfast love.

¹² Jerusalem, sing to the LORD; Zion,
praise your God,

¹³ for he has strengthened your barred
gates; he has blessed your inhabitants.

¹⁴ He has brought peace to your realm
and given you the best of wheat in
plenty.

¹⁵ He sends his command over the
earth, and his word runs swiftly.

¹⁶ He showers down snow, white as
wool, and sprinkles hoar-frost like ashes;

¹⁷ he scatters crystals of ice like
crumbs; he sends the cold, and the
water stands frozen;

¹⁸ he utters his word, and the ice is
melted; he makes the wind blow, and
the water flows again.

¹⁹ To Jacob he reveals his word, his
statutes and decrees to Israel;

²⁰ he has not done this for other
nations, nor were his decrees made
known to them. Praise the LORD.

148 ¹ PRAISE the LORD. Praise
the LORD from the heavens;
praise him in the heights above.

² Praise him, all his angels; praise him,
all his hosts.

³ Praise him, sun and moon; praise him,
all you shining stars;

⁴ praise him, you highest heavens, and
you waters above the heavens.

⁵ Let them praise the name of the LORD,
for by his command they were created;

⁶ he established them for ever and ever
by an ordinance which will never pass
away.

⁷ Praise the LORD from the earth, you
sea monsters and ocean depths;

⁸ fire and hail, snow and ice, gales of
wind that obey his voice;

⁹ all mountains and hills; all fruit trees
and cedars;

¹⁰ wild animals and all cattle, creeping
creatures and winged birds.

¹¹ Let kings and all commoners, princes
and rulers over the whole earth,

¹² youths and girls, old and young
together,

¹³ let them praise the name of the
LORD, for his name is high above all
others, and his majesty above earth and
heaven.

¹⁴He has exalted his people in the pride of power and crowned with praise his loyal servants, Israel, a people close to him. Praise the LORD.

149¹PRAISE the LORD. Sing to the LORD a new song, his praise in the assembly of his loyal servants!

²Let Israel rejoice in their maker; let the people of Zion exult in their king.

³Let them praise his name in the dance, and sing to him psalms with tambourine and lyre.

⁴For the LORD accepts the service of his people; he crowns the lowly with victory.

⁵Let his loyal servants exult in triumph; let them shout for joy as they prostrate themselves.

⁶Let the high praises of God be on their lips and a two-edged sword in their hand

⁷to wreak vengeance on the nations and punishment on the heathen,

⁸binding their kings with chains, putting their nobles in irons,

⁹carrying out the judgement decreed against them -- this is glory for all his loyal servants. Praise the LORD.

150¹ PRAISE the LORD. Praise God in his holy place, praise him in the mighty vault of heaven;

² praise him for his acts of power, praise him for his immeasurable greatness.

³ Praise him with fanfares on the trumpet, praise him on harp and lyre;

⁴ praise him with tambourines and dancing, praise him with flute and strings;

⁵ praise him with the clash of cymbals; with triumphant cymbals praise him.

⁶ Let everything that has breath praise the LORD! Praise the LORD.

Proverbs

- 1** ¹ THE proverbs of Solomon son of David, king of Israel,
² by which mankind will come to wisdom and instruction, will understand words that bring understanding,
³ and will attain to a well-instructed intelligence, righteousness, justice, and probity.
⁴ The simple will be endowed with shrewdness and the young with knowledge and discretion.
⁵ By listening to them the wise will increase their learning, those with understanding will acquire skill
⁶ to understand proverbs and parables, the sayings and riddles of the wise.
⁷ The fear of the LORD is the foundation of knowledge; it is fools who scorn wisdom and instruction.
⁸ Attend, my son, to your father's instruction and do not reject your mother's teaching;

⁹ they become you like a garland on your head, a chain of honour for your neck.

¹⁰ My son, if sinners entice you, do not yield.

¹¹ They may say: Join us and lie in wait for someone's blood; let us waylay some innocent person who has done us no harm.

¹² We shall swallow them like Sheol though they are alive; though in health, they will be like those who go down to the abyss.

¹³ We shall take rich treasure of every sort and fill our houses with plunder.

¹⁴ Throw in your lot with us and share the common purse.

¹⁵ My son, do not go along with them, stay clear of their ways;

¹⁶ they hasten hotfoot into crime, pressing on to shed blood.

¹⁷ (A net is spread in vain if any bird that flies can see it.)

¹⁸ It is for their own blood they lie in wait; they waylay no one but themselves.

¹⁹ Such is the fate of all who strive after ill-gotten gain: it robs of their lives all who possess it.

²⁰Wisdom cries aloud in the open air, and raises her voice in public places.

²¹She calls at the top of the bustling streets; at the approaches to the city gates she says:

²²How long will you simple fools be content with your simplicity?

²³If only you would respond to my reproof, I would fill you with my spirit and make my precepts known to you.

²⁴But because you refused to listen to my call, because no one heeded when I stretched out my hand,

²⁵because you rejected all my advice and would have none of my reproof,

²⁶I in turn shall laugh at your doom and deride you when terror comes,

²⁷when terror comes like a hurricane and your doom approaches like a whirlwind, when anguish and distress come upon you. The insolent delight in their insolence; the stupid hate knowledge.

²⁸When they call to me, I shall not answer; when they seek, they will not find me.

²⁹Because they detested knowledge and chose not to fear the LORD,

³⁰because they did not accept my counsel and spurned all my reproof,

³¹now they will eat the fruits of their conduct and have a surfeit of their own devices;

³²for simpletons who turn a deaf ear come to grief, and the stupid are ruined by their own complacency.

³³But whoever listens to me will live without a care, undisturbed by fear of misfortune.

2¹My son, if you take my words to heart and treasure my commandments deep within you,

²giving your attention to wisdom and your mind to understanding,

³if you cry out for discernment and invoke understanding,

⁴if you seek for her as for silver and dig for her as for buried treasure,

⁵then you will understand the fear of the LORD and attain to knowledge of God.

⁶It is the LORD who bestows wisdom and teaches knowledge and understanding.

⁷ Out of his store he endows the upright with ability. For those whose conduct is blameless he is a shield,

⁸ guarding the course of justice and keeping watch over the way of his loyal servants.

⁹ You will then understand what is right and just and keep only to the good man's path,

¹⁰ for wisdom will sink into your mind, and knowledge will be your heart's delight.

¹¹ Discretion will keep watch over you, understanding will guard you,

¹² to save you from the ways of evildoers, from all whose talk is subversive,

¹³ those who forsake the right road to walk in murky ways,

¹⁴ who take pleasure in doing evil and exult in wicked and subversive acts,

¹⁵ whose ways are crooked, whose course is devious.

¹⁶ It will save you from the adulteress, from the loose woman with her smooth words,

¹⁷ who has forsaken the partner of her youth and forgotten the covenant of her God;

¹⁸ for her house is the way down to death, and her course leads to the land of the dead.

¹⁹ None who resort to her find their way back or regain the path to life.

²⁰ See then that you follow the footsteps of the good and keep to the paths of the righteous;

²¹ for the upright will dwell secure in the land and the blameless remain there;

²² but the wicked will be cut off from the land, those who are perfidious uprooted from it.

3¹ My son, do not forget my teaching, but treasure my commandments in your heart;

² for long life and years in plenty and abundant prosperity will they bring you.

³ Let your loyalty and good faith never fail; bind them about your neck, and inscribe them on the tablet of your memory.

⁴ So will you win favour and success in the sight of God and man.

⁵ Put all your trust in the LORD and do not rely on your own understanding.

⁶ At every step you take keep him in mind, and he will direct your path.

⁷ Do not be wise in your own estimation; fear the LORD and turn from evil.

⁸ Let that be medicine to keep you in health, liniment for your limbs.

⁹ Honour the LORD with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce;

¹⁰ then your granaries will be filled with grain and your vats will brim with new wine.

¹¹ My son, do not spurn the LORD's correction or recoil from his reproof;

¹² for those whom the LORD loves he reproves, and he punishes the son who is dear to him.

¹³ Happy is he who has found wisdom, he who has acquired understanding,

¹⁴ for wisdom is more profitable than silver, and the gain she brings is better than gold!

¹⁵ She is more precious than red coral, and none of your jewels can compare with her.

¹⁶ In her right hand is long life, in her left are riches and honour.

¹⁷ Her ways are pleasant ways and her paths all lead to prosperity.

¹⁸ She is a tree of life to those who grasp her, and those who hold fast to her are safe.

¹⁹ By wisdom the LORD laid the earth's foundations and by understanding he set the heavens in place;

²⁰ by his knowledge the springs of the deep burst forth and the clouds dropped dew.

²¹ My son, safeguard sound judgement and discretion; do not let them out of your sight.

²² They will be a charm hung about your neck, an ornament to grace your throat.

²³ Then you will go on your way without a care, and your foot will not stumble.

²⁴ When you sit, you need have no fear; when you lie down, your sleep will be pleasant.

²⁵ Do not be afraid when fools are frightened or when destruction overtakes the wicked,

²⁶ for the LORD will be at your side, and he will keep your feet from the trap.

²⁷ Withhold from no one a favour due to him when you have the power to grant it.

²⁸ Do not say to your neighbour, Come back again; you can have it tomorrow -- when you could give it now.

²⁹ Devise no evil against the neighbour living trustingly beside you.

³⁰ Do not pick a quarrel with a man for no reason, when he has done you no harm.

³¹ Do not emulate a violent person or choose to follow his example;

³² for one who is not straight is detestable to the LORD, but those who are upright are in God's confidence.

³³ The LORD's curse falls on the house of the wicked, but he blesses the home of the righteous.

³⁴ Though God meets the scornful with scorn, to the humble he shows favour.

³⁵ The wise win renown, but disgrace is the portion of fools.

4¹ Listen, my sons, to a father's instruction, consider attentively how to gain understanding;

² it is sound learning I give you, so do not forsake my teaching.

³When I was a boy, subject to my father, tender in years, my mother's only child,

⁴he taught me and said to me: Hold fast to my words with all your heart, keep my commandments, and you will have life.

⁵Get wisdom, get understanding; do not forget or turn a deaf ear to what I say.

⁶Do not forsake her, and she will watch over you; love her, and she will safeguard you;

⁷[[EMPTY]]

⁸cherish her, and she will lift you high; if only you embrace her, she will bring you to honour.

⁹She will set a becoming garland on your head; she will bestow on you a glorious crown.

¹⁰Listen, my son, take my words to heart, and the years of your life will be many.

¹¹I shall guide you in the paths of wisdom; I shall lead you in honest ways.

¹²When you walk nothing will impede you, and when you run nothing will bring you down.

¹³ Cling to instruction and never let it go; guard it well, for it is your life.

¹⁴ Do not take to the course of the wicked or follow the way of evildoers;

¹⁵ do not set foot on it, but avoid it, turn from it, and go on your way.

¹⁶ For they cannot sleep unless they have done some wrong; unless they have been someone's downfall they lie sleepless.

¹⁷ The bread they eat is gained by crime, the wine they drink is got by violence.

¹⁸ While the course of the righteous is like morning light, growing ever brighter till it is broad day,

¹⁹ the way of the wicked is like deep darkness, and they do not know what has been their downfall.

²⁰ My son, attend to my words, pay heed to my sayings;

²¹ do not let them slip from your sight, keep them fixed in your mind;

²² for they are life to those who find them, and health to their whole being.

²³ Guard your heart more than anything you treasure, for it is the source of all life.

²⁴ Keep your mouth from crooked speech and banish deceitful talk from your lips.

²⁵ Let your eyes look straight before you, fix your gaze on what lies ahead.

²⁶ Mark out the path that your feet must take, and your ways will be secure.

²⁷ Deviate to neither right nor left; keep clear of evil.

5¹ My son, attend to my wisdom and listen with care to my counsel,
² so that you may preserve discretion and your lips safeguard knowledge.

³ For though the lips of an adulteress drip honey and her tongue is smoother than oil,

⁴ yet in the end she is as bitter as wormwood, as sharp as a two-edged sword.

⁵ Her feet tread the downward path towards death, the road she walks leads straight to Sheol.

⁶ She does not mark out the path to life; her course twists this way and that, but she is unconcerned.

⁷ Now, my sons, listen to me and do not ignore what I say:

⁸keep well away from her and do not go near the door of her house,

⁹or you will surrender your vigour to others, the pride of your manhood to the heartless.

¹⁰Strangers will batten on your wealth, and your hard-won gains pass to the family of another.

¹¹When you shrink to skin and bone you will end by groaning

¹²and saying, Oh, why did I hate correction and set my heart against reproof?

¹³Why did I not listen to the voice of my teachers and pay heed to my instructors?

¹⁴I was almost brought to ruin in the public assembly.

¹⁵Drink water from your own cistern, fresh water from your own spring.

¹⁶Do not let your well overflow into the road, your runnels of water pour into the street.

¹⁷Let them be for yourself alone, not shared with strangers.

¹⁸Let your fountain, the wife of your youth, be blessed; find your joy in her.

¹⁹A lovely doe, a graceful hind, let her be your companion; her love will satisfy you at all times and wrap you round continually.

²⁰Why, my son, are you wrapped in the love of an adulteress? Why do you embrace a loose woman?

²¹The LORD watches a man's ways, marking every course he takes.

²²He who is wicked is caught in his own iniquities, held fast in the toils of his own sin;

²³for want of discipline he will perish, wrapped in the shroud of his boundless folly.

6¹ My son, if you give yourself in pledge to another person and stand surety for a stranger,

²if you are caught by your promise, trapped by some promise you have made,

³this is what you must do, my son, to save yourself: since you have come into the power of another, bestir yourself, go and pester the man,

⁴give yourself no rest, allow yourself no sleep.

⁵Free yourself like a gazelle from a net,
like a bird from the grasp of the fowler.

⁶Go to the ant, you sluggard, observe
her ways and gain wisdom.

⁷She has no prince, no governor or
ruler;

⁸but in summer she gathers in her
store of food and lays in her supplies at
harvest.

⁹How long, you sluggard, will you lie
abed? When will you rouse yourself from
sleep?

¹⁰A little sleep, a little slumber, a little
folding of the hands in rest --

¹¹and poverty will come on you like
a footpad, want will assail you like a
hardened ruffian.

¹²A scoundrel and knave is one who
goes around with crooked talk,

¹³a wink of the eye, a nudge with the
foot, a gesture with the fingers.

¹⁴His mind is set on subversion; all the
time he plots mischief and sows strife.

¹⁵That is why disaster comes upon him
suddenly; in an instant he is broken
beyond all remedy.

¹⁶Six things the LORD hates, seven are
detestable to him:

¹⁷ a proud eye, a false tongue, hands that shed innocent blood,

¹⁸ a mind given to forging wicked schemes, feet that run swiftly to do evil,

¹⁹ a false witness telling a pack of lies, and one who sows strife between brothers.

²⁰ My son, observe your father's commands and do not abandon the teaching of your mother;

²¹ wear them always next to your heart and bind them close about your neck.

²² Wherever you turn, wisdom will guide you; when you lie down, she will watch over you, and when you wake, she will talk with you.

²³ For a commandment is a lamp, and teaching a light, reproof and correction point the way to life,

²⁴ to keep you from the wife of another man, from the seductive tongue of the loose woman.

²⁵ Do not be infatuated by her beauty or let her glance captivate you;

²⁶ for a prostitute can be had for the price of a loaf, but a married woman is after the prize of a life.

²⁷ Can a man kindle a fire in his bosom without setting his clothes alight?

²⁸ If a man walks on live coals, will his feet not be scorched?

²⁹ So is he who commits adultery with his neighbour's wife; no one can touch such a woman and go free.

³⁰ Is not a thief contemptible if he steals, even to satisfy his appetite when he is hungry?

³¹ And, if he is caught, must he not pay seven times over and surrender all that his house contains?

³² So one who commits adultery is a senseless fool: he dishonours the woman and ruins himself;

³³ he will get nothing but blows and contumely and can never live down the disgrace;

³⁴ for a husband's anger is rooted in jealousy and he will show no mercy when he takes revenge;

³⁵ compensation will not buy his forgiveness, nor will a present, however large, purchase his connivance.

7 ¹ My son, keep my words; store up my commands in your mind.

²Keep my commands if you would live,
and treasure my teaching as the apple of
your eye.

³Wear them like a ring on your finger;
inscribe them on the tablet of your
memory.

⁴Call wisdom your sister, greet
understanding as a familiar friend;

⁵then they will save you from the
adulteress, from the loose woman with
her seductive words.

⁶I glanced out of the window of my
house, I looked down through the lattice,

⁷and I saw among the simpletons,
among the young men there I noticed a
lad devoid of all sense.

⁸He was passing along the street at her
corner, stepping out in the direction of
her house

⁹at twilight, as the day faded, at dusk
as the night grew dark,

¹⁰and there a woman came to meet
him. She was dressed like a prostitute,
full of wiles,

¹¹flighty and inconstant, a woman
never content to stay at home,

¹²lying in wait by every corner, now in
the street, now in the public squares.

¹³ She caught hold of him and kissed him; brazenly she accosted him and said,

¹⁴ I had a sacrifice, an offering, to make and I have paid my vows today;

¹⁵ so I came out to meet you, to look for you, and now I have found you.

¹⁶ I have spread coverings on my couch, coloured linen from Egypt.

¹⁷ I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cassia.

¹⁸ Come! Let us drown ourselves in pleasure, let us abandon ourselves to a night of love;

¹⁹ for my husband is not at home. He has gone away on a long journey,

²⁰ taking a bag of silver with him; he will not be home until full moon.

²¹ Persuasively she cajoled him, coaxing him with seductive words.

²² He followed her, the simple fool, like an ox on its way to be slaughtered, like an antelope bounding into the noose,

²³ like a bird hurrying into the trap; he did not know he was risking his life until the arrow pierced his vitals.

²⁴ But now, my sons, listen to me, and attend to what I say.

²⁵ Do not let desire entice you into her ways, do not stray down her paths;

²⁶ many has she wounded and laid low, and her victims are without number.

²⁷ Her house is the entrance to Sheol, leading down to the halls of death.

8¹ HEAR how wisdom calls and understanding lifts her voice.

² She takes her stand at the crossroads, by the wayside, at the top of the hill;

³ beside the gate, at the entrance to the city, at the approach by the portals she cries aloud:

⁴ It is to you I call, to all mankind I appeal:

⁵ understand, you simpletons, what it is to be shrewd; you stupid people, understand what it is to have sense.

⁶ Listen! For I shall speak clearly, you will have plain speech from me;

⁷ for I speak nothing but truth, and my lips detest wicked talk.

⁸ All that I say is right, not a word is twisted or crooked.

⁹ All is straightforward to those with understanding, all is plain to those who have knowledge.

¹⁰ Choose my instruction rather than silver, knowledge rather than pure gold;

¹¹ for wisdom is better than red coral, and no jewel can match her.

¹² I am wisdom, I bestow shrewdness and show the way to knowledge and discretion.

¹³ To fear the LORD is to hate evil. Pride, arrogance, evil ways, subversive talk, all those I hate.

¹⁴ From me come advice and ability; understanding and power are mine.

¹⁵ Through me kings hold sway and governors enact just laws.

¹⁶ Through me princes wield authority, from me all rulers on earth derive their rank.

¹⁷ Those who love me I love, and those who search for me will find me.

¹⁸ In my hands are riches and honour, boundless wealth and prosperity.

¹⁹ My harvest is better even than fine gold, and my revenue better than choice silver.

²⁰ I follow the course of justice and keep to the path of equity.

²¹ I endow with riches those who love me; I shall fill their treasuries.

²²The LORD created me the first of his works long ago, before all else that he made.

²³I was formed in earliest times, at the beginning, before earth itself.

²⁴I was born when there was yet no ocean, when there were no springs brimming with water.

²⁵Before the mountains were settled in their place, before the hills I was born,

²⁶when as yet he had made neither land nor streams nor the mass of the earth's soil.

²⁷When he set the heavens in place I was there, when he girdled the ocean with the horizon,

²⁸when he fixed the canopy of clouds overhead and confined the springs of the deep,

²⁹when he prescribed limits for the sea so that the waters do not transgress his command, when he made earth's foundations firm.

³⁰Then I was at his side each day, his darling and delight, playing in his presence continually,

³¹playing over his whole world, while my delight was in mankind.

³² Now, sons, listen to me; happy are those who keep to my ways.

³³ Listen to instruction and grow wise; do not ignore it.

³⁴ Happy the one who listens to me, watching daily at my threshold with his eyes on the doorway!

³⁵ For whoever finds me finds life and wins favour with the LORD,

³⁶ but whoever fails to find me deprives himself, and all who hate me are in love with death.

9¹ Wisdom has built her house; she has hewn her seven pillars.

² Now, having slaughtered a beast, spiced her wine, and spread her table,

³ she has sent her maidens to proclaim from the highest point of the town:

⁴ Let the simple turn in here. She says to him who lacks sense,

⁵ Come, eat the food I have prepared and taste the wine that I have spiced.

⁶ Abandon the company of simpletons and you will live, you will advance in understanding.

⁷ Correct an insolent person, and you earn abuse; reprove a bad one, and you will acquire his faults.

⁸Do not reprove the insolent person or he will hate you; reprove a wise one, and he will be your friend.

⁹Lecture a wise person, and he will grow wiser still; teach a righteous one, and he will add to his learning.

¹⁰The first step to wisdom is the fear of the LORD, and knowledge of the Most Holy One is understanding;

¹¹for through me your days will be increased and years be added to your life.

¹²If you are wise, it will be to your advantage; if you are arrogant, you alone must bear the blame.

¹³The Lady Stupidity is a flighty creature; a fool, she cares for nothing.

¹⁴She sits at the door of her house, on a seat in the highest part of the town,

¹⁵to invite the passers-by indoors as they hurry on their way:

¹⁶Turn in here, simpleton, she says, and to him who lacks sense she says,

¹⁷Stolen water is sweet and bread eaten in secret tastes good.

¹⁸Little does he know that the dead are there, that her guests are in the depths of Sheol.

10¹ PROVERBS of Solomon: A wise son is his father's joy, but a foolish son is a sorrow to his mother.

²No good comes of ill-gotten wealth; uprightness is a safeguard against death.

³The LORD will not let the righteous go hungry, but he thwarts the desires of the wicked.

⁴Idle hands make for penury; diligent hands make for riches.

⁵A prudent son gathers crops in summer; a son who sleeps at harvest is a source of disappointment.

⁶Blessings are showered on the righteous; the speech of the wicked conceals violence.

⁷The righteous are remembered in blessings; the name of the wicked falls into decay.

⁸A person who is wise takes commandments to heart, but the foolish talker comes to grief.

⁹One whose life is pure lives in safety, but one whose ways are crooked is brought low.

¹⁰A wink of the eye causes trouble; a frank rebuke promotes peace.

¹¹ The words of the righteous are a fountain of life; the speech of the wicked conceals violence.

¹² Hate is always picking a quarrel, but love overlooks every offence.

¹³ The possessor of understanding has wisdom on his lips; a rod is in store for the back of the fool.

¹⁴ The wise store up knowledge; when a fool speaks, ruin is imminent.

¹⁵ The wealth of the rich is a strong city, but poverty spells disaster for the helpless.

¹⁶ The reward of the good leads to life; the earnings of the wicked make for a bad end.

¹⁷ Heed admonition and you are on the road to life; neglect reproof and you miss the way.

¹⁸ Lying lips conceal hatred; anyone who defames another is foolish.

¹⁹ When there is too much talk, offence is never far away; the prudent hold their tongues.

²⁰ The tongue of the righteous is like pure silver; the mind of the wicked is trash.

²¹ The teaching of the righteous guides many, but fools perish through lack of sense.

²² The blessing of the LORD is what brings riches, and he sends no sorrow with them.

²³ Lewdness is entertainment for the stupid, wisdom a delight to men of understanding.

²⁴ What the wicked dread will overtake them; what the righteous desire will be granted.

²⁵ When the whirlwind has swept past, the wicked are gone, but the righteous are firmly established for ever.

²⁶ Like vinegar to the teeth or smoke to the eyes, so is the lazy servant to his master.

²⁷ The fear of the LORD brings length of days; the years of the wicked are cut short.

²⁸ The hope of the righteous blossoms; the expectation of the wicked withers away.

²⁹ The LORD is a refuge for the blameless, but he brings destruction on evildoers.

³⁰The righteous man will never be shaken; the wicked will not remain in the land.

³¹Wisdom flows from the mouth of the righteous; the subversive tongue will be torn out.

³²The righteous suit words to the occasion; the wicked know only subversive talk.

11 ¹False scales are an abomination to the LORD, but accurate weights win his favour.

²When pride comes in, in comes contempt, but wisdom goes hand in hand with modesty.

³Integrity is a guide for the upright; the perfidious are ruined by their own duplicity.

⁴Wealth avails naught in the day of wrath, but uprightness is a safeguard against death.

⁵By uprightness the blameless keep their course, but the wicked are brought down by their own wickedness.

⁶Uprightness saves the righteous, but the perfidious are trapped by their own lies.

⁷ When someone wicked dies, all his hopes perish, and any expectation of affluence ends.

⁸ The righteous are rescued from disaster, and the wicked plunge into it.

⁹ By their words the godless try to ruin others, but when the righteous plead for them they are saved.

¹⁰ A city rejoices in the prosperity of the righteous, and when the wicked perish there is jubilation.

¹¹ By the blessing of the upright a city is raised to greatness, but the words of the wicked tear it down.

¹² One who belittles others is lacking in sense; someone of understanding holds his peace.

¹³ A tale-bearer gives away secrets, but a trustworthy person respects a confidence.

¹⁴ For want of skilful strategy an army is lost; victory is the fruit of long planning.

¹⁵ Give a pledge for a stranger and you will suffer; refuse to stand surety and stay safe.

¹⁶ A gracious woman gets honour; a bold man gets only a fortune.

¹⁷ Kindness brings its own reward; cruelty earns trouble for itself.

¹⁸ A wicked person earns a delusive profit, but he who sows goodness reaps a sure reward.

¹⁹ Anyone set on righteousness finds life, but the pursuit of evil leads to death.

²⁰ The LORD detests the crooked heart, but honesty wins his favour.

²¹ Depend upon it: an evildoer will not escape punishment, but the righteous and all their offspring will go free.

²² Like a gold ring in a pig's snout is a beautiful woman without good sense.

²³ The righteous desire only what is good; what the wicked hope for comes to nothing.

²⁴ One may spend freely and yet grow richer; another is tight-fisted, yet ends in poverty.

²⁵ A generous person enjoys prosperity, and one who refreshes others will be refreshed.

²⁶ Whoever holds back his grain is cursed by the people, but one who sells it earns their blessing.

²⁷ Someone who seeks what is good wins much favour, but one who pursues evil finds it recoils upon him.

²⁸ Whoever relies on his wealth is riding for a fall, but the righteous flourish like leaves sprouting.

²⁹ One who brings trouble on his family inherits the wind, and a fool becomes slave to one who is wise.

³⁰ The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, but violence results in the taking of life.

³¹ If the righteous get their deserts on earth, how much more will the wicked and the sinner!

12¹ He who loves correction loves knowledge; he who hates reproof is stupid.

² The good man wins the LORD's favour, the schemer his condemnation.

³ No one can be established by wickedness, but the roots of the righteous will not be disturbed.

⁴ A capable wife is her husband's crown; one who disgraces him is like a canker in his bones.

⁵The purposes of the righteous are just; the schemes of the wicked are full of deceit.

⁶The wicked by their words lay a murderous ambush, but the words of the upright save them.

⁷Once the wicked are down, that is the end of them, but the line of the righteous continues.

⁸Intelligence is commended, but a warped mind is despised.

⁹It is better to be modest and earn one's living than to play the grandee on an empty stomach.

¹⁰A right-minded person cares for his beast, but one who is wicked is cruel at heart.

¹¹Someone who cultivates his land has plenty to eat, but one who follows idle pursuits lacks sense.

¹²The stronghold of the wicked crumbles like clay, but the righteous take lasting root.

¹³The wicked are ensnared by their own offensive speech, but the righteous come safely through trouble.

¹⁴People win success by their words; they get the reward their work merits.

¹⁵ A fool's conduct is right in his own eyes; to listen to advice shows wisdom.

¹⁶ A fool betrays his annoyance at once; a clever person who is slighted conceals his feelings.

¹⁷ An honest witness comes out with the truth, but the false one with deceit.

¹⁸ Gossip is sharp as a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.

¹⁹ Truthful speech stands firm for ever, but lies live only for a moment.

²⁰ Those who plot evil delude themselves, but there is joy for those who seek the common good.

²¹ No mischief will befall the righteous, but the wicked get their fill of adversity.

²² The LORD detests a liar but delights in honesty.

²³ A clever person conceals his knowledge, but a stupid one blurts out folly.

²⁴ Diligence brings people to power, but laziness to forced labour.

²⁵ An anxious heart is dispiriting; a kind word brings cheerfulness.

²⁶ The righteous are freed from evil, but the wicked take a path that leads astray.

²⁷ The lazy hunter puts up no game; those who are diligent reap a rich harvest.

²⁸ The way of righteousness leads to life, but there is a well-worn path to death.

13¹ A wise son heeds a father's instruction; the arrogant will not listen to rebuke.

² The good enjoy the fruit of righteousness, but violence is meat and drink for the perfidious.

³ One who minds his words preserves his life; one who talks too much faces ruin.

⁴ Those who are lazy and torn by appetite are unsatisfied, but the diligent grow prosperous.

⁵ The righteous hate falsehood; the actions of the wicked are base and disgraceful.

⁶ Right conduct protects the honest, but wickedness brings sinners down.

⁷ One pretends to be rich, although he has nothing; another has great wealth but affects poverty.

⁸One who is rich has to pay a ransom, but one who is poor is immune from threats.

⁹The light of the righteous burns brightly; the lamp of the wicked will be extinguished.

¹⁰A brainless fool causes strife by his presumption; wisdom is found among friends in council.

¹¹Wealth quickly won dwindles away, but if amassed little by little it will grow.

¹²Hope deferred makes the heart sick; a wish come true is a tree of life.

¹³To despise a word of advice is to ask for trouble; mind a command, and you will be rewarded.

¹⁴The teaching of the wise is a fountain of life offering escape from the snares of death.

¹⁵Good sense wins favour, but perfidy leads to disaster.

¹⁶Clever people do everything with understanding, but the stupid parade their folly.

¹⁷An evil messenger causes trouble, but a trusty envoy brings healing.

¹⁸To refuse correction brings poverty and humiliation; one who takes reproof to heart comes to honour.

¹⁹Desire fulfilled is sweet to the taste; stupid people detest mending their ways.

²⁰Walk with the wise and learn wisdom; mix with the stupid and come to harm.

²¹Ill fortune pursues the sinner; good fortune rewards the righteous.

²²A good man leaves an inheritance to his descendants, but the sinner's hoard passes to the righteous.

²³The fallow land of the poor may yield much grain, but through injustice it may be stolen.

²⁴A father who spares the rod hates his son, but one who loves his son brings him up strictly.

²⁵The righteous eat their fill, but the bellies of the wicked are empty.

14¹ Wise women build up their homes, but with their own hands the foolish pull theirs down.

²A person whose conduct is upright fears the LORD; the double-dealer scorns him.

³The speech of a fool is a rod for his own back; the words of the wise are their safeguard.

⁴Where there are no oxen, the barn is empty; the strength of an ox ensures rich crops.

⁵A truthful witness does not deceive; the perjurer produces a pack of lies.

⁶The arrogant aspire in vain to wisdom, while to those with understanding, knowledge comes readily.

⁷Avoid a stupid person; you will not hear a word of sense from him.

⁸Someone who is clever will have the wit to find the right way; the folly of the stupid misleads them.

⁹Fools are too arrogant to make amends; the upright know what reconciliation requires.

¹⁰The heart knows its own bitterness, and in its joy a stranger has no part.

¹¹The house of the wicked will be torn down, but the dwelling of the upright will flourish.

¹²A road may seem straightforward, yet end as the way to death.

¹³Even in laughter the heart can ache, and mirth may end in sorrow.

¹⁴ Renegades reap the reward of their conduct, the good the reward of their achievements.

¹⁵ A simpleton believes every word he hears; a clever person watches each step.

¹⁶ One who is wise is cautious and avoids trouble, but one who is stupid is reckless and falls headlong.

¹⁷ Impatience runs into folly; advancement comes by careful thought.

¹⁸ Simpletons wear the trappings of folly; the clever are crowned with knowledge.

¹⁹ Evildoers cringe before the good, the wicked at the door of the righteous.

²⁰ The poor are not liked even by their friends, but the rich have friends in plenty.

²¹ Whoever despises the hungry does wrong, but happy are they who are generous to the poor.

²² Do not those who intend evil go astray, while those with good intentions are loyal and faithful?

²³ The pains of toil bring gain; mere talk yields nothing but need.

²⁴ Their wealth is the crown of the wise, folly the chief ornament of the stupid.

²⁵ A truthful witness saves lives; a slanderer utters nothing but lies.

²⁶ One who is strong and trusts in the fear of the LORD will be a refuge for his children.

²⁷ The fear of the LORD is a fountain of life offering escape from the snares of death.

²⁸ Many subjects make for a king's glory; lack of them makes a prince of no account.

²⁹ To be patient shows great understanding; quick temper is the height of folly.

³⁰ Peace of mind gives health of body, but envy is a canker in the bones.

³¹ To oppress the poor is to insult the Creator; to be generous to the needy is to do him honour.

³² Evildoers are brought down by their wickedness; the upright find refuge in their honesty.

³³ Wisdom is at home in a discerning mind, but in the heart of a fool it is suppressed.

³⁴ Righteousness raises a people to greatness; to pursue wrong degrades a nation.

³⁵ A king shows favour to a prudent servant; his displeasure falls on those who fail him.

15 ¹ A mild answer turns away anger, but a sharp word makes tempers rise.

² The tongues of the wise spread knowledge; the stupid talk a lot of nonsense.

³ The eyes of the LORD are everywhere, surveying everyone, good and evil.

⁴ A soothing word is a tree of life, but a mischievous tongue breaks the spirit.

⁵ A fool spurns his father's correction, but whoever heeds a reproof shows good sense.

⁶ In the houses of the righteous there is ample wealth; the gains of the wicked bring trouble.

⁷ The lips of the wise promote knowledge; the hearts of the stupid are dishonest.

⁸ The sacrifices of the wicked are abominable to the LORD, but the prayers of the upright win his favour.

⁹The conduct of the wicked is abominable to the LORD, but he loves the seeker after righteousness.

¹⁰Punishment awaits the one who forsakes the right way; he who hates reproof will die.

¹¹Sheol and Abaddon lie open before the LORD; how much more does the human heart!

¹²The arrogant do not take kindly to reproof; they will not consult the wise.

¹³A glad heart makes a cheerful face; heartache crushes the spirit.

¹⁴A discerning mind seeks knowledge, but the stupid feed on folly.

¹⁵To the downtrodden every day is wretched, but to have a merry heart is a perpetual feast.

¹⁶Better a pittance with the fear of the LORD than wealth with worry in its train.

¹⁷Better a dish of vegetables if love goes with it than a fattened ox eaten amid hatred.

¹⁸Bad temper provokes quarrels, but patience heals discord.

¹⁹The path of the sluggard is a tangle of briars, but the road of the diligent is a highway.

²⁰A wise son brings joy to his father; a young fool despises his mother.

²¹Folly may amuse the empty-headed; a person of understanding holds to a straight course.

²²Schemes lightly made come to nothing, but with detailed planning they succeed.

²³Someone may be pleased with his own retort; how much better is a word in season!

²⁴For the prudent the path of life leads upwards and keeps them clear of Sheol below.

²⁵The LORD will pull down the houses of the proud, but maintain the widow's boundary stones.

²⁶Evil thoughts are an abomination to the LORD, but the words of the pure are pleasing.

²⁷He who is grasping brings trouble on his family, but he who spurns a bribe will enjoy long life.

²⁸The righteous think before they answer; but from the mouths of the wicked mischief pours out.

²⁹The LORD stands aloof from the wicked, but he listens to the prayer of the righteous.

³⁰A bright look brings joy to the heart, and good news warms the bones to the marrow.

³¹Whoever listens to wholesome reproof will enjoy the society of the wise.

³²Whoever refuses correction is his own worst enemy, but one who listens to reproof learns sense.

³³Wisdom's discipline is the fear of the LORD, and humility comes before honour.

16¹ A mortal may order his thoughts, but the LORD inspires the words his tongue utters.

²A mortal's whole conduct may seem right to him, but the LORD weighs up his motives.

³Commit to the LORD all that you do, and your plans will be successful.

⁴The LORD has made each thing for its own end; so he has made the wicked for a day of calamity.

⁵One and all the proud are abominable to the LORD; depend upon it: they will not escape punishment.

⁶ Guilt is wiped out by loyalty and faith, and the fear of the LORD makes mortals turn from evil.

⁷ When the LORD approves someone's conduct, he makes even his enemies live at peace with him.

⁸ Better a pittance honestly earned than great gains ill gotten.

⁹ Someone may plan his journey by his own wit, but it is the LORD who guides his steps.

¹⁰ The king's mouth is an oracle; he does not err when he passes sentence.

¹¹ Accuracy of scales and balances is the LORD's concern; all the weights in the bag are his business.

¹² Wrongdoing is abhorrent to kings, for a throne rests firmly on righteousness.

¹³ Honest speech is what pleases kings, for they hold dear those who speak the truth.

¹⁴ A king's anger is a herald of death, and the wise will appease it.

¹⁵ In the light of the king's countenance is life; his favour is like a rain-cloud in the spring.

¹⁶How much better than gold it is to get wisdom, and to gain discernment is more desirable than silver.

¹⁷The highway of the upright avoids evil; he who watches his step preserves his life.

¹⁸Pride goes before disaster, and arrogance before a fall.

¹⁹Better live humbly with those in need than divide the spoil with the proud.

²⁰He who is shrewd in business will prosper, but happy is he who puts his trust in the LORD.

²¹The sensible person seeks advice from the wise; persuasive speech increases learning.

²²Good sense is a fountain of life to its possessors, but a fool is punished by his own folly.

²³The wise person's mind guides his speech, and what his lips impart increases learning.

²⁴Kind words are like dripping honey: sweetness to the palate and health for the body.

²⁵A road may seem straightforward to the one who is on it, yet it may end as the way to death.

²⁶The labourer's appetite impels him to work, hunger spurs him on.

²⁷A scoundrel rakes up evil gossip; it is like a scorching fire on his lips.

²⁸Disaffection sows strife, and tale-bearing breaks up the closest friendship.

²⁹Anyone given to violence will entice others and lead them into evil ways.

³⁰Anyone narrowing his eyes intends dishonesty, and one who pinches his lips is bent on mischief.

³¹Grey hair is a crown of glory, which is won by a virtuous life.

³²Better be slow to anger than a fighter, better control one's temper than capture a city.

³³The lots may be cast into the lap, but the issue depends wholly on the LORD.

17 ¹Better a dry crust and amity with it than a feast in a house full of strife.

²Where the son is a wastrel, a prudent slave is master, and shares the inheritance with the brothers.

³The smelting pot for silver, the crucible for gold, but the LORD it is who assays the heart.

⁴A rogue gives a ready ear to mischievous talk, and a liar listens to slander.

⁵To sneer at the poor is to insult the Creator, and whoever gloats over another's misfortune will answer for it.

⁶Grandchildren are the crown of old age, and parents are the pride of their children.

⁷Fine talk is out of place in a boor, how much more are false words from a noble character!

⁸A bribe works like a charm for him who offers it; wherever he turns he will prosper.

⁹One who covers up another's offence seeks his goodwill, but one who betrays a confidence disrupts a friendship.

¹⁰A reproof makes more impression on a discerning person than a hundred blows on one who is stupid.

¹¹An evil person is set only on rebellion, so a messenger without mercy will be sent against him.

¹²Better face a she-bear robbed of her cubs than a fool in his folly.

¹³If anyone repays evil for good, evil will never depart from his house.

¹⁴Stealing water starts a quarrel;
abandon a dispute before you come to
blows.

¹⁵To acquit the guilty and to condemn
the innocent -- both are abominable to
the LORD.

¹⁶What use is money in the hands of
a fool? Can he buy wisdom if he has no
sense?

¹⁷A friend shows his friendship at all
times, and a brother is born to share
troubles.

¹⁸Whoever gives a guarantee is without
sense; as surety he surrenders himself
to another.

¹⁹One who likes giving offence likes
strife. One who builds a lofty entrance
invites disaster.

²⁰A crooked heart will come to no good,
and a mischievous tongue will end in
calamity.

²¹Stupid offspring bring sorrow to
parents, and no father has joy of a
boorish son.

²²A glad heart makes for good health,
but low spirits sap one's strength.

²³ A wicked person produces a bribe from under his cloak to pervert the course of justice.

²⁴ Wisdom is never out of sight of those who are discerning, but the stupid have their eyes on the ends of the earth.

²⁵ A stupid son exasperates his father and is a heartache to the mother who bore him.

²⁶ To punish the innocent is not right, and it is wrong to inflict blows on those of noble mind.

²⁷ Experience uses few words; discernment keeps a cool head.

²⁸ Even a fool, if he keeps his mouth shut, will seem wise; if he holds his tongue, he will seem intelligent.

18¹ A solitary person pursues his own desires; he quarrels with every sound policy.

² The foolish have no interest in seeking to understand, but only in expressing their own opinions.

³ When wickedness comes in, in comes contempt; with loss of honour comes reproach.

⁴The words of the mouth are a gushing torrent, but deep is the water in the well of wisdom.

⁵It is wrong to show favour to the wicked, to deprive the righteous of justice.

⁶When the stupid man talks, contention follows; his words provoke blows.

⁷The tongue of a stupid person is his undoing; his lips put his life in jeopardy.

⁸A gossip's whispers are tasty morsels swallowed right down.

⁹The lazy worker is own brother to the man who enjoys destruction.

¹⁰The name of the LORD is a tower of strength, where the righteous may run for refuge.

¹¹The wealth of someone who is rich is his strong city; he thinks it an unscalable wall.

¹²Before disaster comes one may be proud; before honour comes one must be humble.

¹³To answer a question before you have heard it out is both stupid and insulting.

¹⁴A person's spirit sustains in sickness, but who can endure if the spirit is crushed?

¹⁵ Knowledge comes to the discerning mind; the wise ear listens to get knowledge.

¹⁶ A gift opens the door to the giver and gains access to the great.

¹⁷ In a lawsuit the first speaker seems right, until another comes forward to cross-examine him.

¹⁸ Cast lots, and settle a quarrel, and so keep litigants apart.

¹⁹ A reluctant brother is more unyielding than a fortress, and quarrels are as stubborn as the bars of a fortress.

²⁰ Someone may live by the fruit of his tongue; his lips may earn him a livelihood.

²¹ The tongue has power of life and death; make friends with it and enjoy its fruits.

²² He who finds a wife finds a good thing; he has won favour from the LORD.

²³ The poor speak in a tone of entreaty; the rich give a harsh answer.

²⁴ Some companions are good only for idle talk, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

19¹ Better to be poor and above reproach than rich and double-tongued.

² It is not good to have zeal without knowledge, nor to be in too great a hurry and so miss the way.

³ When folly wrecks someone's life, he rages in his heart against the LORD.

⁴ Wealth makes many new friends, but someone without means loses any friend he has.

⁵ A false witness will not escape punishment; the perjurer will not go free.

⁶ Many curry favour with the great; a lavish giver has the world for his friend.

⁷ A pauper's brothers all dislike him; how much more is he shunned by his friends! The man who picks his words keeps to the point.

⁸ To learn sense is true self-love; cherish discernment and make sure of success.

⁹ A false witness will not escape punishment; the perjurer will perish.

¹⁰ A fool at the helm is out of place, how much worse a slave in command of men of rank!

¹¹ Forbearance shows intelligence; to overlook an offence brings glory.

¹² A king's rage is like a lion's roar, but his favour is like dew on the grass.

¹³ A stupid son is a calamity to his father; a nagging wife is like water endlessly dripping.

¹⁴ Home and wealth may come down from ancestors, but a sensible wife is a gift from the LORD.

¹⁵ Sloth leads to sleep and negligence to starvation.

¹⁶ Keeping the commandments keeps a person safe, but scorning the way of the LORD brings death.

¹⁷ He who is generous to the poor lends to the LORD, who will recompense him for his deed.

¹⁸ Chastise your son while there is hope for him; only be careful not to flog him to death.

¹⁹ Anyone whose temper is violent must bear the consequences; try to save him, and you make matters worse.

²⁰ Listen to advice and accept instruction, and in the end you will be wise.

²¹ The human mind may be full of schemes, but it is the LORD's purpose that will prevail.

²² Greed is a disgrace to a man; better be poor than a liar.

²³ The fear of the LORD is life; he who is full of it will rest untouched by evil.

²⁴ The sluggard dips his hand into the dish but will not so much as lift it to his mouth.

²⁵ Strike an arrogant person, and the simpleton learns prudence; reprove someone who has understanding, and he understands what you mean.

²⁶ He who expels his father evicts his mother; they have a son who brings shame and disgrace on them.

²⁷ A son who ceases to accept correction is sure to turn his back on the teachings of knowledge.

²⁸ A lying witness makes a mockery of justice, and the talk of the wicked fosters mischief.

²⁹ There is a rod in pickle for the arrogant, and blows are ready for the fool's back.

20¹ Wine is an insolent fellow, strong drink a brawler, and no one addicted to their company grows wise.

² A king's threat is like a lion's roar; one who ignores it puts his life in jeopardy.

³ To draw back from a dispute is honourable, but every fool comes to blows.

⁴ The lazy man who does not plough in autumn looks for a crop at harvest and gets nothing.

⁵ Counsel in another's heart is like deep water, but a discerning person will draw it up.

⁶ Many assert their loyalty, but where will you find one to keep faith?

⁷ If someone leads a good and upright life, happy are his children after him!

⁸ A king seated on his throne in judgement has an eye to sift out all that is evil.

⁹ Who can say, I have a clear conscience; I am purged from my sin?

¹⁰ A double standard in weights and measures is an abomination to the LORD.

¹¹ By his actions a child reveals himself, whether or not his conduct is innocent and upright.

¹² An attentive ear, an observant eye, the LORD made them both.

¹³ Love sleep, and you will know poverty; keep awake, and you will eat your fill.

¹⁴ A bad bargain! says the buyer to the seller, but off he goes to brag about it.

¹⁵ There is gold in plenty and a wealth of red coral, but informed speech is a rarity.

¹⁶ Take the garment of anyone who pledges his word for a stranger; hold it as security for the unknown person.

¹⁷ Bread got by fraud may taste good, but afterwards it turns to grit in the mouth.

¹⁸ Counsel is the key to good planning; wars are won by statecraft.

¹⁹ A gossip will betray secrets, so have nothing to do with a tale-bearer.

²⁰ If anyone reviles his father and mother, his lamp will fail when darkness is deepest.

²¹ If you begin by amassing possessions in haste, they will bring you no blessing in the end.

²² Do not think to repay evil for evil; wait for the LORD to deliver you.

²³ A double standard in weights is an abomination to the LORD, and false scales are unforgivable.

²⁴ It is the LORD who directs a person's steps; how can anyone understand the road he travels?

²⁵ It is dangerous to dedicate a gift rashly, to make a vow and then have second thoughts.

²⁶ A wise king sifts out the wicked and turns the wheel of fortune against them.

²⁷ The LORD shines into a person's soul, searching out his inmost being.

²⁸ Loyalty and good faith preserve a king; his throne is upheld by justice.

²⁹ The glory of young men is their strength, the dignity of old men their grey hairs.

³⁰ A good beating purges the mind of evil, and blows chasten the inmost being.

21 ¹The king's heart is in the LORD's hand; like runnels of water, he turns it wherever he will.

²A person's whole conduct may be right in his own eyes, but the LORD weighs up his motives.

³To do what is right and just is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice.

⁴Haughty looks and a proud heart -- these sins brand the wicked.

⁵Forethought and diligence lead to profit as surely as rash haste leads to poverty.

⁶He who makes a fortune by telling lies runs needlessly into the snares of death.

⁷The wicked are caught up in their own violence, because they refuse to do what is just.

⁸The criminal's conduct is devious; straight dealing is a sign of integrity.

⁹Better to live on a corner of the housetop than share the house with a nagging wife.

¹⁰The wicked are set on evil; even friends do not arouse their pity.

¹¹Simpletons learn wisdom when the insolent are punished; when the wise prosper they draw a lesson from it.

¹²The Just One deals effectively with the wicked household, overturning the wicked to their ruin.

¹³Whoever stops his ears at the cry of the helpless will himself cry for help and not be answered.

¹⁴A gift given privily appeases anger; a present in secret allays great wrath.

¹⁵When justice is done, honest folk rejoice, but it causes dismay among evildoers.

¹⁶If someone takes leave of common sense he will come to rest in the company of the dead.

¹⁷Love pleasure and you will end in want; one who loves wine and oil will never grow rich.

¹⁸The wicked serve as a ransom for the righteous, so do the perfidious for the upright.

¹⁹Better to live alone in the desert than with a nagging and ill-tempered wife!

²⁰The wise man has a houseful of fine and costly treasures; the stupid man will fritter them away.

²¹He who perseveres in right conduct and loyalty finds life, prosperity, and honour.

²² He who is wise can attack a city full of armed men and undermine its boasted strength.

²³ Keep a guard over your lips and tongue and you keep yourself out of trouble.

²⁴ The conceited man is haughty, his name is insolence; overweening conceit marks all he does.

²⁵ The sluggard's cravings will be the death of him, because his hands refuse to work;

²⁶ all day long his cravings go unsatisfied, while the righteous give without stint.

²⁷ Sacrifice from a wicked person is an abomination to the LORD, the more so when it is offered from impure motives.

²⁸ A lying witness will be cut short, but a truthful witness will speak on.

²⁹ A wicked person puts a bold face on it, whereas one who is upright looks to his ways.

³⁰ Face to face with the LORD, wisdom, understanding, counsel avail nothing.

³¹ A horse may be made ready for the day of battle, but victory rests with the LORD.

22¹ A good name is more to be desired than great riches; esteem is better than silver or gold.

² Rich and poor have this in common: the LORD made them both.

³ A shrewd person sees trouble coming and lies low; the simpleton walks straight into it and pays the penalty.

⁴ The fruit of humility is the fear of God with riches and honour and life.

⁵ Snares and pitfalls lie in the path of the crooked; the cautious person will steer clear of them.

⁶ Start a child on the right road, and even in old age he will not leave it.

⁷ The rich lord it over the poor; the borrower becomes the lender's slave.

⁸ Whoever sows injustice will reap trouble; the rod of God's wrath will destroy him.

⁹ One who is kindly will be blessed, for he shares his food with the poor.

¹⁰ Banish the insolent, and strife goes too; discord and disgrace are ended.

¹¹ The LORD loves a person to be sincere; by attractive speech a king's friendship is won.

¹²The LORD keeps watch over every claim at law, and upsets the perjurer's case.

¹³The sluggard protests, There is a lion outside; I shall be killed if I go on the street.

¹⁴The mouth of an adulteress is like a deep pit; he whom the LORD has cursed will fall into it.

¹⁵Folly is deep-rooted in the hearts of children; a good beating will drive it out of them.

¹⁶Oppression of the poor brings gain, but giving to the rich leads only to penury.

¹⁷PAY heed and listen to the sayings of the wise, and apply your mind to the knowledge I impart;

¹⁸to keep them in your heart will give pleasure, and then you will always have them ready on your lips.

¹⁹I would have you trust in the LORD and so I make these things known to you now.

²⁰Here I have written out for you thirty sayings, full of knowledge and wise advice,

²¹ to impart to you a knowledge of the truth, that you may take back a true report to him who sent you.

²² Never rob anyone who is helpless because he is helpless, nor ill-treat a poor wretch in court;

²³ for the LORD will take up their cause and rob of life those who rob them.

²⁴ Never make friends with someone prone to anger, nor keep company with anyone hot-tempered;

²⁵ be careful not to learn his ways and find yourself caught in a trap.

²⁶ Never be one to give guarantees, or to pledge yourself as surety for another;

²⁷ for if you cannot pay, beware: your very bed will be taken from under you.

²⁸ Do not move the ancient boundary stone which your ancestors set up.

²⁹ You see an artisan skilful at his craft: he will serve kings, not common men.

23 ¹ When you sit down to dine with a ruler, give heed to what is before you.

² Cut down your appetite if you are a greedy person.

³ Do not hanker after his dainties, for they are not what they seem.

⁴ Do not slave to get wealth; be sensible, and desist.

⁵ Before you can look around it is gone! It will surely grow wings like an eagle, like a bird in the sky.

⁶ Do not go to dine with a miserly person, and do not hanker after his dainties;

⁷ for they will stick in your throat like a hair. He will bid you eat and drink, but in his heart he does not mean it;

⁸ you will bring up the morsel you have eaten, and your compliments will have been wasted.

⁹ Do not address yourself to a stupid person, for he will disdain your words of wisdom.

¹⁰ Do not move an ancient boundary stone or encroach on the land of the fatherless:

¹¹ they have a powerful Guardian who will take up their cause against you.

¹² Apply your mind to instruction and your ears to words of knowledge.

¹³ Do not withhold discipline from a boy; take the stick to him, and save him from death.

¹⁴If you take the stick to him yourself, you will be preserving him from Sheol.

¹⁵My son, if you are wise at heart, my heart in turn will be glad;

¹⁶I shall rejoice with all my soul when your lips utter what is right.

¹⁷Do not try to emulate sinners; emulate only those who fear the LORD all their days;

¹⁸do this, and you may look forward to the future, and your hopes will not be cut short.

¹⁹Listen, my son, and become wise; set your mind on the right course.

²⁰Do not keep company with drunkards or those who are greedy for the fleshpots.

²¹The drunkard and the glutton will end in poverty; in a state of stupor they are reduced to rags.

²²Listen to your father, who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old.

²³Buy truth, and do not sell it; buy wisdom, instruction, and understanding.

²⁴A good man's father will rejoice and he who has a wise son will delight in him.

²⁵ Give your father and mother cause for delight; may she who bore you rejoice.

²⁶ My son, pay attention to me and accept my guidance willingly.

²⁷ A prostitute is a deep pit, a loose woman a narrow well;

²⁸ the one lies in wait like a robber, the other is unfaithful with man after man.

²⁹ Whose is the misery? Whose the remorse? Whose are the quarrels and the anxiety? Who gets the bruises without knowing why? Whose eyes are bloodshot?

³⁰ Those who linger late over their wine, those always sampling some new spiced liquor.

³¹ Do not gulp down the wine, the strong red wine, when the droplets form on the side of the cup.

³² It may flow smoothly but in the end it will bite like a snake and poison like a cobra.

³³ Then your eyes will see strange sights, your wits and your speech will be confused;

³⁴ you become like a man tossing out at sea, like one who clings to the top of the rigging;

³⁵ you say, If I am struck down, what do I care? If I am overcome, what of it? As soon as I wake up, I shall turn to the wine again.

24¹ Do not emulate the wicked or desire their friendship;

² for violence is all they think of, and mischief is ever on their lips.

³ Wisdom builds the house, good judgement makes it secure,

⁴ knowledge fills the rooms with costly and pleasing furnishings.

⁵ Wisdom prevails over strength, knowledge over brute force;

⁶ for wars are won by skilful strategy, and victory is the fruit of detailed planning.

⁷ Wisdom is too lofty for a fool to grasp; he remains tongue-tied in the public assembly.

⁸ Whoever is bent on mischief gets a name for intrigue;

⁹ the intrigues of the foolish misfire, and the insolent are odious to their fellows.

¹⁰If you have shown yourself weak at a time of crisis, how limited is your strength!

¹¹Rescue those being dragged away to death, and save those being hauled off to execution.

¹²If you say, But this person I do not know, God, who fixes a standard for the heart, will take note; he who watches you will know; he will repay everyone according to what he does.

¹³Eat honey, my son, for it is good, and the honeycomb is sweet to your palate.

¹⁴Seek wisdom for yourself; if you find it, you may look forward to the future, and your thread of life will not be cut short.

¹⁵Do not lie in wait like a felon at the upright person's house, or raid his homestead.

¹⁶Though he may fall seven times, he is soon up again, but the rogue is brought headlong by misfortune.

¹⁷Do not rejoice at the fall of your enemy; do not gloat when he is brought down,

¹⁸ or the LORD will be displeased at the sight, and will cease to be angry with him.

¹⁹ Do not vie with evildoers or emulate the wicked;

²⁰ for those who are evil can expect no future; their lamp will be extinguished.

²¹ My son, fear the LORD and fear the king. Have nothing to do with persons of high rank;

²² they will come to sudden disaster, and who knows what their ruin will entail?

²³ More sayings of the wise: Partiality in dispensing justice is invidious.

²⁴ A judge who pronounces the guilty innocent is cursed by nations, and peoples denounce him;

²⁵ but it will go well with those who convict the guilty, and they will be blessed with prosperity.

²⁶ A straightforward answer is as good as a kiss of friendship.

²⁷ Put in order your work out of doors and make everything ready on the land; after that build yourself a home.

²⁸ Do not testify against your neighbour without good reason or misrepresent him in your evidence.

²⁹ Do not say, I shall do to him as he has done to me; I am paying off an old score.

³⁰ I passed by the field of an idle fellow, by the vineyard of someone with no sense.

³¹ I looked, and it was all overgrown with thistles; it was covered with weeds, and its stone wall was broken down.

³² I saw and I took it to heart, I considered and learnt the lesson:

³³ a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands in rest --

³⁴ and poverty will come on you like a footpad, want will assail you like a hardened ruffian.

25 ¹ MORE proverbs of Solomon, transcribed by the men of King Hezekiah of Judah:

² The glory of God is to keep things hidden, but the glory of kings is to fathom them.

³ The heavens for height, the earth for depth: unfathomable likewise is the mind of a king.

⁴ Rid silver of its impurities, then it may go to the silversmith;

⁵ rid the king's presence of the wicked, and his throne will rest firmly on righteousness.

⁶ Do not push yourself forward at court or take your stand where the great assemble;

⁷ for it is better to be told, Come up here, than to be moved down to make room for a nobleman. What you have witnessed

⁸ be in no hurry to tell everyone, or it will end in reproaches from your friend.

⁹ Argue your own case with your neighbour, but do not reveal another's secrets,

¹⁰ or he will reproach you when he hears of it and your indiscretion will then be beyond recall.

¹¹ Like apples of gold set in silver filigree is a word spoken in season.

¹² Like a golden ear-ring or a necklace of Nubian gold is a wise person's reproof in an attentive ear.

¹³ Like the coolness of snow in harvest time is a trusty messenger to those

who send him; he brings new life to his masters.

¹⁴ Like clouds and wind that bring no rain is he who boasts of gifts he never gives.

¹⁵ A prince may be won over by patience, and a soft tongue may break down authority.

¹⁶ If you find honey, eat what you need and no more; a surfeit will make you sick.

¹⁷ Be sparing in visits to your neighbour's house; if he sees too much of you, he will come to dislike you.

¹⁸ Like a club, a sword, or a sharp arrow is a false witness who denounces his friend.

¹⁹ Like a decaying tooth or a sprained ankle is a perfidious person relied on in the day of trouble.

²⁰ Like one who dresses a wound with vinegar, so is the sweetest of singers to the heavy-hearted.

²¹ If your enemy is hungry, give him food; if he is thirsty, give him a drink of water;

²² for so you will heap live coals on his head, and the LORD will reward you.

²³ As the north wind holds back the rain, so an angry glance holds back slander.

²⁴ Better to live on a corner of the housetop than share the house with a nagging wife.

²⁵ Like cold water to the throat that is faint with thirst is good news from a distant land.

²⁶ Like a muddied spring or a polluted well is a righteous man who gives way to a wicked one.

²⁷ A surfeit of honey is bad for one, and the quest for glory is onerous.

²⁸ Like a city breached and defenceless is a man who cannot control his temper.

26 ¹ Like snow in summer or rain at harvest, honour is unseasonable when paid to a fool.

² Like a fluttering sparrow or a darting swallow, groundless abuse gets nowhere.

³ The whip for a horse, the bridle for a donkey, the rod for the back of a fool!

⁴ Do not answer a fool as his folly deserves, or you will grow like him yourself;

⁵ answer a fool as his folly deserves, or he will think himself wise.

⁶Whoever sends a fool on an errand cuts his own leg off and displays the stump.

⁷A proverb in the mouth of fools dangles helpless as the legs of the lame.

⁸Like one who ties the stone into his sling is he who bestows honour on a fool.

⁹Like a thorn-stick brandished by a drunkard is a proverb in the mouth of a fool.

¹⁰Like an archer who shoots at any passer-by is one who hires a fool or a drunkard.

¹¹A fool who repeats his folly is like a dog returning to its vomit.

¹²Do you see that man who thinks himself so wise? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

¹³The sluggard protests, There is a lion in the road, a lion at large on the street.

¹⁴A door turns on its hinges, a sluggard on his bed.

¹⁵A sluggard dips his hand into the dish but is too lazy to lift it to his mouth.

¹⁶A sluggard is wiser in his own eyes than seven who answer sensibly.

¹⁷ Like someone who seizes a stray cur by the ears is he who meddles in a quarrel not his own.

¹⁸ Like a madman shooting at random his deadly darts and lethal arrows,

¹⁹ so is the man who deceives another and then says, It was only a joke.

²⁰ For lack of wood a fire dies down and for want of a tale-bearer a quarrel subsides.

²¹ Like coal for glowing embers and wood for the fire is a quarrelsome man for kindling strife.

²² A gossip's whispers are tasty morsels swallowed right down.

²³ Like glaze spread on earthenware is glib speech that covers a spiteful heart.

²⁴ With his lips an enemy may speak you fair but in his heart he harbours deceit;

²⁵ when his speech is fair, do not trust him, for seven abominations fill his mind;

²⁶ he may cloak his enmity in dissimulation, but his wickedness will be exposed before the assembly.

²⁷ Whoever digs a pit will fall into it; if he rolls a stone, it will roll back upon him.

²⁸ A lying tongue is the enemy of the innocent, and smooth words bring about their downfall.

27 ¹ Do not praise yourself for tomorrow's success; you never know what a day may bring forth.

² Let praise come from a stranger, not from yourself, from the lips of an outsider and not from your own.

³ Stone is a burden and sand a dead weight, but to be vexed by a fool is more burdensome than both.

⁴ Wrath is cruel and anger is a deluge; but who can stand up to jealousy?

⁵ Open reproof is better than love concealed.

⁶ The blows a friend gives are well meant, but the kisses of an enemy are perfidious.

⁷ Someone who is full may refuse honey from the comb, but to the hungry even bitter food tastes sweet.

⁸ Like a bird that strays from its nest is a man straying from his home.

⁹Oil and incense bring joy to the heart, but cares torment one's very soul.

¹⁰Do not neglect your own friend or your father's. Do not run to your brother's house when you are in trouble. Better a neighbour near at hand than a brother far away!

¹¹Acquire wisdom, my son, and bring joy to my heart; I shall have an answer for my critics.

¹²A shrewd person sees trouble coming and lies low; the simpleton walks right into it and pays the penalty.

¹³Take the garment of anyone who pledges his word for a stranger; hold it as security for the unknown person.

¹⁴If someone wakes another early with effusive greetings, he might as well curse him!

¹⁵A constant dripping on a rainy day -- that is what a woman's nagging is like.

¹⁶As well try to control the wind as to control her! As well try to pick up oil in one's fingers!

¹⁷As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens the wits of another.

¹⁸He who guards the fig tree will eat its fruit, and he who watches his master's interests will come to honour.

¹⁹As someone sees his face reflected in water, so he sees his own mind reflected in another's.

²⁰Sheol and Abaddon are insatiable; so too the human eye is never satisfied.

²¹The smelting pot is for silver, the crucible for gold; so the character is tested by praise.

²²You may pound a fool in a mortar with a pestle, but his folly will never be knocked out of him.

²³Be careful to know the state of your flock and take good care of your herds;

²⁴for possessions do not last for ever, nor will a crown endure to endless generations.

²⁵The grass is cropped, new shoots are seen, and the green growth on the hills is gathered in;

²⁶the lambs provide you with clothing, and the he-goats with the price of a field,

²⁷while the goats' milk is food enough for your household and sustenance for your servant-girls.

28¹ The wicked flee, even though no one pursues, but the righteous are as confident as young lions.

² It is the fault of a violent person that quarrels start, but they are settled by one who possesses discernment.

³ A tyrant oppressing the poor is like driving rain that ruins the crop.

⁴ Those who abandon God's law applaud the wicked; those who keep it contend with them.

⁵ Evildoers have no understanding of justice, but those who seek the LORD understand it well.

⁶ Better to be poor and above reproach than rich and crooked.

⁷ A discerning son observes God's law, but one who keeps profligate company brings disgrace on his father.

⁸ He who grows rich by lending at discount or at interest is saving for another who will be generous to the poor.

⁹ If anyone turns a deaf ear to God's law, even his prayer is an abomination.

¹⁰ He who tempts the upright into evil ways will himself land in the pit he has dug; but the honest will inherit a fortune.

¹¹ The person who is rich may think himself wise, but the discerning poor will see through him.

¹² When the just triumph, morale is high, but when the wicked come to the top, the people are downtrodden.

¹³ Conceal your offences, and you will not prosper; confess and renounce them, and you will obtain mercy.

¹⁴ Happy are those who are scrupulous in conduct, but if one hardens his heart he falls into misfortune!

¹⁵ Like a roaring lion or a prowling bear is a wicked ruler governing a helpless people.

¹⁶ The leader who is stupid and grasping will perish; he who detests ill-gotten gain will live long.

¹⁷ Anyone charged with bloodshed will jump into a well to escape arrest.

¹⁸ Whoever leads an honest life will be safe, but a rogue will fall into a pit.

¹⁹ Those who cultivate their land will have food in plenty, but those who follow idle pursuits will have poverty in plenty.

²⁰ Someone of steady character will enjoy many blessings, but one in a hurry to get rich will not go unpunished.

²¹ It is invidious to show partiality; wrong may be done for a crust of bread.

²² The miser is in a hurry to become rich, never dreaming that want may overtake him.

²³ Take someone to task and in the end win more thanks than he who has a flattering tongue.

²⁴ To rob your father or mother and say you do no wrong is no better than murder.

²⁵ A grasping person provokes quarrels, but he who trusts in the LORD will prosper.

²⁶ It is stupid to trust to one's own wits, but he whose guide is wisdom will come safely through.

²⁷ He who gives to the poor will never want, but he who turns a blind eye gets nothing but curses.

²⁸ When the wicked come to the top, people go into hiding; but, when they perish, the righteous come into power.

29¹ Someone still stubborn after much reproof will suddenly be broken past mending.

²When the righteous are in power the people rejoice, but they groan when the wicked hold sway.

³A lover of wisdom brings joy to his father, but an associate of harlots squanders wealth.

⁴By just government a king maintains a country, but by extortion it can be brought to ruin.

⁵To flatter a neighbour is to spread a net for his feet.

⁶An evildoer is ensnared by his sin, but the doer of good will live and flourish.

⁷The righteous are concerned for the claims of the helpless, but the wicked cannot understand such concern.

⁸Arrogance can inflame a city, but wisdom averts the people's anger.

⁹If a wise person goes to law with a fool, he will meet with unceasing abuse and derision.

¹⁰Bloodthirsty men hate those who are honest, but the upright see to their interests.

¹¹The stupid give free rein to their anger; the wise wait for it to cool.

¹²If a ruler listens to what liars say, all his ministers become wicked.

¹³The poor and the oppressors have this in common: it is the LORD who gives light to the eyes of both.

¹⁴If a king steadfastly deals out justice to the weak his throne will be secure for ever.

¹⁵Rod and reprimand impart wisdom, but an uncontrolled youth brings shame on his mother.

¹⁶When the wicked are in power, sin is in power, but the righteous will witness their downfall.

¹⁷Correct your son, and he will be a comfort to you and bring you the delights you desire.

¹⁸With no one in authority, the people throw off all restraint, but he who keeps God's law leads them on a straight path.

¹⁹Mere words will not keep a slave in order; he may understand, but he will not respond.

²⁰Do you see someone over-eager to speak? There is more hope for a fool than for him.

²¹Pamper a slave from childhood, and in the end he will prove ungrateful.

²²Someone prone to anger provokes quarrels and a hothead is always committing some offence.

²³Pride will bring anyone low, but honour awaits the lowly.

²⁴He who goes shares with a thief is his own enemy: he hears himself put on oath but divulges nothing.

²⁵Fear of men may prove a snare, but trust in the LORD is a tower of refuge.

²⁶Many seek audience of a ruler, but it is the LORD who decides each case.

²⁷The righteous cannot abide the unjust, nor can the wicked abide him whose conduct is upright.

30¹ Sayings of Agur son of Jakeh from Massa: This is the great man's very word: I am weary, God, I am weary and worn out;

²I am a dumb beast, scarcely a man, without a man's powers of understanding;

³I have not learnt wisdom, nor have I attained to knowledge of the Most Holy One.

⁴Who has ever gone up to heaven and come down again? Who has cupped the wind in the hollow of his hands? Who

has bound up the waters in the fold of his garment? Who has fixed all the boundaries of the earth? What is his name or his son's name? Surely you know!

⁵God's every promise has stood the test: he is a shield to all who take refuge in him.

⁶Add nothing to his words, or he will convict you and expose you as a liar.

⁷Two things I ask of you -- do not withhold them in my lifetime:

⁸put fraud and lying far from me; give me neither poverty nor wealth, but provide me with the food I need,

⁹for if I have too much I shall deny you and say, Who is the LORD? and if I am reduced to poverty I shall steal and besmirch the name of my God.

¹⁰Never disparage a slave to his master, or he will speak ill of you and you will be held guilty.

¹¹There are certain people who defame their fathers and speak ill of their own mothers.

¹²There are people who are pure in their own estimation, yet are not cleansed of their filth.

¹³There are people -- how haughty are their looks, how disdainful their glances!

--

¹⁴there are people whose teeth are swords, whose fangs are knives; they devour the wretched from the earth and the needy from among mankind.

¹⁵The leech has two daughters; Give, says one, and Give, says the other. Three things there are which will never be satisfied, four which never say, Enough!

¹⁶Sheol, a barren woman, a land thirsty for water, and fire that never says, Enough!

¹⁷The eye that mocks a father or scorns a mother's old age will be plucked out by the ravens of the valley or eaten by young vultures.

¹⁸Three things there are which are too wonderful for me, four which are beyond my understanding:

¹⁹the way of an eagle in the sky, the way of a serpent over rock, the way of a ship out at sea, and the way of a man with a girl.

²⁰The way of an unfaithful wife is this: she eats, then wipes her mouth and says, I have done nothing wrong.

²¹ Under three things the earth shakes,
four things it cannot bear:

²² a slave becoming king, a fool gorging
himself,

²³ a hateful woman getting wed, and a
slave supplanting her mistress.

²⁴ Four things there are which are
smallest on earth yet wise beyond the
wisest:

²⁵ ants, a folk with no strength, yet
they prepare their store of food in the
summer;

²⁶ rock-badgers, a feeble folk, yet they
make their home among the rocks;

²⁷ locusts, which have no king, yet they
all sally forth in formation;

²⁸ the lizard, which can be grasped in
the hand, yet is found in the palaces of
kings.

²⁹ Three things there are which are
stately in their stride, four which are
stately as they move:

³⁰ the lion, mighty among beasts, which
will not turn tail for anyone;

³¹ the strutting cock, the he-goat, and a
king going forth at the head of his army.

³² If you are churlish and arrogant and
given to scheming, hold your tongue;

³³ for as the pressing of milk produces curd, and the pressing of the nose produces blood, so the pressing of anger leads to strife.

31 ¹ Sayings of King Lemuel of Massa, which his mother taught him:

² What shall I say to you, my son, child of my womb and answer to my prayers?

³ Do not give the vigour of your manhood to women, or consort with women who bring down kings.

⁴ Lemuel, it is not for kings, not for kings to drink wine, or for those who govern to crave strong liquor.

⁵ If they drink, they will forget rights and customs and twist the law against all who are defenceless.

⁶ Give strong drink to the despairing and wine to the embittered of heart;

⁷ let them drink and forget their poverty and remember their trouble no more.

⁸ Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves; oppose any that go to law against them;

⁹ speak out and pronounce just sentence and give judgement for the wretched and the poor.

¹⁰WHO can find a good wife? Her worth is far beyond red coral.

¹¹Her husband's whole trust is in her, and children are not lacking.

¹²She works to bring him good, not evil, all the days of her life.

¹³She chooses wool and flax and with a will she sets about her work.

¹⁴Like a ship laden with merchandise she brings home food from far off.

¹⁵She rises while it is still dark and apportions food for her household, with a due share for her servants.

¹⁶After careful thought she buys a field and plants a vineyard out of her earnings.

¹⁷She sets about her duties resolutely and tackles her work with vigour.

¹⁸She sees that her business goes well, and all night long her lamp does not go out.

¹⁹She holds the distaff in her hand, and her fingers grasp the spindle.

²⁰She is open-handed to the wretched and extends help to the poor.

²¹When it snows she has no fear for her household, for they are wrapped in double cloaks.

²² She makes her own bed coverings and clothing of fine linen and purple.

²³ Her husband is well known in the assembly, where he takes his seat with the elders of the region.

²⁴ She weaves linen and sells it, and supplies merchants with sashes.

²⁵ She is clothed in strength and dignity and can afford to laugh at tomorrow.

²⁶ When she opens her mouth, it is to speak wisely; her teaching is sound.

²⁷ She keeps her eye on the conduct of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness.

²⁸ Her sons with one accord extol her virtues; her husband too is loud in her praise:

²⁹ Many a woman shows how gifted she is; but you excel them all.

³⁰ Charm is deceptive and beauty fleeting; but the woman who fears the LORD is honoured.

³¹ Praise her for all she has accomplished; let her achievements bring her honour at the city gates.

Ecclesiastes

1 ¹ THE words of the Speaker, the son of David, king in Jerusalem.

² Futility, utter futility, says the Speaker, everything is futile.

³ What does anyone profit from all his labour and toil here under the sun?

⁴ Generations come and generations go, while the earth endures for ever.

⁵ The sun rises and the sun goes down; then it speeds to its place and rises there again.

⁶ The wind blows to the south, it veers to the north; round and round it goes and returns full circle.

⁷ All streams run to the sea, yet the sea never overflows; back to the place from which the streams ran they return to run again.

⁸ All things are wearisome. No one can describe them all, no eye can see them all, no ear can hear them all.

⁹ What has happened will happen again, and what has been done will be done

again; there is nothing new under the sun.

¹⁰Is there anything of which it can be said, Look, this is new? No, it was already in existence, long before our time.

¹¹Those who lived in the past are not remembered, and those who follow will not be remembered by those who follow them.

¹²I, the Speaker, ruled as king over Israel in Jerusalem;

¹³and I applied my mind to study and explore by means of wisdom all that is done under heaven. It is a worthless task that God has given to mortals to keep them occupied.

¹⁴I have seen everything that has been done here under the sun; it is all futility and a chasing of the wind.

¹⁵What is crooked cannot become straight; what is not there cannot be counted.

¹⁶I thought to myself, I have amassed great wisdom, surpassing all my predecessors on the throne at Jerusalem; I have become familiar with wisdom and knowledge.

¹⁷ So I applied my mind to understanding wisdom and knowledge, madness and folly, and I came to see that this too is a chasing of the wind.

¹⁸ For in much wisdom is much vexation; the more knowledge, the more suffering.

2¹ I said to myself, Come, I will test myself with pleasure and get enjoyment; but that too was futile.

² Of laughter I said, It is madness! And of pleasure, What is the good of that?

³ I sought how to cheer my body with wine, and, though my mind was still guiding me with wisdom, how to pursue folly; I hoped to find out what was good for mortals to do under heaven during their brief span of life.

⁴ I undertook great works; I built myself palaces and planted vineyards;

⁵ I made myself gardens and orchards, planted with every kind of fruit tree.

⁶ I constructed ponds from which to water a grove of growing trees;

⁷ I acquired male and female slaves, and I had my home-born slaves as well; I owned possessions, more flocks and

herds than any of my predecessors in Jerusalem;

⁸I also amassed silver and gold, the treasure of kings and provinces; I got for myself minstrels, male and female, and everything that affords delight.

⁹I achieved greatness, surpassing all my predecessors in Jerusalem; and my wisdom stood me in good stead.

¹⁰I did not refuse my eyes anything they coveted; I did not deny myself any pleasure. Indeed I found pleasure in all my labour, and for all my labour this was my reward.

¹¹I considered my handiwork, all my labour and toil: it was futility, all of it, and a chasing of the wind, of no profit under the sun.

¹²Then I considered wisdom and madness and folly.

¹³I saw that wisdom is more profitable than folly, as light is more profitable than darkness:

¹⁴the wise person has eyes in his head, but the fool walks in the dark. Yet I realized also that one and the same fate overtakes them both.

¹⁵ So I thought, I too shall suffer the fate of the fool. To what purpose have I been wise? Where is the profit? Even this, I said to myself, is futile.

¹⁶ The wise person is remembered no longer than the fool, because in the days to come both will have been forgotten. Alas, both wise and foolish are doomed to die!

¹⁷ So I came to hate life, since everything that was done here under the sun was a trouble to me; for all is futility and a chasing of the wind.

¹⁸ I came to hate all my labour and toil here under the sun, since I should have to leave its fruits to my successor. What will the king's successor do? Will he do what has been done before?

¹⁹ Who knows whether he will be wise or foolish? Yet he will have in his control all the fruits of my labour and skill here under the sun. This too is futility.

²⁰ Then I turned and gave myself up to despair, as I reflected on all my labour and toil here under the sun.

²¹ For though someone toils with wisdom, knowledge, and skill he must leave it all to one who has spent no

labour on it. This too is futility and a great wrong.

²²What reward does anyone have for all his labour, his planning, and his toil here under the sun?

²³His lifelong activity is pain and vexation to him; even in the night he has no peace of mind. This too is futility.

²⁴To eat and drink and experience pleasure in return for his labours, this does not come from any good in a person: it comes from God.

²⁵For without God who can eat with enjoyment?

²⁶He gives wisdom and knowledge and joy to whosoever is pleasing to him, while to the one who fails to please him is given the task of gathering and amassing wealth only to hand it over to someone else who does please God. This too is futility and a chasing of the wind.

3¹FOR everything its season, and for every activity under heaven its time:

²a time to be born and a time to die; a time to plant and a time to uproot;

³a time to kill and a time to heal; a time to break down and a time to build up;

⁴ a time to weep and a time to laugh;
a time for mourning and a time for
dancing;

⁵ a time to scatter stones and a time to
gather them; a time to embrace and a
time to abstain from embracing;

⁶ a time to seek and a time to lose; a
time to keep and a time to discard;

⁷ a time to tear and a time to mend; a
time for silence and a time for speech;

⁸ a time to love and a time to hate; a
time for war and a time for peace.

⁹ What profit has the worker from his
labour?

¹⁰ I have seen the task that God has
given to mortals to keep them occupied.

¹¹ He has made everything to suit its
time; moreover he has given mankind
a sense of past and future, but no
comprehension of God's work from
beginning to end.

¹² I know that there is nothing good for
anyone except to be happy and live the
best life he can while he is alive.

¹³ Indeed, that everyone should eat and
drink and enjoy himself, in return for all
his labours, is a gift of God.

¹⁴I know that whatever God does lasts for ever; there is no adding to it, no taking away. And he has done it all in such a way that everyone must feel awe in his presence.

¹⁵Whatever is has been already, and whatever is to come has been already, with God summoning each event back in its turn.

¹⁶Moreover I saw here under the sun that, where justice ought to be, there was wickedness; and where righteousness ought to be, there was wickedness.

¹⁷I said to myself, God will judge the just and the wicked equally; for every activity and every purpose has its proper time.

¹⁸I said to myself, In dealing with human beings it is God's purpose to test them and to see what they truly are.

¹⁹Human beings and beasts share one and the same fate: death comes to both alike. They all draw the same breath. Man has no advantage over beast, for everything is futility.

²⁰All go to the same place: all came from the dust, and to the dust all return.

²¹ Who knows whether the spirit of a human being goes upward or whether the spirit of a beast goes downward to the earth?

²² So I saw that there is nothing better than that all should enjoy their work, since that is their lot. For who will put them in a position to see what will happen afterwards?

4¹ Again, I considered all the acts of oppression perpetrated under the sun; I saw the tears of the oppressed, and there was no one to comfort them. Power was on the side of their oppressors, and there was no one to afford comfort.

² I accounted the dead happy because they were already dead, happier than the living who still have lives to live;

³ more fortunate than either I reckoned those yet unborn, who have not witnessed the wicked deeds done here under the sun.

⁴ I considered all toil and all achievement and saw that it springs from rivalry between one person and another. This too is futility and a chasing of the wind.

⁵The fool folds his arms and wastes away.

⁶Better one hand full, along with peace of mind, than two full, along with toil; that is a chasing of the wind.

⁷Here again I saw futility under the sun:

⁸someone without a friend, without son or brother, toiling endlessly yet never satisfied with his wealth -- For whom, he asks, am I toiling and denying myself the good things of life? This too is futile, a worthless task.

⁹Two are better than one, for their partnership yields this advantage:

¹⁰if one falls, the other can help his companion up again; but woe betide the solitary person who when down has no partner to help him up.

¹¹And if two lie side by side they keep each other warm; but how can one keep warm by himself?

¹²If anyone is alone, an assailant may overpower him, but two can resist; and a cord of three strands is not quickly snapped.

¹³ Better a poor and wise youth than an old and foolish king who will listen no longer to advice.

¹⁴ One who has been in prison may well rise to be king, though born a pauper in his future kingdom.

¹⁵ But I have studied all life here under the sun, and I saw his place taken by yet another young man,

¹⁶ and no limit set to the number of people he ruled. He in turn will give no joy to those who come after him. This too is futility and a chasing of the wind.

5¹ Go circumspectly when you visit the house of God. Better draw near in obedience than offer the sacrifice of fools, who sin without a thought.

² Do not be impulsive in speech, nor be guilty of hasty utterance in God's presence. God is in heaven and you are on earth, so let your words be few.

³ Dreams come with much business; the voice of the fool comes with much chatter.

⁴ When you make a vow to God, do not be dilatory in paying it, for he has no use for fools. Whatever you vow, pay!

⁵ Better not vow at all than vow and fail to pay.

⁶ Do not let your tongue lead you into sin, and then say before the angel of God that it was unintentional, or God will be angry at your words, and all your achievements will be brought to nothing.

⁷ A profusion of dreams and a profusion of words are futile. Therefore fear God.

⁸ If in some province you witness the oppression of the poor and the denial of right and justice, do not be surprised at what goes on, for every official has a higher one set over him, and the highest keeps watch over them all.

⁹ The best thing for a country is a king whose own lands are well tilled.

¹⁰ No one who loves money can ever have enough, and no one who loves wealth enjoys any return from it. This too is futility.

¹¹ When riches increase, so does the number of parasites living off them; and what advantage has the owner, except to feast his eyes on them?

¹² Sweet is the sleep of a labourer whether he has little or much to eat, but

the rich man who has too much cannot sleep.

¹³There is a singular evil here under the sun which I have seen: a man hoards wealth to his own hurt,

¹⁴in that the wealth is lost through an unlucky venture, and the owner's son is left with nothing.

¹⁵As he came from the womb of mother earth, so, naked as he came, must he return; all his toil produces nothing he can take away with him.

¹⁶This too is a singular evil: exactly as he came, so shall he go, and what profit does he get when his labour is all for the wind?

¹⁷What is more, all his days are overshadowed; gnawing anxiety and great vexation are his lot, sickness and resentment.

¹⁸This is what I have seen: that it is good and proper for a man to eat and drink and enjoy himself in return for his labours here under the sun, throughout the brief span of life which God has allotted him.

¹⁹Moreover, it is a gift of God that everyone to whom he has granted wealth

and riches and the power to enjoy them should accept his lot and rejoice in his labour.

²⁰He will not brood overmuch on the passing years, for God fills his time with joy of heart.

6¹ Here is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it weighs heavily on the human race.

²Consider someone to whom God grants wealth, riches, and substance, and who lacks nothing that his heart is set on: if God has not given him the power to enjoy these things, but a stranger enjoys them instead, that is futility and a dire affliction.

³Or someone may have a hundred children and live to a great age; but however many his days may be, if he does not gain satisfaction from the good things of life and in the end receives no burial, then I maintain that the stillborn child is in better case than he.

⁴Its coming is a futile thing, it departs into darkness, and in darkness its name is hidden;

⁵it has never seen the sun or known anything, yet its state is better than his.

⁶What if the man should live a thousand years twice over, and have no enjoyment? Do not both go to the same place?

⁷The end of all man's toil is but to fill his belly, yet his appetite is never satisfied.

⁸What advantage then in facing life has the wise man over the fool, or what advantage has the pauper for all his experience?

⁹It is better to be satisfied with what is before your eyes than to give rein to desire; this too is futility and a chasing of the wind.

¹⁰Whatever exists has already been given a name; it is known what human beings are and they cannot contend with one who is stronger than they.

¹¹The more words used the greater is the futility of it all; and where is the advantage to anyone?

¹²For who can know what is good for anyone in this life, this brief span of futile existence through which one passes like a shadow? What is to happen afterwards here under the sun, who can tell?

7¹ A GOOD name smells sweeter than fragrant ointment, and the day of death is better than the day of birth.

²It is better to visit a house of mourning than a house of feasting; for to be mourned is the lot of everyone, and the living should take this to heart.

³Grief is better than laughter: a sad face may go with a cheerful heart.

⁴The thoughts of the wise are at home in the house of mourning, but a fool's thoughts in the house of mirth.

⁵It is better to listen to the rebukes of the wise than to the songs of fools.

⁶For the laughter of fools is like the crackling of thorns under a pot. That too is futility.

⁷Oppression drives the wise crazy, and a bribe corrupts the mind.

⁸Better the end of anything than its beginning; better patience than pride!

⁹Do not be quick to take offence, for it is fools who nurse resentment.

¹⁰Do not ask why the old days were better than the present; for that is a foolish question.

¹¹Wisdom is better than possessions and an advantage to all who see the sun.

¹² Better have wisdom behind you than money; wisdom profits by giving life to those who possess her.

¹³ Consider God's handiwork; who can straighten what he has made crooked?

¹⁴ When things go well, be glad; but when they go ill, consider this: God has set the one alongside the other in such a way that no one can find out what is to happen afterwards.

¹⁵ In my futile existence I have seen it all, from the righteous perishing in their righteousness to the wicked growing old in wickedness.

¹⁶ Do not be over-righteous and do not be over-wise. Why should you destroy yourself?

¹⁷ Do not be over-wicked and do not be a fool. Why die before your time?

¹⁸ It is good to hold on to the one thing and not lose hold of the other; for someone who fears God will succeed both ways.

¹⁹ Wisdom makes the possessor of wisdom stronger than ten rulers in a city.

²⁰ There is no one on earth so righteous that he always does right and never does wrong.

²¹ Moreover, do not pay attention to everything folk say, or you may hear your servant speak ill of you;

²² for you know very well how many times you yourself have spoken ill of others.

²³ All this I have put to the test of wisdom. I said, I am resolved to be wise, but wisdom was beyond my reach --

²⁴ whatever has happened lies out of reach, deep down, deeper than anyone can fathom.

²⁵ I went on to reflect how I could know, enquire, and search for wisdom and for the reason in things, only to discover that it is folly to be wicked and madness to act like a fool.

²⁶ I find more bitter than death the woman whose heart is a net to catch and whose hands are fetters. He who is pleasing to God may escape her, but the sinner she will entrap.

²⁷ See, says the Speaker, this is what I have found, reasoning things out one by one,

²⁸ after searching long without success: I have found one man in a thousand

worthy to be called upright, but I have not found one woman among them all.

²⁹This alone I have found: that God, when he made man, made him straightforward, but men invent endless subtleties of their own.

8¹ Who here is wise enough? Who has insight into the meaning of anything? Wisdom lights up a person's face, and the boldness of his aspect is changed.

²Do as the king commands you, and if you have to swear by God,

³do not rush into it. Do not persist in something which displeases the king, and leave his presence, for he can do whatever he likes.

⁴His word is sovereign, and who can call in question what he does?

⁵Whoever obeys a command will come to no harm. One who is wise knows in his heart the right time and method for action.

⁶Every enterprise has its time and method, although man is greatly troubled

⁷by ignorance of the future; who can tell him what it will bring?

⁸It is not in anyone's power to retain the breath of life, and no one has power over the day of death. In war no one can lay aside his arms, no wealth will save its possessor.

⁹All this I have seen, having applied my mind to everything done under the sun, at a time when one person had power over another and could make him suffer.

¹⁰It was then that I saw scoundrels approaching and even entering the holy place; and they went about the city priding themselves on having done right. This too is futility.

¹¹It is because sentence upon a wicked act is not promptly carried out that evildoers are emboldened to act.

¹²A sinner may do wrong and live to old age, yet I know that it will be well with those who fear God: their fear of him ensures this.

¹³But it will not be well with the evildoer, nor will his days lengthen like a shadow, because he does not fear God.

¹⁴There is a futile thing found on earth: sometimes the just person gets what is due to the unjust, and the unjust what is

due to the just. I maintain that this too is futility.

¹⁵So I commend enjoyment, since there is nothing good for anyone to do here under the sun but to eat and drink and enjoy himself; this is all that will remain with him to reward his toil throughout the span of life which God grants him here under the sun.

¹⁶I applied my mind to acquire wisdom and to observe the tasks undertaken on earth, when mortal eyes are never closed in sleep day or night;

¹⁷and always I perceived that God has so ordered it that no human being should be able to discover what is happening here under the sun. However hard he may try, he will not find out; the wise may think they know, but they cannot find the truth of it.

9¹To all this I applied my mind, and I understood -- that the righteous and the wise and whatever they do are under God's control; but whether they will earn love or hatred they have no way of knowing. Everything that confronts them, everything is futile,

²since one and the same fate comes to all, just and unjust alike, good and bad, ritually clean and unclean, to the one who offers sacrifice and to the one who does not. The good and the sinner fare alike, he who can take an oath and he who dares not.

³This is what is wrong in all that is done here under the sun: that one and the same fate befalls everyone. The minds of mortals are full of evil; there is madness in their minds throughout their lives, and afterwards they go down to join the dead.

⁴But for anyone who is counted among the living there is still hope: remember, a live dog is better than a dead lion.

⁵True, the living know that they will die; but the dead know nothing. There is no more reward for them; all memory of them is forgotten.

⁶For them love, hate, rivalry, all are now over. Never again will they have any part in what is done here under the sun.

⁷Go, then, eat your food and enjoy it, and drink your wine with a cheerful heart; for God has already accepted what you have done.

⁸Always be dressed in white, and never fail to anoint your head.

⁹Enjoy life with a woman you love all the days of your allotted span here under the sun, futile as they are; for that is your lot while you live and labour here under the sun.

¹⁰Whatever task lies to your hand, do it with might; because in Sheol, for which you are bound, there is neither doing nor thinking, neither understanding nor wisdom.

¹¹One more thing I have observed here under the sun: swiftness does not win the race nor strength the battle. Food does not belong to the wise, nor wealth to the intelligent, nor success to the skilful; time and chance govern all.

¹²Moreover, no one knows when his hour will come; like fish caught in the destroying net, like a bird taken in a snare, so the people are trapped when misfortune comes suddenly on them.

¹³This too is an example of wisdom as I have observed it here under the sun, and I find it of great significance.

¹⁴There was once a small town with few inhabitants, which a great king came to

attack; he surrounded it and constructed huge siege-works against it.

¹⁵There was in it a poor wise man, and he saved the town by his wisdom. But no one remembered that poor man.

¹⁶I thought, Surely wisdom is better than strength; but a poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words go unheeded.

¹⁷A wise man speaking quietly is more to be heeded than a commander shouting orders among fools.

¹⁸Wisdom is better than weapons of war, but one mistake can undo many things done well.

10¹Dead flies make the sweet ointment of the perfumer turn rancid and ferment; so a little folly can make wisdom lose its worth.

²The minds of the wise turn to the right, but the mind of a fool to the left.

³Even when he travels, the fool shows no sense and reveals to everyone how foolish he is.

⁴If the anger of the ruler flares up at you, do not leave your post; submission makes amends for grave offences.

⁵There is an evil that I have observed here under the sun, an error for which rulers are responsible:

⁶fools are given high office, while the rich occupy humble positions.

⁷I have seen slaves on horseback and men of high rank going on foot like slaves.

⁸He who digs a pit may fall into it, and he who breaks down a wall may be bitten by a snake.

⁹He who quarries stones may be hurt by them, and the woodcutter runs a risk of injury.

¹⁰If the axe is blunt for lack of sharpening, then one must use more force; the skilled worker has a better chance of success.

¹¹If a snake bites before it is charmed, the snake-charmer loses his fee.

¹²Wise words win favour, but a fool's tongue is his undoing.

¹³He begins by talking nonsense and ends in mischief run mad.

¹⁴A fool talks at great length; but no one knows what is coming, and what will come after that, who can tell?

¹⁵The fool wearies himself to death with his exertions; he does not even know the way to town!

¹⁶Woe betide the land when a slave becomes its king, and its princes begin feasting in the morning.

¹⁷Happy the land when its king is nobly born, and its princes feast at the right time of day, with self-control, and not as drunkards.

¹⁸If the owner is negligent the rafters collapse, and if his hands are idle the house leaks.

¹⁹The table has its pleasures, and wine makes for a cheerful life; but money meets all demands.

²⁰Do not speak ill of the king when you are at rest, or of a rich man even when you are in your bedroom, for a bird may carry your voice, a winged creature may repeat what you say.

11 ¹Send your grain across the seas, and in time you will get a return.

²Divide your merchandise among seven or perhaps eight ventures, since you do not know what disasters are in store for the world.

³If the clouds are heavy with rain, they will shed it on the earth; whether a tree falls south or north, it must lie as it falls.

⁴He who keeps watching the wind will never sow, and he who keeps his eye on the clouds will never reap.

⁵As you do not know how a pregnant woman comes to have a body and a living spirit in her womb, so you do not know the work of God, the maker of all things.

⁶In the morning sow your seed in good time, and do not let your hands slack off until evening, for you do not know whether this or that sowing will be successful, or whether both alike will do well.

⁷The light of day is sweet, and pleasant to the eye is the sight of the sun.

⁸However many years a person may live, he should rejoice in all of them. But let him remember the days of darkness, for they will be many. Everything that is to come will be futility.

⁹DELIGHT in your youth, young man, make the most of your early days; let your heart and your eyes show you the

way; but remember that for all these things God will call you to account.

¹⁰Banish vexation from your mind, and shake off the troubles of the body, for youth and the prime of life are mere futility.

12¹ Remember your Creator in the days of your youth, before the bad times come and the years draw near when you will say, I have no pleasure in them,

²before the sun and the light of day give place to darkness, before the moon and the stars grow dim, and the clouds return with the rain.

³Remember him in the day when the guardians of the house become unsteady, and the strong men stoop, when the women grinding the meal cease work because they are few, and those who look through the windows can see no longer,

⁴when the street doors are shut, when the sound of the mill fades, when the chirping of the sparrow grows faint and the songbirds fall silent;

⁵when people are afraid of a steep place and the street is full of terrors,

when the blossom whitens on the almond tree and the locust can only crawl and the caper-buds no longer give zest. For mortals depart to their everlasting home, and the mourners go about the street.

⁶Remember your Creator before the silver cord is snapped and the golden bowl is broken, before the pitcher is shattered at the spring and the wheel broken at the well,

⁷before the dust returns to the earth as it began and the spirit returns to God who gave it.

⁸Utter futility, says the Speaker, everything is futile.

⁹So the Speaker, in his wisdom, continued to instruct the people. He turned over many maxims in his mind and sought how best to set them out.

¹⁰He chose his words to give pleasure, but what he wrote was straight truth.

¹¹The sayings of the wise are sharp as goads, like nails driven home; they guide the assembled people, for they come from one shepherd.

¹²One further warning, my son: there is no end to the writing of books, and much study is wearisome.

¹³This is the end of the matter: you have heard it all. Fear God and obey his commandments; this sums up the duty of mankind.

¹⁴For God will bring everything we do to judgement, every secret, whether good or bad.

The Song of Songs

- 1** ¹ SOLOMON'S song of songs:
² Bride May he smother me with kisses. Your love is more fragrant than wine,
³ fragrant is the scent of your anointing oils, and your name is like those oils poured out; that is why maidens love you.
⁴ Take me with you, let us make haste; bring me into your chamber, O king. Companions Let us rejoice and be glad for you; let us praise your love more than wine, your caresses more than rare wine.
⁵ Bride Daughters of Jerusalem, I am dark and lovely, like the tents of Kedar or the tent curtains of Shalmah.
⁶ Do not look down on me; dark of hue I may be because I was scorched by the sun, when my mother's sons were displeased with me and sent me to watch over the vineyards; but my own vineyard I did not watch over!

⁷Tell me, my true love, where you mind your flocks, where you rest them at noon, that I may not be left picking lice as I sit among your companions' herds.

⁸Bridegroom If you do not know, O fairest of women, go, follow the tracks of the sheep and graze your young goats by the shepherds' huts.

⁹I would compare you, my dearest, to a chariot-horse of Pharaoh.

¹⁰Your cheeks are lovely between plaited tresses, your neck with its jewelled chains.

¹¹Companions We shall make you braided plaits of gold set with beads of silver.

¹²Bride While the king reclines on his couch, my spikenard gives forth its scent.

¹³My beloved is for me a sachet of myrrh lying between my breasts;

¹⁴my beloved is for me a spray of henna blossom from the vineyards of En-gedi.

¹⁵Bridegroom How beautiful you are, my dearest, ah, how beautiful, your eyes are like doves!

¹⁶Bride How beautiful you are, my love, and how handsome! Bridegroom Our couch is shaded with branches;

¹⁷the beams of our house are of cedar, our rafters are all of pine.

2¹Bride I am a rose of Sharon, a lily growing in the valley.

²Bridegroom A lily among thorns is my dearest among the maidens.

³Bride Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest, so is my beloved among young men. To sit in his shadow is my delight, and his fruit is sweet to my taste.

⁴He has taken me into the wine-garden and given me loving glances.

⁵Sustain me with raisins, revive me with apples; for I am faint with love.

⁶His left arm pillows my head, his right arm is round me.

⁷Bridegroom I charge you, maidens of Jerusalem, by the spirits and the goddesses of the field: Do not rouse or awaken love until it is ready.

⁸Bride Hark! My beloved! Here he comes, bounding over the mountains, leaping over the hills.

⁹My beloved is like a gazelle or a young stag. There he stands outside our wall, peering in at the windows, gazing through the lattice.

¹⁰My beloved spoke, saying to me: Rise up, my darling; my fair one, come away.

¹¹For see, the winter is past! The rains are over and gone;

¹²the flowers appear in the countryside; the season of birdsong is come, and the turtle-dove's cooing is heard in our land;

¹³the green figs ripen on the fig trees and the vine blossoms give forth their fragrance. Rise up, my darling; my fair one, come away.

¹⁴Bridegroom My dove, that hides in holes in the cliffs or in crannies on the terraced hillside, let me see your face and hear your voice; for your voice is sweet, your face is lovely.

¹⁵Companions Catch the jackals for us, the little jackals, the despoilers of vineyards, for our vineyards are full of blossom.

¹⁶Bride My beloved is mine and I am his; he grazes his flock among the lilies.

¹⁷While the day is cool and the shadows are dispersing, turn, my beloved, and

show yourself a gazelle or a young stag on the hills where aromatic spices grow.

3¹ Night after night on my bed I have sought my true love; I have sought him, but I have not found him.

² I said, I will rise and go the rounds of the city through streets and squares, seeking my true love. I sought him, but could not find him.

³ The watchmen came upon me, as they made their rounds of the city. Have you seen my true love? I asked them.

⁴ Scarcely had I left them behind when I met my true love. I held him and would not let him go till I had brought him to my mother's house, to the room of her who conceived me.

⁵ Bridegroom I charge you, maidens of Jerusalem, by the spirits and the goddesses of the field: Do not rouse or awaken love until it is ready.

⁶ Companions Who is this coming up from the wilderness like a column of smoke from the burning of myrrh and frankincense, of all the powdered spices that merchants bring?

⁷ Look! It is Solomon carried in his state litter, escorted by sixty of Israel's picked warriors,

⁸ all of them skilled swordsmen, all expert in handling arms, each with his sword ready at his side against the terrors of the night.

⁹ The palanquin which King Solomon had made for himself was of wood from Lebanon.

¹⁰ Its uprights were made of silver, its headrest of gold; its seat was of purple stuff, its lining of leather.

¹¹ Come out, maidens of Jerusalem; you maidens of Zion, welcome King Solomon, wearing the crown which his mother placed on his head on his wedding day, his day of joy.

4¹ Bridegroom How beautiful you are, my dearest, how beautiful! Your eyes are doves behind your veil, your hair like a flock of goats streaming down Mount Gilead.

² Your teeth are like a flock of ewes newly shorn, freshly come up from the dipping; all of them have twins, and none has lost a lamb.

³Your lips are like a scarlet thread, and your mouth is lovely; your parted lips behind your veil are like a pomegranate cut open.

⁴Your neck is like David's tower, which is built with encircling courses; a thousand bucklers hang upon it, and all are warriors' shields.

⁵Your two breasts are like two fawns, twin fawns of a gazelle grazing among the lilies.

⁶While the day is cool and the shadows are dispersing, I shall take myself to the mountains of myrrh and to the hill of frankincense.

⁷You are beautiful, my dearest, beautiful without a flaw.

⁸Come with me from Lebanon, my bride; come with me from Lebanon. Hurry down from the summit of Amana, from the top of Senir and Hermon, from the lions' lairs, and the leopard-haunted hills.

⁹You have stolen my heart, my sister, you have stolen it, my bride, with just one of your eyes, one jewel of your necklace.

¹⁰How beautiful are your breasts, my sister and bride! Your love is more fragrant than wine, your perfumes sweeter than any spices.

¹¹Your lips drop sweetness like the honeycomb, my bride, honey and milk are under your tongue, and your dress has the scent of Lebanon.

¹²My sister, my bride, is a garden close-locked, a garden close-locked, a fountain sealed.

¹³Your two cheeks are an orchard of pomegranates, an orchard full of choice fruits:

¹⁴spikenard and saffron, aromatic cane and cinnamon with every frankincense tree, myrrh and aloes with all the most exquisite spices.

¹⁵Bride The fountain in my garden is a spring of running water flowing down from Lebanon.

¹⁶Awake, north wind, and come, south wind! Blow upon my garden to spread its spices abroad, that my beloved may come to his garden and enjoy the choice fruit.

5¹ Bridegroom I have come to my garden, my sister and bride; I have

gathered my myrrh and my spices; I have eaten my honeycomb and my honey, and drunk my wine and my milk. Eat, friends, and drink deep, till you are drunk with love.

²Bride I sleep, but my heart is awake. Listen! My beloved is knocking: Open to me, my sister, my dearest, my dove, my perfect one; for my head is drenched with dew, my locks with the moisture of the night.

³I have put off my robe; must I put it on again? I have bathed my feet; must I dirty them again?

⁴When my beloved slipped his hand through the latch-hole, my heart turned over.

⁵When I arose to open for my beloved, my hands dripped with myrrh; the liquid myrrh from my fingers ran over the handle of the latch.

⁶I opened to my love, but my love had turned away and was gone; my heart sank when he turned his back. I sought him, but could not find him, I called, but there was no answer.

⁷The watchmen came upon me, as they made their rounds of the city. They beat

and wounded me, and those on the walls stripped off my cloak.

⁸Maidens of Jerusalem, I charge you, if you find my beloved, to tell him that I am faint with love.

⁹Companions What is your beloved more than any other, O fairest of women? What is your beloved more than any other, that you should give us this charge?

¹⁰Bride My beloved is fair and desirable, a paragon among ten thousand.

¹¹His head is gold, finest gold. His locks are like palm-fronds, black as the raven.

¹²His eyes are like doves beside pools of water, in their setting bathed as it were in milk.

¹³His cheeks are like beds of spices, terraces full of perfumes; his lips are lilies, they drop liquid myrrh.

¹⁴His arms are golden rods set with topaz, his belly a plaque of ivory adorned with sapphires.

¹⁵His legs are pillars of marble set on bases of finest gold; his aspect is like Lebanon, noble as cedars.

¹⁶His mouth is sweetness itself, wholly desirable. Such is my beloved, such is my darling, O maidens of Jerusalem.

6¹Companions Where has your beloved gone, O fairest of women? Which way did your beloved turn, that we may look for him with you?

²Bride My beloved has gone down to his garden, to the beds where balsam grows, to delight in the gardens, and to pick the lilies.

³I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine; he grazes his flock among the lilies.

⁴Bridegroom You are beautiful as Tirzah, my dearest, lovely as Jerusalem.

⁵Turn your eyes away from me; they dazzle me. Your hair is like a flock of goats streaming down Mount Gilead;

⁶your teeth are like a flock of ewes newly come up from the dipping, all of them have twins, and none has lost a lamb.

⁷Your parted lips behind your veil are like a pomegranate cut open.

⁸There may be three score princesses, four score concubines, and young women past counting,

⁹but there is one alone, my dove, my perfect one, her mother's only child, the favourite of the one who bore her. Maidens see her and call her happy, princesses and concubines sing her praises.

¹⁰Who is this that looks out like the dawn, beautiful as the moon, radiant as the sun, majestic as the starry heavens?

¹¹I went down to a garden of nut trees to look at the green shoots of the palms, to see if the vine had budded or the pomegranates were in flower.

¹²I did not recognize myself: she made me a prince chosen from myriads of my people.

¹³Companions Come back, O Shulammite, come back; come back, that we may gaze on you. Bridegroom How you love to gaze on the Shulammite, as she moves between the lines of dancers!

7¹How beautiful are your sandalled feet, O prince's daughter! The curves of your thighs are like ornaments devised by a skilled craftsman.

²Your navel is a rounded goblet that will never lack spiced wine. Your belly is a heap of wheat encircled by lilies.

³Your two breasts are like two fawns, twin fawns of a gazelle.

⁴Your neck is like a tower of ivory. Your eyes are the pools in Heshbon, beside the gate of the crowded city. Your nose is like towering Lebanon that looks towards Damascus.

⁵You carry your head like Carmel; your flowing locks are lustrous black, tresses braided with ribbons.

⁶How beautiful, how entrancing you are, my loved one, daughter of delights!

⁷You are stately as a palm tree, and your breasts are like clusters of fruit.

⁸I said, Let me climb up into the palm to grasp its fronds. May I find your breasts like clusters of grapes on the vine, your breath sweet-scented like apples,

⁹Your mouth like fragrant wine flowing smoothly to meet my caresses, gliding over my lips and teeth.

¹⁰Bride I am my beloved's, his longing is all for me.

¹¹ Come, my beloved, let us go out into the fields to lie among the henna bushes;

¹² let us go early to the vineyards and see if the vine has budded or its blossom opened, or if the pomegranates are in flower. There I shall give you my love,

¹³ when the mandrakes yield their perfume, and all choice fruits are ready at our door, fruits new and old which I have in store for you, my love.

8¹ If only you were to me like a brother nursed at my mother's breast! Then if I came upon you outside, I could kiss you, and no one would despise me.

² I should lead you to the house of my mother, bring you to her who conceived me; I should give you mulled wine to drink and the fresh juice of my pomegranates.

³ His left arm pillows my head, his right arm is round me.

⁴ Bridegroom I charge you, maidens of Jerusalem: Do not rouse or awaken love until it is ready.

⁵ Companions Who is this coming up from the wilderness leaning on her beloved? Bridegroom Under the apple

tree I roused you. It was there your mother was in labour with you, there she who bore you was in labour.

⁶Wear me as a seal over your heart, as a seal upon your arm; for love is strong as death, passion cruel as the grave; it blazes up like a blazing fire, fiercer than any flame.

⁷Many waters cannot quench love, no flood can sweep it away; if someone were to offer for love all the wealth in his house, it would be laughed to scorn.

⁸Companions We have a little sister who as yet has no breasts. What shall we do with our sister when she is asked in marriage?

⁹If she is a wall, we shall build on it a silver parapet; if she is a door, we shall bar it with a plank of cedarwood.

¹⁰Bride I am a wall, and my breasts are like towers; so in his eyes I am as one who brings content.

¹¹Solomon has a vineyard at Baalhamon; he has given his vineyard to others to guard; each is to bring for its fruit a thousand pieces of silver.

¹²My vineyard is mine to give; keep your thousand pieces, O Solomon; those

who guard the fruit shall have two hundred.

¹³Bridegroom My bride, you sit in my garden, and my friends are listening to your voice. Let me hear it too.

¹⁴Bride Come into the open, my beloved, and show yourself like a gazelle or a young stag on the spice-bearing mountains.

Isaiah

1 ¹ THE vision which Isaiah son of Amoz had about Judah and Jerusalem during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah.

² Let the heavens and the earth give ear, for it is the LORD who speaks: I reared children and brought them up, but they have rebelled against me.

³ An ox knows its owner and a donkey its master's stall; but Israel lacks all knowledge, my people has no discernment.

⁴ You sinful nation, a people weighed down with iniquity, a race of evildoers, children whose lives are depraved, who have deserted the LORD, spurned the Holy One of Israel, and turned your backs on him!

⁵ Why do you invite more punishment, why persist in your defection? Your head is all covered with sores, your whole body is bruised;

⁶ from head to foot there is not a sound spot in you -- nothing but weals and

welts and raw wounds which have not felt compress or bandage or the soothing touch of oil.

⁷Your country is desolate, your cities burnt down. Before your eyes strangers devour your land; it is as desolate as Sodom after its overthrow.

⁸Only Zion is left, like a watchman's shelter in a vineyard, like a hut in a plot of cucumbers, like a beleaguered city.

⁹Had the LORD of Hosts not left us a few survivors, we should have become like Sodom, no better than Gomorrah.

¹⁰Listen to the word of the LORD, you rulers of Sodom; give ear to the teaching of our God, you people of Gomorrah:

¹¹Your countless sacrifices, what are they to me? says the LORD. I am sated with whole-offerings of rams and the fat of well-fed cattle; I have no desire for the blood of bulls, of sheep, and of he-goats,

¹²when you come into my presence. Who has asked you for all this? No more shall you tread my courts.

¹³To bring me offerings is futile; the reek of sacrifice is abhorrent to me. New moons and sabbaths and sacred

assemblies -- such idolatrous ceremonies I cannot endure.

¹⁴I loathe your new moons and your festivals; they have become a burden to me, and I can tolerate them no longer.

¹⁵When you hold out your hands in prayer, I shall turn away my eyes. Though you offer countless prayers, I shall not listen; there is blood on your hands.

¹⁶Wash and be clean; put away your evil deeds far from my sight; cease to do evil,

¹⁷learn to do good. Pursue justice, guide the oppressed; uphold the rights of the fatherless, and plead the widow's cause.

¹⁸Now come, let us argue this out, says the LORD. Though your sins are scarlet, they may yet be white as snow; though they are dyed crimson, they may become white as wool.

¹⁹If you are willing to obey, you will eat the best that earth yields;

²⁰but if you refuse and rebel, the sword will devour you. The LORD himself has spoken.

²¹ How the faithful city has played the whore! Once the home of justice where righteousness dwelt, she is now inhabited by murderers.

²² Your silver has turned to dross and your fine liquor is diluted with water.

²³ Your rulers are rebels, associates of thieves; every one of them loves a bribe and chases after gifts; they deny the fatherless their rights, and the widow's cause is never heard.

²⁴ This therefore is the word of the Lord, the LORD of Hosts, the Mighty One of Israel: Alas for you! I shall secure a respite from my foes and wreak vengeance on my enemies.

²⁵ Once again I shall act against you to refine away your dross as if with potash and purge all your impurities.

²⁶ I shall make your judges what once they were and your counsellors like those of old. Then you will be called Home of Righteousness, the Faithful City.

²⁷ Zion will be redeemed by justice and her returning people by righteousness.

²⁸ Rebels and sinners alike will be broken and those who forsake the LORD will cease to be.

²⁹The sacred oaks in which you delighted will play you false, the garden-shrines of your fancy will fail you.

³⁰You will be like a terebinth with withered leaves, like a garden without water.

³¹The strongest tree will flare up like tow, and what is made from it will go up in sparks; both will burn together with no one to quench the flames.

2¹This is the message which Isaiah son of Amoz received in a vision about Judah and Jerusalem.

²In days to come the mountain of the LORD's house will be set over all other mountains, raised high above the hills. All the nations will stream towards it,

³and many peoples will go and say, Let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths. For instruction comes from Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

⁴He will judge between the nations as arbiter among many peoples. They will beat their swords into mattocks and

their spears into pruning-knives; nation will not lift sword against nation nor ever again be trained for war.

⁵ Come, people of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the LORD.

⁶ You have abandoned your people, the house of Jacob. Their towns are filled with traders from the east, and with soothsayers speaking like Philistines; the children of foreigners are everywhere.

⁷ Their land is full of silver and gold, and there is no end to their treasures; their land is full of horses, and there is no end to their chariots.

⁸ Their land is full of idols, and they bow down to their own handiwork, to objects their fingers have fashioned.

⁹ Mankind will be brought low, everyone will be humbled.

¹⁰ Get among the rocks and hide in the ground from the dread presence of the LORD and the splendour of his majesty.

¹¹ Haughty looks will be cast down, loftiness brought low; the LORD alone will be exalted on that day.

¹² The LORD of Hosts has a day of doom in store for all that is proud and lofty, for all that is high and lifted up,

¹³ for all the cedars of Lebanon, lofty and high, and all the oaks of Bashan,

¹⁴ for all lofty mountains and all high hills,

¹⁵ for every tall tower and every towering wall,

¹⁶ for all ships of Tarshish and all stately vessels.

¹⁷ Then will pride be brought low and loftiness humbled; the LORD alone will be exalted on that day.

¹⁸ The idols will utterly pass away.

¹⁹ Creep into caves in the rocks and openings in the ground from the dread presence of the LORD and the splendour of his majesty, when he arises to strike the world with terror.

²⁰ On that day people will fling away the idols of silver and gold which they have made and worship, fling them to the dung-beetles and bats.

²¹ They themselves will creep into crevices in rocks and crannies in cliffs from the dread presence of the LORD and the splendour of his majesty, when he arises to strike the world with terror.

²²Do not rely on mere mortals. What are they worth? No more than the breath in their nostrils.

3¹The Lord, the LORD of Hosts, is about to strip Jerusalem and Judah of every prop and stay,

²warriors and soldiers, judges, prophets, diviners, and elders,

³captains of companies and men of good standing, counsellors, skilled magicians, and expert enchanters.

⁴I shall appoint youths to positions of authority, and they will govern as the whim takes them.

⁵The people will deal oppressively with one another, everyone oppressing his neighbour; the young will be arrogant towards their elders, mere nobodies towards men of rank.

⁶A man will take hold of his brother in his father's house, saying, You have a cloak, you shall be our chief; our stricken family shall be in your charge.

⁷But the brother will at once reply, I cannot heal society's wounds when in my house there is neither bread nor cloak. You shall not put me in authority over the people.

⁸ Jerusalem is brought low, Judah has come to grief, for in word and deed they defied the LORD, in open rebellion against his glory.

⁹ The look on their faces testifies against them; like Sodom they proclaim their sins, parading them openly. Woe betide them! They have earned the disaster that strikes them.

¹⁰ Happy the righteous! All goes well with them; they enjoy the fruit of their actions.

¹¹ Woe betide the wicked! All goes ill with them; they reap the reward they have earned.

¹² Moneylenders strip my people bare, and usurers lord it over them. My people, those who guide you are leading you astray and putting you on the path to ruin.

¹³ The LORD comes forward to argue his case, standing up to judge his people.

¹⁴ The LORD opens the indictment against the elders and officers of his people: It is you that have ravaged the vineyard; in your houses are the spoils taken from the poor.

¹⁵Is it nothing to you that you crush my people and grind the faces of the poor? This is the word of the LORD of Hosts.

¹⁶The LORD said: Because the women of Zion give themselves airs, with heads held haughtily, with wanton glances, as they move with mincing gait and jingling feet,

¹⁷the Lord will smite with baldness the women of Zion, the LORD will make bare their foreheads.

¹⁸On that day the Lord will take away their finery: anklets, discs, crescents,

¹⁹pendants, bracelets, coronets,

²⁰headbands, armlets, necklaces, locketts, charms,

²¹signet rings, nose-rings,

²²fine dresses, mantles, cloaks, flounced skirts,

²³scarves of gauze, kerchiefs of linen, turbans, and flowing veils.

²⁴Instead of perfume there will be the stench of decay; there will be a rope instead of a girdle, baldness instead of hair elegantly coiled, a loincloth of sacking instead of a fine robe, the mark of branding instead of beauty.

²⁵ Zion, your men will fall by the sword, your warriors in battle.

²⁶ Zion's gates will mourn and lament, and, stripped bare, she will sit on the ground.

4¹ On that day seven women will take hold of one man and say, We shall provide our own food and clothing if only we may bear your name. Take away our disgrace!

² On that day the plant that the LORD has grown will become glorious in its beauty, and the fruit of the land will be the pride and splendour of the survivors of Israel.

³ Then those who are left in Zion, who remain in Jerusalem, every one whose survival in Jerusalem was decreed will be called holy.

⁴ When the Lord washes away the filth of the women of Zion and cleanses Jerusalem from bloodstains by a spirit of judgement burning like fire,

⁵ he will create a cloud of smoke by day and a bright flame of fire by night over the whole building on Mount Zion and over all her assemblies; for his glory will be a canopy over all,

⁶a cover giving shade by day from the heat, a refuge and shelter from storm and rain.

5¹ I shall sing for my beloved my love song about his vineyard: My beloved had a vineyard high up on a fertile slope.

²He trenched it, cleared it of stones, and planted it with choice red vines; in the middle he built a watch-tower and also hewed out a wine vat. He expected it to yield choice grapes, but all it yielded was a crop of wild grapes.

³Now, you citizens of Jerusalem and people of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard.

⁴What more could have been done for my vineyard than I did for it? Why, when I expected it to yield choice grapes, did it yield wild grapes?

⁵Now listen while I tell you what I am about to do to my vineyard: I shall take away its hedge and let it go to waste, I shall break down its wall and let it be trampled underfoot;

⁶I shall leave it derelict. It will be neither pruned nor hoed, but left overgrown with briars and thorns. I shall

command the clouds to withhold their rain from it.

⁷The vineyard of the LORD of Hosts is Israel, Judah the plant he cherished. He looked for justice but found bloodshed, for righteousness but heard cries of distress.

⁸Woe betide those who add house to house and join field to field, until everyone else is displaced, and you are left as sole inhabitants of the countryside.

⁹In my hearing the LORD of Hosts made this solemn oath: Great houses will be brought to ruin, fine mansions left uninhabited.

¹⁰Five acres of vineyard will yield only a gallon, and ten bushels of seed return only a peck.

¹¹Woe betide those who rise early in the morning to go in pursuit of drink, who sit late into the night inflamed with wine,

¹²at whose feasts there are harps and lutes, tabors and pipes and wine; yet for the work of the LORD they have never a thought, no regard for what he has done.

¹³Therefore my people shall go into captivity because they lack all knowledge of me. The nobles are starving to death, and the common folk die of thirst.

¹⁴Therefore Sheol gapes with straining throat and opens her enormous jaws: down go the nobility and people of Jerusalem, her noisy throng of revellers.

¹⁵Mankind is brought low, everyone is humbled, and haughty looks are cast down.

¹⁶But the LORD of Hosts is exalted by judgement, and by righteousness the Holy God reveals his holiness.

¹⁷Lambs will feed where fat bullocks once pastured, young goats will graze broad acres where cattle grew fat.

¹⁸Woe betide those who drag wickedness and sin along, as with a sheep's tether or a heifer's rope,

¹⁹who say, Let the LORD make haste: let him speed up his work that we may see it; let the purpose of the Holy One of Israel be soon fulfilled, that we may know it.

²⁰Woe betide those who call evil good and good evil, who make darkness light

and light darkness, who make bitter sweet and sweet bitter.

²¹ Woe betide those who are wise in their own sight and prudent in their own esteem.

²² Woe betide those heroic toppers, those valiant mixers of drink,

²³ who for a bribe acquit the guilty and deny justice to those in the right.

²⁴ As tongues of fire lick up the stubble and chaff shrivels in the flames, so their root will moulder away and their opening buds vanish like fine dust; for they have spurned the instruction of the LORD of Hosts and rejected the word of the Holy One of Israel.

²⁵ So the anger of the LORD is roused against his people, and he has stretched out his hand to strike them down; the mountains trembled, and corpses lay like refuse in the streets. Yet for all this his anger has not abated, and his hand is still stretched out.

²⁶ He will hoist a standard as a signal to a nation far away, he will whistle them up from the ends of the earth, and they will come with all speed.

²⁷ None is weary, not one of them stumbles, no one slumbers or sleeps. None has his belt loose about his waist or a broken thong to his sandals.

²⁸ Their arrows are sharpened and all their bows bent, their horses' hoofs are like flint, their chariot wheels like the whirlwind.

²⁹ Their growling is like that of a lion, they growl like young lions; they roar as they seize their prey and carry it beyond reach of rescue.

³⁰ Their roaring over it on that day will be like the roaring of the sea. Anyone who looks over the land sees darkness closing in, and the light overshadowed by the gathering clouds.

6¹ IN the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord seated on a throne, high and exalted, and the skirt of his robe filled the temple.

² Seraphim were in attendance on him. Each had six wings: with one pair of wings they covered their faces and with another their bodies, and with the third pair they flew.

³They were calling to one another, Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of Hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

⁴As each called, the threshold shook to its foundations at the sound, while the house began to fill with clouds of smoke.

⁵Then I said, Woe is me! I am doomed, for my own eyes have seen the King, the LORD of Hosts, I, a man of unclean lips, I, who dwell among a people of unclean lips.

⁶One of the seraphim flew to me, carrying in his hand a glowing coal which he had taken from the altar with a pair of tongs.

⁷He touched my mouth with it and said, This has touched your lips; now your iniquity is removed and your sin is wiped out.

⁸I heard the Lord saying, Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?

⁹I said: Here am I! Send me. He replied: Go, tell this people: However hard you listen, you will never understand. However hard you look, you will never perceive.

¹⁰This people's wits are dulled; they have stopped their ears and shut their

eyes, so that they may not see with their eyes, nor listen with their ears, nor understand with their wits, and then turn and be healed.

¹¹I asked, Lord, how long? And he answered, Until cities fall in ruins and are deserted, until houses are left without occupants, and the land lies ruined and waste.

¹²The LORD will drive the people far away, and the country will be one vast desolation.

¹³Even though a tenth part of the people were to remain, they too would be destroyed like an oak or terebinth when it is felled, and only a stump remains. Its stump is a holy seed.

7¹WHEN Ahaz son of Jotham and grandson of Uzziah was ruler of Judah, King Rezin of Aram with Pekah son of Remaliah, king of Israel, marched on Jerusalem, but was unable to reduce it.

²When it was reported to the house of David that the Aramaeans had made an alliance with the Ephraimites, king and people shook like forest trees shaking in the wind.

³The LORD said to Isaiah, Go out with your son Shear-jashub to meet Ahaz at the end of the conduit of the Upper Pool by the causeway leading to the Fuller's Field,

⁴and say to him: Remain calm and unafraid; do not let your nerve fail because of the blazing anger of Rezin with his Aramaeans and Remaliah's son, those two smouldering stumps of firewood.

⁵The Aramaeans with Ephraim and Remaliah's son have plotted against you:

⁶Let us invade Judah and break her spirit, they said; let us bring her over to our side, and set Tabeal's son on the throne.

⁷The Lord GOD has said: This shall not happen now or ever,

⁸that the rule in Aram should belong to Damascus, the rule in Damascus to Rezin, or that the rule in Ephraim should belong to Samaria, and the rule in Samaria to Remaliah's son. (Within sixty-five years a shattered Ephraim shall cease to be a nation.) Have firm faith, or you will fail to stand firm.

⁹(7: 8)

¹⁰The LORD spoke further to Ahaz.

¹¹Ask the LORD your God for a sign, he said, whether from Sheol below or from heaven above.

¹²But Ahaz replied: No, I will not put the LORD to the test by asking for a sign.

¹³Then the prophet said: Listen, you house of David. Not content with wearing out the patience of men, must you also wear out the patience of my God?

¹⁴Because you do, the Lord of his own accord will give you a sign; it is this: A young woman is with child, and she will give birth to a son and call him Immanuel.

¹⁵By the time he has learnt to reject what is bad and choose what is good, he will be eating curds and honey;

¹⁶before that child has learnt to reject evil and choose good, the territories of those two kings before whom you now cringe in fear will lie desolate.

¹⁷The LORD will bring on you, on your people, and on your father's house, a time the like of which has not been seen since Ephraim broke away from Judah.

¹⁸On that day the LORD will whistle up flies from the distant streams of Egypt and bees from the land of Assyria.

¹⁹They will all come and settle in the steep wadis and in the clefts of the rock, swarming over the camel-thorn and stinkwort.

²⁰On that day the Lord will shave the head and body with a razor hired on the banks of the Euphrates, and it will remove the beard as well.

²¹On that day a man will keep a young cow and two ewes,

²²and he will get so much milk that he eats curds; all who are left in the land will eat curds and honey.

²³On that day every place where there used to be a thousand vines worth a thousand pieces of silver will be given over to briars and thorns.

²⁴A man will go there only to hunt with bow and arrows, for briars and thorns will cover the whole land.

²⁵Daunted by the briars and thorns, no one will set foot on any of those hills once under the hoe. They will become a place where oxen are turned loose and sheep and goats can wander.

8¹ The LORD said to me, Take a large writing tablet and write on it in common script Maher-shalal-hash-baz.

² I had it witnessed for me by Uriah the priest and Zechariah son of Jeberechiah as reliable witnesses.

³ Then I lay with my wife, and she conceived and gave birth to a son. The LORD said to me, Call him Maher-shalal-hash-baz;

⁴ before the boy can say Father or Mother, the wealth of Damascus and the spoils of Samaria will be carried off and presented to the king of Assyria.

⁵ Once again the LORD spoke to me; he said:

⁶ Because this nation has rejected the waters of Shiloah, which flow softly and gently,

⁷ therefore the Lord will bring up against it the mighty floodwaters of the Euphrates. The river will rise in its channels and overflow all its banks.

⁸ In a raging torrent mounting neck-high it will sweep through Judah. With his outspread wings the whole expanse of the land will be filled, for God is with us.

⁹Take note, you nations; you will be shattered. Listen, all you distant parts of the earth: arm yourselves, and be shattered; arm yourselves, and be shattered.

¹⁰Devise your plans, but they will be foiled; propose what you will, but it will not be carried out; for God is with us.

¹¹This is what the LORD said to me when he took me by the hand and charged me not to follow the ways of this people:

¹²You are not to call alliance anything that this people calls alliance; you must neither fear nor stand in awe of what they fear.

¹³It is the LORD of Hosts whom you should hold sacred; he must be the object of your fear and awe.

¹⁴He will become a snare, an obstacle, and a rock against which the two houses of Israel will strike and stumble, a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

¹⁵Over them many will stumble and fall and suffer injury; they will be snared and caught.

¹⁶I shall tie up the message, I shall seal the instruction so that it cannot be consulted by my disciples.

¹⁷I shall wait eagerly for the LORD, who is hiding his face from the house of Jacob; I shall watch longingly for him.

¹⁸Here I am with the children the LORD has given me to be signs and portents in Israel, sent by the LORD of Hosts who dwells on Mount Zion.

¹⁹People will say to you, Seek guidance from ghosts and familiar spirits which squeak and gibber; a nation may surely consult its gods, consult its dead on behalf of the living

²⁰for instruction or a message. They will surely say some such thing, but what they say has no force.

²¹So despondency and fear will come over them, and when they are afraid and fearful, they will rebel against their king and their gods. Whether they turn their gaze upwards

²²or look down, everywhere is distress and darkness inescapable, constraint and gloom that cannot be avoided;

9¹for there is no escape for an oppressed people. Formerly the lands

of Zebulun and Naphtali were lightly regarded, but afterwards honour was bestowed on Galilee of the Nations on the road beyond Jordan to the sea.

²The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; on those who lived in a land as dark as death a light has dawned.

³You have increased their joy and given them great gladness; they rejoice in your presence as those who rejoice at harvest, as warriors exult when dividing spoil.

⁴For you have broken the yoke that burdened them, the rod laid on their shoulders, the driver's goad, as on the day of Midian's defeat.

⁵The boots of earth-shaking armies on the march, the soldiers' cloaks rolled in blood, all are destined to be burnt, food for the fire.

⁶For a child has been born to us, a son is given to us; he will bear the symbol of dominion on his shoulder, and his title will be: Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty Hero, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷Wide will be the dominion and boundless the peace bestowed on

David's throne and on his kingdom, to establish and support it with justice and righteousness from now on, for evermore. The zeal of the LORD of Hosts will do this.

⁸THE Lord has sent forth his word against Jacob and it will fall on Israel;

⁹all the people will know, Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria, though in their pride and arrogance they say,

¹⁰The bricks have fallen down, but we shall rebuild in dressed stone; the sycomores are cut down, but we shall grow cedars in their place.

¹¹The LORD has raised their foes against them and spurred on their enemies,

¹²Aramaeans from the east, Philistines from the west, and they have swallowed Israel in one mouthful. For all this his anger has not abated; his hand still threatens.

¹³Yet the people did not come back to him who struck them, nor seek guidance from the LORD of Hosts;

¹⁴therefore on one day the LORD cut off from Israel head and tail, palm-frond and reed.

¹⁵(The aged and the honoured are the head; the prophets who give false instruction are the tail.)

¹⁶Those who guide this people have led them astray, and those who follow their guidance are engulfed.

¹⁷That is why the Lord showed no mercy to their youths, no compassion towards the fatherless and widows; it is a nation of godless evildoers, every one speaking impiety. For all this his anger has not abated; his hand still threatens.

¹⁸Wicked men have been set ablaze like a fire fed with briars and thorns, kindled in the thickets of the forest; they are wrapped in a pall of smoke.

¹⁹The land is scorched by the fury of the LORD of Hosts, and the people are like food for the fire.

²⁰On one side, a man is eating his fill but yet remains hungry; on another, a man is devouring but is not satisfied; each feeds on his own children's flesh, and no one spares his own brother. (Manasseh Ephraim, and Ephraim Manasseh -- together they are against Judah.)

²¹ For all this his anger has not abated; his hand still threatens.

10¹ Woe betide those who enact unjust laws and draft oppressive edicts,

² depriving the poor of justice, robbing the weakest of my people of their rights, plundering the widow and despoiling the fatherless!

³ What will you do when called to account, when devastation from afar confronts you? To whom will you flee for help, and where will you leave your children

⁴ so that they do not cower among the prisoners or fall among the slain? For all this his anger has not abated; his hand still threatens.

⁵ The Assyrian! He is the rod I wield in my anger, the staff in the hand of my wrath.

⁶ I send him against a godless nation, I bid him march against a people who rouse my fury, to pillage and plunder at will, to trample them down like mud in the street.

⁷ But this man's purpose is lawless, and lawless are the plans in his mind; for his

thought is only to destroy and to wipe out nation after nation.

⁸Are not my commanders all kings? he boasts.

⁹See how Calno has suffered the fate of Carchemish. Is not Hamath like Arpad, Samaria like Damascus?

¹⁰Before now I have overcome kingdoms full of idols, with more images than have Jerusalem and Samaria,

¹¹and now, what I did to Samaria and her worthless gods, I shall do also to Jerusalem and her idols.

¹²When the Lord has finished all that he means to do against Mount Zion and Jerusalem, he will punish the king of Assyria for the words which spring from his arrogance and for his high and haughty mien,

¹³because he said: By my own might I have done it, and in my own far-seeing wisdom I have swept aside the frontiers of nations and plundered their treasures; like a bull I have trampled on their inhabitants.

¹⁴My hand has come on the wealth of nations as on a nest, and, as one gathers eggs that have been abandoned, so have

I taken every land; not a wing fluttered, not a beak gaped, no cheep was heard.

¹⁵Will the axe set itself up against the hewer, or the saw claim mastery over the sawyer, as if a stick were to brandish him who raises it, or a wooden staff to wield one who is not wood?

¹⁶Therefore the Lord, the LORD of Hosts, will inflict a wasting disease on the king's frame, on his sturdy frame from head to toe, and in his body a fever like fire will rage.

¹⁷The Light of Israel will become a fire and its Holy One a flame, which in one day will burn up and consume his thorns and his briars;

¹⁸his splendid forest and meadow will be destroyed as suddenly as someone falling in a fit;

¹⁹what remain of the trees in his forest will be so few that a child might record them.

²⁰On that day the remnant of Israel, the survivors of Jacob, will lean no more on him who scourged them; without wavering they will lean on the LORD, the Holy One of Israel.

²¹ A remnant will return, a remnant of Jacob, to God their strength.

²² Israel, your people may be many as the sands of the sea, but only a remnant will return. The instrument of final destruction will overflow with justice,

²³ for the Lord, the LORD of Hosts, will bring final destruction on the whole land.

²⁴ Therefore these are the words of the Lord, the LORD of Hosts: My people, you dwellers in Zion, do not be afraid of the Assyrians, though they beat you with their rod and lift their staff against you as the Egyptians did;

²⁵ for in a very short time my wrath will be over and my anger will be finally spent.

²⁶ Then the LORD of Hosts will brandish his scourge at them as he did when he struck Midian at the Rock of Oreb; he will lift his staff against the Euphrates as he did against Egypt.

²⁷ On that day the burden they laid on your shoulder will be removed and their yoke will be broken from off your neck.

²⁸ An invader from Rimmon has reached Aiath, has passed through Migron, and left his baggage train at Michmash;

²⁹ he has passed through Maabarah and camped for the night at Geba. Ramah is terrified, Gibeah of Saul is in flight.

³⁰ Bath-gallim, raise a shrill cry. Hear it, Laish. Answer her, Anathoth.

³¹ Madmenah retreats; the people of Gebim seek cover.

³² This day he will be at Nob; he gives the signal to advance against the mount of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem.

³³ The Lord, the LORD of Hosts, will shatter the trees with a crash, the tallest will be hewn down, the lofty laid low,

³⁴ the thickets of the forest will be felled with the axe, and Lebanon with its noble trees will fall.

11 ¹ Then a branch will grow from the stock of Jesse, and a shoot will spring from his roots.

² On him the spirit of the LORD will rest: a spirit of wisdom and understanding, a spirit of counsel and power, a spirit of knowledge and fear of the LORD;

³ and in the fear of the LORD will be his delight. He will not judge by outward appearances or decide a case on hearsay;

⁴ but with justice he will judge the poor and defend the humble in the land with equity; like a rod his verdict will strike the ruthless, and with his word he will slay the wicked.

⁵ He will wear the belt of justice, and truth will be his girdle.

⁶ Then the wolf will live with the lamb, and the leopard lie down with the kid; the calf and the young lion will feed together, with a little child to tend them.

⁷ The cow and the bear will be friends, and their young will lie down together; and the lion will eat straw like cattle.

⁸ The infant will play over the cobra's hole, and the young child dance over the viper's nest.

⁹ There will be neither hurt nor harm in all my holy mountain; for the land will be filled with the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

¹⁰ On that day a scion from the root of Jesse will arise like a standard to rally the peoples; the nations will resort to him, and his abode will be glorious.

¹¹ On that day the Lord will exert his power a second time to recover the remnant of his people from Assyria and

Egypt, from Pathros and Cush, from Elam, Shinar, Hamath, and the islands of the sea.

¹²He will hoist a standard for the nations and gather those dispersed from Israel; he will assemble Judah's scattered people from the four corners of the earth.

¹³Ephraim's jealousy will cease, and enmity towards Judah will end. Ephraim will not be jealous of Judah, nor will Judah be hostile towards Ephraim.

¹⁴They will swoop down on the Philistine flank in the west and together plunder the tribes of the east: Edom and Moab will be in their clutches, and Ammon will be subject to them.

¹⁵The LORD will divide the tongue of the Egyptian sea. He will wave his hand over the Euphrates to bring a mighty wind, and will split it into seven wadis so that it may be crossed dry-shod.

¹⁶So there will be a causeway for the remnant of his people, for the remnant rescued from Assyria, as there was for the Israelites when they came up from Egypt.

12¹ On that day you will say: I shall praise you, LORD. Though you were angry with me, your anger has abated, and you have comforted me.

² God is my deliverer. I am confident and unafraid, for the LORD is my refuge and defence and has shown himself my deliverer.

³ With joy you will all draw water from the wells of deliverance.

⁴ On that day you will say: Give thanks to the LORD, invoke him by name, make known among the peoples what he has done, proclaim that his name is exalted.

⁵ Sing psalms to the LORD, for he has triumphed; let this be known in all the world.

⁶ Cry out, shout aloud, you dwellers in Zion, for the Holy One of Israel is among you in majesty.

13¹ BABYLON: an oracle which Isaiah son of Amoz received in a vision.

² On a wind-swept height hoist the standard, sound the call to battle, wave on the advance towards the Nobles' Gate.

³I have issued this order to my fighting men, and summoned my warriors, all eager for my victory, to give effect to my anger.

⁴A tumult is heard on the mountains, the sound of a vast multitude; it is the clamour of kingdoms, of nations assembling. The LORD of Hosts is mustering a host for war.

⁵They come from a distant land, from beyond the horizon, the LORD with the weapons of his wrath, to lay the whole earth waste.

⁶Wail, for the day of the LORD is at hand, devastation coming from the Almighty!

⁷Because of it every hand will hang limp, every man's courage melt away;

⁸they will writhe with terror; agonizing pangs will grip them, like a woman in labour. They will look aghast at each other, their faces livid with fear.

⁹The day of the LORD is coming, that cruel day of wrath and fierce anger, to reduce the earth to desolation and destroy all the wicked there.

¹⁰The stars of heaven in their constellations will give no light, the sun

will be dark at its rising, and the moon will not shed its light.

¹¹ I shall bring disaster on the world and due punishment on the wicked. I shall cut short insolent pride and bring down ruthless arrogance.

¹² I shall make human beings scarcer than fine gold, more rare than gold of Ophir.

¹³ Then I shall make the heavens shudder, and the earth will be shaken to its foundations at the wrath of the LORD of Hosts, on the day of his blazing anger.

¹⁴ Like a gazelle pursued by a hunter or like a flock with no shepherd to round it up, every man will head back to his own people, each one will flee to his own land.

¹⁵ All who are found will fall by the sword, all who are taken will be thrust through;

¹⁶ their babes will be battered to death before their eyes, their houses looted and their wives raped.

¹⁷ I shall stir up the Medes against them; they cannot be bought off with silver, nor be tempted by gold;

¹⁸ they have no pity on little children and spare no mother's son.

¹⁹ Babylon, fairest of kingdoms, proud beauty of the Chaldaeans, will be like Sodom and Gomorrah when overthrown by God.

²⁰ Never again will she be inhabited, no one will live in her throughout the ages; no Arab will pitch his tent there, no shepherds fold their flocks.

²¹ But marmots will have their lairs in her, and porcupines will overrun her houses; desert-owls will dwell there, and there he-goats will gambol;

²² jackals will occupy her mansions, and wolves her luxurious palaces. Her time draws very near; her days have not long to run.

14¹ The LORD will show compassion for Jacob and will once again make Israel his choice. He will resettle them on their native soil, where aliens will join them and attach themselves to Jacob's people.

² Nations will escort Israel to her homeland, and she will take them over, both male and female, as slaves in the

LORD's land; she will take her captors captive and lord it over her oppressors.

³On the day when the LORD gives you relief from your pain and trouble and from the cruel servitude imposed upon you,

⁴you will take up this taunt-song over the king of Babylon: See how still the oppressor has become, how still his raging arrogance!

⁵The LORD has broken the rod of the wicked, the sceptre of rulers

⁶who in anger struck down peoples with unerring blows, who in fury trod nations underfoot with relentless persecution.

⁷The whole world rests undisturbed; it breaks into cries of joy.

⁸The very pines and the cedars of Lebanon exult: Since you have been laid low, they say, no woodman comes to cut us down.

⁹Sheol below was all astir to greet you at your coming; she roused for you the ancient dead, all that were leaders on earth; she had all who had been kings of the nations get up from their thrones.

¹⁰All greet you with these words: So you too are impotent as we are, and have become like one of us!

¹¹Your pride has been brought down to Sheol, to the throng of your victims; maggots are the mattress beneath you, and worms your coverlet.

¹²Bright morning star, how you have fallen from heaven, thrown to earth, prostrate among the nations!

¹³You thought to yourself: I shall scale the heavens to set my throne high above the mighty stars; I shall take my seat on the mountain where the gods assemble in the far recesses of the north.

¹⁴I shall ascend beyond the towering clouds and make myself like the Most High!

¹⁵Instead you are brought down to Sheol, into the depths of the abyss.

¹⁶Those who see you stare at you, reflecting as they gaze: Is this the man who shook the earth, who made kingdoms quake,

¹⁷who turned the world into a desert and laid its cities in ruins, who never set his prisoners free?

¹⁸All the kings of every nation lie in honour, each in his last resting-place.

¹⁹But you have been flung out without burial like some loathsome carrion, a carcass trampled underfoot, a companion to the slain pierced by the sword who have gone down to the stony abyss.

²⁰You will not be joined in burial with those kings, for you have ruined your land, brought death to your people. That wicked dynasty will never again be mentioned!

²¹Prepare the shambles for his children butchered for their fathers' sins; they will not rise and possess the earth or cover the world with their cities.

²²I shall rise against them, declares the LORD of Hosts; I shall destroy what remains of Babylon, her name, her offspring, and her posterity, declares the LORD;

²³I shall make her a haunt of the bustard, a waste of marshland, and sweep her with the besom of destruction. This is the word of the LORD of Hosts.

²⁴The LORD of Hosts has sworn this oath: As I purposed, so most surely it will be; as I planned, so it will take place:

²⁵I shall break the Assyrian in my own land and trample him down on my mountains; his yoke will be lifted from my people, his burden taken from their shoulders.

²⁶This is the plan prepared for the whole world, this the hand stretched out over all the nations.

²⁷For the LORD of Hosts has prepared his plan: who can frustrate it? His is the hand that is stretched out, and who can turn it back?

²⁸In the year King Ahaz died this oracle came from God:

²⁹Let none of you Philistines rejoice because the rod that chastised you is broken; for a viper will be born of a snake, and its offspring will be a flying serpent.

³⁰The poor will graze their flocks in my meadows, and the destitute will lie down in safety, but your offspring I shall do to death by famine, and your remnant I shall slay.

³¹Wail in the gate, cry for help in the city, let all Philistia be stricken with panic; for a formidable foe is coming

from the north, with not one straggler in his ranks.

³²What answer is there for a nation's envoys? It is that the LORD has established Zion, and in her the afflicted among his people will find refuge.

15¹Moab: an oracle. On the night when Ar is laid waste, Moab meets her doom; on the night when Kir is laid waste, Moab meets her doom.

²The people of Dibon go up to the shrines to weep; Moab is wailing over Nebo and over Medeba. Every head is shaven, every beard cut off.

³In their streets they wear sackcloth, they cry out on the roofs; in the public squares every one wails, streaming with tears.

⁴Heshbon and Elealeh cry out in distress, their voices carry to Jahaz. So Moab's stoutest warriors become alarmed, and their courage ebbs away.

⁵My heart cries out for Moab, whose fugitives have reached Zoar, as far as Eglath-shelishiyah. On the ascent to Luhith they go up weeping; on the road to Horonaim there are cries of Disaster!

⁶The waters of Nimrim are desolate;
the grass is parched, the herbage dead,
not a green thing is left;

⁷the people carry across the wadi
Arabim their hard-earned wealth and
hoarded savings.

⁸The cry of distress echoes round the
frontiers of Moab, their wailing reaches
Eglaim and Beer-elim.

⁹The waters of Dibon run with blood;
yet I have worse in store for Dibon: a
lion for the survivors of Moab, and for
the remnant of Admah.

16¹The rulers of the land send a
present of lambs from Sela by the
wilderness to the mount of Zion;

²the women of Moab at the fords of
the Arnon are like fluttering birds, like
scattered nestlings.

³Give us counsel, intervene for us; let
your shadow shield us at high noon as if
it were night. Give the exiles shelter, do
not betray the fugitives;

⁴let the exiles from Moab find a home
with you and shelter them from the
despoiler. When oppression has done its
work and the despoiling is over, when

the heel of the aggressor has vanished from the land,

⁵a trusted throne will be set up in David's tent; on it there will sit a true judge, one who cares for justice and pursues right.

⁶We have heard how great is the haughtiness of Moab, we have heard of his pride, his surpassing pride -- his boastful talk is groundless!

⁷Therefore let Moab wail; let all the Moabites wail indeed; they will mourn for the prosperous farmers of Kir-hareseth, who face ruin;

⁸the vineyards of Heshbon languish, the vines of Sibmah, whose red grapes used to overpower the lords of the nations; they reached as far as Jazer and trailed out to the wilderness, and their spreading branches crossed the sea.

⁹I shall weep for Sibmah's vines as I weep for Jazer. I shall drench you with tears, Heshbon and Elealeh; for the shouts of the enemy have fallen on your summer fruits and harvest.

¹⁰Joy and gladness will be banished from the fields, no more will they tread

wine in the winepresses; I have silenced the shouting of the harvesters.

¹¹ Therefore my heart throbs like a harp for Moab, and my soul for Kir-hareseth.

¹² Though the Moabites come to worship and weary themselves at the shrines, though they flock to their sanctuaries to pray, it will avail them nothing.

¹³ Those are the words which the LORD spoke long ago about Moab;

¹⁴ and now he says: In three years, as a hired labourer counts them off exactly, the vast population in which Moab glories will be brought into contempt; those who are left will be few and feeble and bereft of all honour.

17 ¹ Damascus: an oracle. Damascus will cease to be a city; she will be reduced to a heap of ruins

² for ever desolate. Flocks will have her for their own and lie there undisturbed.

³ No longer will Ephraim boast a fortified city, or Damascus a kingdom; the remnant of Aram will share the fate of Israel's glory. This is the word of the LORD of Hosts.

⁴ On that day Jacob's glory will wane and his prosperity waste away,

⁵as when the reaper gathers the standing grain, harvesting the ears by armfuls, or as when one gleanes the ears in the vale of Rephaim,

⁶or as when an olive tree is beaten and only gleanings are left on it, two or three berries on the topmost branch, four or five on its fruitful boughs. This is the word of the LORD the God of Israel.

⁷On that day all will look to their Maker, turning their eyes to the Holy One of Israel;

⁸they will not look to the altars, their own handiwork, or to objects their fingers have made, sacred poles and incense-altars.

⁹On that day your strong cities will be deserted like the deserted cities of the Hivites and the Amorites, which they abandoned at Israel's approach, and they will become desolate.

¹⁰You forgot the God who delivered you, and did not keep in mind the rock, your stronghold. Plant then, if you will, your gardens in honour of Adonis, set out your cuttings for a foreign god;

¹¹though you protect them on the day you plant them, and though your seeds

sprout next morning, yet the crop will disappear when wasting disease comes in a day of incurable pain.

¹²Listen! It is the thunder of vast forces, a thundering like the thunder of the sea. Listen! It is the roar of nations, a roaring like the roar of mighty waters.

¹³At his rebuke, they flee far away, driven before the wind like chaff on the hills, like thistledown before the storm.

¹⁴At evening all is terror; before morning it is gone. Such is the fate of our plunderers, the lot of those who despoil us.

18¹ There is a land of sailing ships lying beyond the rivers of Cush;

²it sends its envoys by the Nile in vessels of reed on the waters. Go, swift messengers, to a people tall and smooth-skinned, to a people dreaded far and near, a nation strong and aggressive, whose land is scoured by rivers.

³All you inhabitants of the world, you dwellers on earth, will see when the standard is hoisted on the mountains and hear when the trumpet sounds.

⁴These were the words of the LORD to me: From my dwelling-place I shall

look on and do nothing when the heat shimmers in the summer sun, when the dew is heavy at harvest time.

⁵Before the vintage, when the budding is over and the flower ripens into a berry, the shoots will be cut down with pruning-knives, the branches struck off and cleared away.

⁶All will be left to birds of prey on the hills and to the wild beasts of the earth; in summer those birds will make their home there, in winter those wild beasts.

⁷At that time tribute will be brought to the LORD of Hosts from a people tall and smooth-skinned, dreaded near and far, a nation strong and aggressive, whose land is scoured by rivers. They will bring it to the place where the name of the LORD of Hosts dwells, to Mount Zion.

19¹ Egypt: an oracle. The LORD comes riding swiftly on a cloud, and he descends on Egypt; the idols of Egypt quail before him, Egypt's courage melts within her.

²I shall incite Egyptian against Egyptian, and they will fight one against another, neighbour against neighbour,

city against city, kingdom against kingdom.

³Egypt's spirit will ebb away within her, and I shall throw her counsels into confusion. They will resort to idols and oracle-mongers, to ghosts and spirits,

⁴but I shall hand Egypt over to a hard master, and a fierce ruler will be king over them. This is the word of the Lord, the LORD of Hosts.

⁵The waters of the Nile will disappear, the river bed will be parched and dry,

⁶and its channels will give off a stench. Egypt's canals will fail altogether; reeds and rushes will wither away.

⁷The lotus beside the Nile and everything sown along the river will dry up; they will blow away and vanish.

⁸The fishermen will groan and lament; all who cast their hooks into the Nile and those who spread nets on the water will lose heart.

⁹The flax-dressers will be dejected, the women carding and the men weaving grow pale.

¹⁰Egypt's spinners will be downcast, and all her artisans sick at heart.

¹¹ The princes of Zoan are no better than fools; Pharaoh's wisest counsellors give stupid advice. How can you say to Pharaoh, I am descended from wise men; I spring from ancient kings?

¹² Where are your wise men, Pharaoh, to teach you and make known to you what the LORD of Hosts has planned for Egypt?

¹³ Zoan's princes are fooled, the princes of Noph are dupes; the chieftains of her clans have led Egypt astray.

¹⁴ The LORD has infused into them a spirit that distorts their judgement; they make Egypt miss her way in all she does, as a vomiting drunkard will miss his footing.

¹⁵ There will be nothing in Egypt that anyone can do, be they head or tail, palm-frond or reed.

¹⁶ When that day comes the Egyptians will become weak as women; they will be terror-stricken when the LORD of Hosts raises his hand against them.

¹⁷ The land of Judah will throw the Egyptians into panic; the very mention of its name will cause dismay, because

of the plans that the LORD of Hosts has laid against them.

¹⁸When that day comes there will be five cities in Egypt speaking the language of Canaan and swearing allegiance to the LORD of Hosts, and one of them will be called the City of the Sun.

¹⁹When that day comes there will be an altar dedicated to the LORD in the heart of Egypt, and a sacred pillar set up for the LORD at her frontier.

²⁰It will stand as a symbol and a reminder of the LORD of Hosts in Egypt; for they will appeal to him against their oppressors, and he will send a deliverer to champion their cause and come to their rescue.

²¹The LORD will make himself known to the Egyptians. They will acknowledge the LORD when that day comes; they will worship him with sacrifices and grain-offerings, make vows to him, and fulfil them.

²²The LORD will strike down Egypt, and then bring healing; when they turn back to him he will respond to their prayers and heal them.

²³When that day comes there will be a highway between Egypt and Assyria. The Assyrians will link up with Egypt and the Egyptians with Assyria, and Egyptians will worship with Assyrians.

²⁴When that day comes Israel will rank as a third with Egypt and Assyria and be a blessing in the world.

²⁵This is the blessing the LORD of Hosts will give: Blessed be Egypt my people, Assyria my handiwork, and Israel my possession.

20¹IT was the year that King Sargon of Assyria sent his commander-in-chief to Ashdod, and he took it by storm.

²Before that time the LORD had said to Isaiah son of Amoz, Strip the sackcloth from your waist and take off your sandals. He had done so, and gone about naked and barefoot.

³Now the LORD said, As my servant Isaiah has gone naked and barefoot for three years, a sign and portent to Egypt and Cush,

⁴so will the king of Assyria lead away the captives of Egypt and the exiles of Cush naked and barefoot, young and

old alike, with their buttocks shamefully exposed.

⁵All will be dismayed; their trust in Cush and their pride in Egypt will be disappointed.

⁶On that day those who dwell along this coast will say, So much for all our hopes on which we relied, our hopes for help and deliverance from the king of Assyria! What escape is there for us?

21 ¹THE wilderness: an oracle. A day of storms, sweeping through the Negeb, coming from the wilderness, from a land of terror!

²A grim vision is shown to me: the traitor betrayed, the spoiler despoiled. Advance, Elam; up, Media, to the siege! Throw off all weariness!

³At this vision my limbs writhe in anguish, I am gripped by pangs like a woman in labour. I am distraught past hearing, disquieted past seeing,

⁴my mind reels, sudden convulsions assail me. The evening cool I longed for has become horrible to me:

⁵the banquet is set, the rugs are spread; they are eating and drinking. Rise, princes, burnish your shields.

⁶For these are the words of the Lord to me: Go, post a watchman to report what he sees.

⁷If it is a column of horsemen in pairs, a column of donkeys, a column of camels, he must be on the alert, fully on the alert.

⁸Then the look-out cried: All day long I stand on the watch-tower, Lord, and night after night I am at my post.

⁹There they come: a column of horsemen in pairs. A voice called back: Fallen, fallen is Babylon, and all the images of her gods lie shattered on the ground.

¹⁰My people, once trodden out on the threshing-floor, what I have heard from the LORD of Hosts, from the God of Israel, I have told you.

¹¹Dumah: an oracle. One calls to me from Seir: Watchman, what is left of the night? Watchman, what is left of it?

¹²The watchman answered: Morning comes, and so does night. Come back again and ask if you will.

¹³With the Arabs: an oracle. You caravans of Dedan, that camp in the scrub with the Arabs,

¹⁴bring water to meet the thirsty. You inhabitants of Tema, meet the fugitives with food,

¹⁵for they flee from the sword, the sharp edge of the sword, from the bent bow, and from the press of battle.

¹⁶For these are the words of the Lord to me: Within a year, as a hired labourer counts off years exactly, all Kedar's glory will come to an end;

¹⁷few will be the archers left, the warriors of Kedar. The LORD the God of Israel has spoken.

22¹THE Valley of Vision: an oracle. Tell me, what is amiss with you that all of you have climbed up on the roofs?

²You city full of tumult, you town in ferment and filled with uproar, your slain did not fall by the sword; they did not die in battle.

³All your commanders are in full flight, fleeing in groups from the bow; all your stoutest warriors dispersed in groups have fled in all directions.

⁴That is why I said: Turn your eyes away from me; leave me to weep in

misery. Do not press consolation on me for the ruin of my people.

⁵For the Lord, the LORD of Hosts, has ordained a day of tumult, a day of trampling and turmoil in the Valley of Vision, clamour and cries among the mountains.

⁶Elam took up the quiver, horses were harnessed to the chariots of Aram, Kir bared the shield.

⁷Your fairest valleys were overrun by chariots and the city gates were beset by horsemen;

⁸the heart of Judah's defence was laid open. On that day you checked the weapons stored in the House of the Forest;

⁹you filled all the many pools in the City of David, collecting water from the Lower Pool.

¹⁰Then you surveyed the houses in Jerusalem, tearing some down to repair and fortify the wall,

¹¹and between the two walls you constructed a reservoir for the water of the Old Pool. You did not look to the Maker of the city or consider him who fashioned it long ago.

¹²On that day the Lord, the LORD of Hosts, called for weeping and beating the breast in mourning, for shaving the head and putting on sackcloth.

¹³Instead there was joy and merrymaking, killing of cattle and slaughtering of sheep, eating of meat and drinking of wine. Let us eat and drink, you said, for tomorrow we die!

¹⁴Here are words revealed to me by the LORD of Hosts: Assuredly your wickedness will never be wiped out; you will die for it. This is the word of the Lord, the LORD of Hosts.

¹⁵These were the words of the Lord, the LORD of Hosts: Go to the steward, this Shebna, comptroller of the household, and say:

¹⁶What have you here, or whom have you here, that you have hewn out a tomb here for yourself? Why should he hew his tomb in an eminent place, and carve for himself a resting-place in the rock?

¹⁷The LORD is about to shake you out, as a garment is shaken to rid it of lice;

¹⁸he will roll you up tightly and throw you like a ball into a land of vast

expanses. There you will die, and there your chariot of honour will remain, bringing disgrace on your master's household.

¹⁹I shall remove you from office and pluck you from your post.

²⁰On that day I shall send for my servant Eliakim son of Hilkiah;

²¹I shall invest him with your robe, equip him with your sash of office, and invest him with your authority; he will be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the people of Judah.

²²I shall place the key of David's palace on his shoulder; what he opens none will shut, and what he shuts none will open.

²³He will be a seat of honour for his father's family; I shall fasten him firmly in place like a peg.

²⁴On him will hang the whole glory of the family, even to the meanest members -- all the paltriest of vessels, whether bowl or pot.

²⁵On that day, says the LORD of Hosts, the peg which was firmly fastened in its place will be removed; cut off, it will fall, and the load hanging on it will be destroyed. The LORD has spoken.

23¹ TYRE: an oracle. Wail, you ships of Tarshish, for the harbour is destroyed; the port of entry from Kittim is swept away.

²Lament, you people of the sea coast, you merchants of Sidon,

³whose envoys cross the great waters, whose harvest is grain from Shihor, whose revenue comes from trade between nations.

⁴In dismay Sidon, the sea-fortress, says: I no longer feel the anguish of labour or bear children; I have no young sons to rear, no daughters to bring up.

⁵When the news reaches Egypt her people will writhe in anguish at the fate of Tyre.

⁶Make your way to Tarshish; wail, you dwellers by the sea.

⁷Is this your bustling city of ancient foundation, the founder of colonies in distant parts?

⁸Whose was this plan against Tyre, a city with crowns in its gift, whose merchants were princes, whose traders the most honoured men on earth?

⁹The LORD of Hosts planned it to prick every noble's pride and humiliate all the most honoured men on earth.

¹⁰Take to the tillage of your fields, you people of Tarshish; for your market is lost.

¹¹The LORD has stretched out his hand over the sea and made kingdoms quake; he has decreed the destruction of Canaan's marts.

¹²He has said, You will be busy no more, you, the sorely oppressed city of Sidon. Though you make your escape to Kittim, even there you will find no respite.

¹³Look at this land, the destined home of ships! The Chaldeans (this was the people; it was not Assyria) erected siege-towers, tore down its palaces, and laid it in ruins.

¹⁴Wail, you ships of Tarshish; for your haven is destroyed.

¹⁵From that day Tyre will be forgotten for seventy years, the span of one king's life. At the end of the seventy years her plight will be that of the harlot in the song:

¹⁶Take your lyre, walk about the city, poor, forgotten harlot; touch the strings sweetly, sing all your songs, make men remember you once more.

¹⁷At the end of seventy years the LORD will turn again to Tyre; she will go back to her old trade and hire herself out to every kingdom on earth.

¹⁸But the profits of her trading will be dedicated to the LORD; they will not be stored up or hoarded, but given to those who worship the LORD, to purchase food in plenty and fine apparel.

24¹BEWARE, the LORD is about to strip the earth, split it and turn it upside down, and scatter its inhabitants!

²There will be the same fate for priest and people, for master and slave, mistress and maid, seller and buyer, borrower and lender, creditor and debtor.

³The earth is empty and void and stripped bare. For this is the word that the LORD has spoken.

⁴The earth dries up and withers, the whole world wilts and withers, the heights of the earth wilt.

⁵The earth itself is desecrated by those who live on it, for they have broken

laws, disobeyed statutes, and violated the everlasting covenant.

⁶That is why a curse consumes the earth and its inhabitants suffer punishment, why the inhabitants of the earth dwindle and only a few are left.

⁷The new wine fails, the vines wilt, and the revellers all groan in sorrow.

⁸The merry beat of tambourines is silenced, the shouts of revelry are hushed, the joyful lyre is silent.

⁹They drink wine but without songs; liquor tastes bitter to the one who drinks it.

¹⁰The city is shattered and in chaos, every house barred, that none may enter.

¹¹In the streets there is a crying out for wine; all joy has faded, and merriment is banished from the land.

¹²Nothing but desolation is left in the city; its gates are smashed beyond repair.

¹³So it will be throughout the world among the nations, as when an olive tree is beaten and stripped at the end of the vintage.

¹⁴ People raise their voices and cry aloud, acclaiming in the west the majesty of the LORD.

¹⁵ Therefore let the LORD be glorified in the eastern regions, and the name of the LORD the God of Israel in the coasts and islands of the sea.

¹⁶ From the ends of the earth we have heard them sing, ascribing beauty to the righteous nation. But I said: Depravity, depravity! Woe betide me! Traitors deal treacherously! They are double-dyed traitors.

¹⁷ The hunter's scare, the pit, and the trap threaten all you inhabitants of the earth.

¹⁸ Whoever runs from the rattle of the scare will fall into the pit, and whoever climbs out of the pit will be caught in the trap. The windows of heaven above are opened and earth's foundations shake;

¹⁹ the earth is utterly shattered, it is convulsed and reels wildly.

²⁰ The earth lurches like a drunkard and sways like a watchman's shelter; the sins of its inhabitants weigh heavy on it, and it falls, to rise no more.

²¹ On that day the LORD will punish in heaven the host of heaven, and on earth the kings of the earth.

²² They are herded together, and packed like prisoners in a dungeon, shut up in jail, punished over many years.

²³ The moon will grow pale and the sun hide its face in shame; for the LORD of Hosts has become king on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and is revealed in his glory to the elders of his people.

25 ¹ LORD, you are my God; I shall exalt you, I shall praise your name, for you have done wonderful things, long-planned, certain and sure.

² You have turned cities into heaps of ruin, fortified towns into rubble; every mansion in the cities is swept away, never to be rebuilt.

³ For this many a cruel nation holds you in honour, the cities of ruthless peoples treat you with awe.

⁴ Truly you have been a refuge to the poor, a refuge to the needy in their distress, shelter from tempest, shade from heat. For the blast of the ruthless is like an icy storm

⁵ or a scorching drought; you subdue the roar of the foe, and the song of the ruthless dies away.

⁶ On this mountain the LORD of Hosts will prepare a banquet of rich fare for all the peoples, a banquet of wines well matured, richest fare and well-matured wines strained clear.

⁷ On this mountain the LORD will destroy that veil shrouding all the peoples, the pall thrown over all the nations.

⁸ He will destroy death for ever. Then the Lord GOD will wipe away the tears from every face, and throughout the world remove the indignities from his people. The LORD has spoken.

⁹ On that day the people will say: See, this is our God; we have waited for him and he will deliver us. This is the LORD for whom we have waited; let us rejoice and exult in his deliverance.

¹⁰ For the hand of the LORD will rest on this mountain, but Moab will be trampled where he stands, as straw is trampled in the slush of a midden.

¹¹ In it Moab will spread out his hands as a swimmer spreads his hands to

swim, but his pride will be sunk with every stroke of his hands.

¹²The LORD will overthrow the high-walled defences, level them to the ground, and bring them down to the dust.

26¹ On that day this song will be sung in Judah: We have a strong city with walls and ramparts built for our safety.

²Open the gates! Let a righteous nation enter, a nation that keeps faith!

³LORD, you keep those of firm purpose untroubled because of their trust in you.

⁴Trust in the LORD for ever, for he is an eternal rock.

⁵He has brought low all who dwell high in a towering city; he levels it to the ground and lays it in the dust,

⁶so that the oppressed and the poor may tread it underfoot.

⁷The path of the righteous is smooth, and you, LORD, make level the way for the upright.

⁸We have had regard to the path prescribed in your laws, your name and your renown are our heart's desire.

⁹With all my heart I long for you in the night, at dawn I seek for you; for, when your laws prevail on earth, the inhabitants of the world learn what justice is.

¹⁰The wicked are destroyed; they have never learnt justice. Corrupt in a land of honest ways, they are blind to the majesty of the LORD.

¹¹LORD, your hand is lifted high, but they do not see your zeal for your people (let them see and be ashamed!); let the fire reserved for your enemies consume them.

¹²LORD, you will bestow prosperity on us; for in truth all our works are your doing.

¹³LORD our God, other lords than you have been our masters, but you alone do we invoke by name.

¹⁴Those who are dead will not live again, those in their graves will not rise: you punished and destroyed them, and wiped out all memory of them.

¹⁵LORD, you have enlarged the nation, enlarged it and won honour for yourself; you have extended all the frontiers of the country.

¹⁶In distress, LORD, we sought you out, chastened by the whisper of your rebuke.

¹⁷As a woman with child cries out in her pains when her time is near and she is in labour, so were we because of you, LORD.

¹⁸We have been with child, we have been in labour, but have given birth to wind. We have achieved no victories for the land, given birth to no one to inhabit the world.

¹⁹But your dead will live, their bodies will rise again. Those who sleep in the earth will awake and shout for joy; for your dew is a dew of sparkling light, and the earth will bring those long dead to birth again.

²⁰Go, my people, enter your rooms, and shut the doors after you; withdraw for a little while, until the LORD's wrath has passed.

²¹The LORD is coming from his dwelling-place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their sins; then the earth will reveal the blood shed on it and hide the slain no more.

27 ¹ On that day the LORD with his cruel sword, his mighty and powerful sword, will punish Leviathan that twisting sea serpent, that writhing serpent Leviathan; he will slay the monster of the deep.

² On that day sing of the pleasant vineyard.

³ I the LORD am its keeper, I water it regularly, for fear its leaves should wilt. Night and day I tend it,

⁴ but I get no wine. I would as soon have briars and thorns. Then as if in battle I would trample it down,

⁵ unless it grasps me as its refuge and makes peace with me -- unless it makes its peace with me.

⁶ In time to come Jacob's posterity will take root and Israel will bud and blossom, and they will fill the whole earth with fruit.

⁷ Has the LORD struck them down as he struck their enemies? Have they been slaughtered as their attackers were slaughtered?

⁸ His quarrel with Jerusalem ends by driving her into exile, removing her by a cruel blast like that of the east wind.

⁹This wipes out Jacob's iniquity, and the removal of his sin has this result: he pounds to chalk all the altar stones, and no sacred poles or incense-altars are left standing.

¹⁰The fortified city is left solitary, a homestead stripped bare, forsaken like a wilderness; the calf grazes and lies down there, and eats up every twig.

¹¹The boughs grow dry and snap off and women come and light their fires with them. They are a people without sense; therefore their Maker will show them no mercy, he who formed them will show them no favour.

¹²On that day the LORD will beat out the grain, from the streams of the Euphrates to the wadi of Egypt; but you Israelites will be gathered one by one.

¹³On that day a great trumpet will be sounded, and those who are lost in Assyria and those dispersed in Egypt will come to worship the LORD on Jerusalem's holy mountain.

28¹ALAS for the proud garlands of Ephraim's drunkards, fading flowers, lovely in their beauty, on the

heads of those who drip with perfumes,
on those who are overcome with wine!

²The Lord has one at his bidding,
mighty and strong; like a sweeping
storm of hail, like a destroying tempest,
like a torrent of water in overwhelming
flood he will beat down on the land with
violence.

³The proud garlands of Ephraim's
drunkards will be trampled underfoot.

⁴The fading flowers, lovely in their
beauty, on those who drip with perfumes,
will be like early figs ripe before summer.
Whoever sees them plucks them, and
their bloom is gone while they lie in the
hand.

⁵On that day the LORD of Hosts shall
be a lovely garland, a fair diadem for the
remnant of his people,

⁶a spirit of justice for one who sits as a
judge, and of valour for those who repel
enemy attacks at the gate.

⁷These also lose their way through
wine and are set wandering by strong
drink: priest and prophet lose their way
through strong drink and are befuddled
with wine; they are set wandering by

strong drink, lose their way through
tippling, and stumble in judgement.

⁸Every table is covered with vomit; filth
is everywhere.

⁹Who is there that can be taught? Who
makes sense of what he hears? They are
babes newly weaned, just taken from
the breast.

¹⁰A babble of meaningless noises, mere
sounds on every side!

¹¹So through barbarous speech and a
strange tongue the Lord will address this
people,

¹²a people to whom he once said, This
is true rest; let the exhausted have rest.
This is repose, but they would not listen.

¹³Now to them the word of the LORD
will be a babble of meaningless noises,
mere sounds on every side. And so, as
they walk, they will fall backwards, they
will be injured, trapped, and caught.

¹⁴Therefore listen to the word of the
LORD, you arrogant rulers of this people
in Jerusalem.

¹⁵You say, We have made a treaty with
Death and signed a pact with Sheol:
when the raging flood sweeps by, it will

not touch us; for we have taken refuge in lies and sheltered behind falsehood.

¹⁶Therefore these are the words of the Lord GOD: I am laying a stone in Zion, a block of granite, a precious corner-stone well founded; he who has faith will not waver.

¹⁷I shall use justice as a plumb-line and righteousness as a plummet. Then hail will sweep away your refuge of lies and floodwaters carry away your shelter.

¹⁸Your treaty with Death will be annulled and your pact with Sheol will not stand; the raging waters will sweep by, and you will be like land overwhelmed by flood.

¹⁹As often as it sweeps by, it will take you; daily, morning and night, it will sweep by. When you understand what you hear, it will mean sheer terror.

²⁰As the saying goes: The bed is too short for a person to stretch, and the blanket too narrow for a cover.

²¹But the LORD will arise as he rose on Mount Perazim and storm with rage as he did in the vale of Gibeon to do what he must do, how strange a deed; to perform his task, an alien task!

²² But now have done with your arrogance, or your bonds will be tightened; for I have heard destruction decreed for the whole land by the Lord GOD of Hosts.

²³ Listen and hear what I say, attend and hear my words.

²⁴ Will the ploughman spend his whole time ploughing, breaking up his ground and harrowing it?

²⁵ Does he not, once he has levelled it, broadcast the dill and scatter the cummin? Does he not put in the wheat and barley in rows, and vetches along the edge?

²⁶ Does not his God instruct him and train him aright?

²⁷ Dill must not be threshed with a threshing-sledge, nor the cartwheel rolled over cummin; but dill is beaten out with a rod, and cummin with a flail.

²⁸ Grain is crushed, but not too long or too finely; cartwheels rumble over it and thresh it, but they do not grind it fine.

²⁹ Even this knowledge comes from the LORD of Hosts, whose counsel is wonderful and whose wisdom is great.

29¹ Woe betide Ariel! Ariel, the city where David encamped. When another year has passed, with its full round of pilgrim-feasts,

² then I shall reduce Ariel to sore straits. There will be moaning and lamentation when I make her my Ariel, my fire-altar.

³ I shall encircle you with my army, set a ring of outposts all round you, and erect siege-works against you.

⁴ You will be brought low, you will speak out of the ground, and your words will issue from the earth; your voice will come ghostlike from the ground, and your words will squeak out of the earth.

⁵ Yet the horde of your enemies will crumble into dust, the horde of ruthless foes will fly like chaff. Suddenly, all in an instant,

⁶ punishment will come from the LORD of Hosts with thunder and earthquake and a great noise, with storm and tempest and a flame of devouring fire.

⁷ The horde of all the nations warring against Ariel, all who fight against her with their siege-works, all who hem her in, will fade as a dream, a vision of the night.

⁸Like one who is hungry and dreams that he is eating, but wakes to find himself empty, or like one who is thirsty and dreams that he is drinking, but wakes to find himself faint with thirst, so will it be with the horde of nations all warring against Mount Zion.

⁹If you confuse yourselves, you will stay confused; if you blind yourselves, you will stay blinded. Be drunk but not with wine, reel but not with strong drink;

¹⁰for the LORD has poured on you a spirit of deep stupor; he has closed your eyes (that is, the prophets), and muffled your heads (they are the seers).

¹¹The prophetic vision of it all has become for you like the words in a sealed book. If you hand such a book to one who can read and say, Pray read this, he will answer, I cannot; it is sealed.

¹²Give it to one who cannot read and say, Pray read this; he will answer, I cannot read.

¹³Then the Lord said: Because this people worship me with empty words and pay me lip-service while their hearts are far from me, and their religion is but a human precept, learnt by rote,

¹⁴ therefore I shall shock this people yet again, adding shock to shock: the wisdom of their wise men will vanish and the discernment of the discerning will be lost.

¹⁵ Woe betide those who seek to hide their plans too deep for the LORD to see! When their deeds are done in the dark they say, Who sees us? Who knows of us?

¹⁶ How you turn things upside down, as if the potter ranked no higher than the clay! Will the thing made say of its maker, He did not make me? Will the pot say of the potter, He has no skill?

¹⁷ In but a very short time Lebanon will return to garden land and the garden land will be reckoned as common as scrub.

¹⁸ On that day the deaf will hear when a book is read, and the eyes of the blind will see out of impenetrable darkness.

¹⁹ The lowly will once again rejoice in the LORD, and the poor exult in the Holy One of Israel.

²⁰ The ruthless will be no more, the arrogant will cease to exist; those who are quick to find mischief, those who

impute sins to others, or lay traps for him who brings the wrongdoer into court, or by falsehood deny justice to the innocent -- all these will be cut down.

²¹ (29: 20)

²² Therefore these are the words of the LORD, the deliverer of Abraham, about the house of Jacob: This is no time for Jacob to be shamed, no time for his face to grow pale;

²³ for his descendants will hallow my name when they see what I have done in their midst. They will hold sacred the Holy One of Jacob and regard Israel's God with awe;

²⁴ the confused will gain understanding, and the obstinate accept instruction.

30¹ Woe betide the rebellious children! says the LORD, who make plans, but not of my devising, who weave schemes, but not inspired by me, so piling sin on sin.

² Without consulting me they hurry down to Egypt to seek shelter under Pharaoh's protection, to take refuge under Egypt's shadow.

³Pharaoh's protection will lead to humiliation and refuge under Egypt's shadow will bring you disgrace.

⁴Though his officers are at Zoan and his envoys reach as far as Hanes,

⁵that unprofitable nation will leave everyone in sorry plight; they will find neither help nor profit, only humiliation and contempt.

⁶THE Beasts of the South: an oracle. Through a land of hardship and distress, of lioness and roaring lion, of sand-viper and venomous flying serpent, they convey their wealth on the backs of donkeys and their treasures on camels' humps to an unprofitable people.

⁷Worthless and futile is the help of Egypt; therefore have I given her this name: Rahab Subdued.

⁸Now in their sight write it on a tablet, engrave it as an inscription that it may be there in future days, a testimony for all time to come.

⁹They are a race of rebels, disloyal children, children who refuse to listen to the LORD's instruction.

¹⁰They say to the seers, You are not to see, and to those who have visions, Do

not produce true visions for us; give us smooth words and illusory visions.

¹¹ Turn aside, leave the straight path, and rid us of the Holy One of Israel.

¹² Therefore these are the words of the Holy One of Israel: You have rejected this warning and put your trust in devious and dishonest practices on which you lean for support,

¹³ therefore you shall find this iniquity like a crack running down a high wall, which bulges out and suddenly, all in an instant, comes crashing down.

¹⁴ It crashes and breaks like an earthen jar shattered beyond repair, so that among the fragments not a shard is found to take an ember from the hearth, or to scoop water from a pool.

¹⁵ These are the words of the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel: In calm detachment lies your safety, your strength in quiet trust. But you would have none of it;

¹⁶ No, you said, we shall take horse and flee. Therefore you will be put to flight! We shall ride apace, you said. Therefore swift will be the pace of your pursuers!

¹⁷ When a thousand flee at the challenge of one, you will flee at the challenge of five, until you are left solitary as a mast on a mountaintop, a signal-post on a hill.

¹⁸ Yet the LORD is waiting to show you his favour, and he yearns to have pity on you; for the LORD is a God of justice. Happy are all who wait for him!

¹⁹ People of Zion, dwellers in Jerusalem, you will weep no more. The LORD will show you favour and answer you when he hears your cry for help.

²⁰ The Lord may give you bread of adversity and water of affliction, but he who teaches you will no longer keep himself out of sight, but with your own eyes you will see him.

²¹ If you stray from the path, whether to right or to left, you will hear a voice from behind you sounding in your ears saying, This is the way; follow it.

²² You will treat as things unclean your silver-plated images and your gold-covered idols; you will loathe them like a foul discharge and call them filth.

²³ The Lord will give rain for the seed you sow in the ground, and as the produce of your soil he will give you

heavy crops. When that day comes your cattle will graze in broad pastures;

²⁴ the oxen and donkeys that plough the land will be fed with well-seasoned fodder, winnowed with shovel and fork.

²⁵ On every high mountain and lofty hill streams of water will flow, on the day of massacre when fortresses fall.

²⁶ The moon will shine as brightly as the sun, and the sun with seven times its wonted brightness, like seven days' light in one, on the day when the LORD binds up the broken limbs of his people and heals the wounds inflicted on them.

²⁷ See, the LORD himself comes from afar, his anger blazing and his doom heavy. His lips are charged with wrath and his tongue is like a devouring fire.

²⁸ His breath is like a torrent in spate, to load the nations with an evil yoke. He sieves out the nations for destruction; he puts a bit in their mouths to lead the peoples astray.

²⁹ But for you there will be songs, as on a night of a sacred pilgrim-feast, and gladness of heart as if one marched to the sound of the pipe on the way to the

mountain of the LORD, to the Rock of Israel.

³⁰Then the LORD will make his voice heard in majesty and reveal his arm descending in fierce anger with devouring flames of fire, amid cloudburst and tempests of rain and hail.

³¹For at the voice of the LORD Assyria's heart fails her, as she feels the stroke of his rod;

³²tambourines, lyres, and shaking sistrums will keep time with every stroke of his rod, of the punishment which the LORD inflicts on them.

³³Topheth was made ready long ago (it, too, was prepared for Molech); its fire-pit, made deep and broad, is a blazing mass of logs, with the breath of the LORD like a stream of brimstone setting it ablaze.

31 ¹Woe betide those who go down to Egypt for help and rely upon horses, who put their trust in chariots because they are many, and in horsemen because of their vast numbers, but do not look to the Holy One of Israel or seek guidance of the LORD!

²Yet he too in his wisdom can bring trouble and he does not take back his threats; he will rise up against wrongdoers, against all who go to the help of evildoers.

³The Egyptians are mortals, not gods, their horses are flesh, not spirit. When the LORD stretches out his hand, the helper will stumble and the one who is helped will fall; both will perish together.

⁴This is what the LORD has said to me: As a lion or a young lion growls over its prey when the shepherds are called out in force, and it is not scared at their shouting or daunted by their clamour, so the LORD of Hosts will come down to do battle on the heights of Mount Zion.

⁵Like a hovering bird the LORD of Hosts will be a shield over Jerusalem; he will shield and deliver her, sparing and rescuing her.

⁶Israel, you have been deeply disloyal, yet come back to him,

⁷for on that day every one of you will spurn the idols of silver and the idols of gold which your own sinful hands have made.

⁸Assyria will fall, but not by man's sword; a sword that no mortal wields will devour him. He will flee before the sword, and his young warriors will be put to forced labour;

⁹officers will be helpless from terror and captains powerless to flee. This is the word of the LORD whose fire blazes in Zion, whose furnace burns in Jerusalem.

32¹ A king will reign in righteousness and his ministers rule with justice,² each of them a refuge from the wind and a shelter from the storm. They will be like runnels of water in dry ground, like the shade of a great rock in a thirsty land.

³Then those who see will see clearly, and those who hear will listen with care;

⁴the impetuous mind will understand and know, and the stammering tongue will speak fluently and plainly.

⁵The scoundrel will no longer be thought noble, nor the villain considered honourable;

⁶for the scoundrel will speak like a scoundrel hatching evil in his heart, godless in all his conduct, and a liar to the LORD; he starves the hungry of their

food and deprives the thirsty of anything to drink.

⁷The villain's tactics are villainous and he devises infamous plans to bring ruin on the poor with his lies and deny justice to the needy.

⁸But he who is of noble mind forms noble designs and in those designs he stands firm.

⁹You women who live at ease, listen attentively to what I say; you daughters without a care, mark my words.

¹⁰You may be carefree now, but you will be quaking at the turn of the year, for the vintage will be a failure, with no produce gathered in.

¹¹You women now at ease, be terrified; tremble, you women without a care. Strip yourselves bare, and put on a loincloth of sacking.

¹²Beat upon your breasts in mourning for the pleasant fields and fruitful vines,

¹³for my people's land with its yield of thorns and briars, for every happy home in the bustling city.

¹⁴Mansions are forsaken and the crowded streets deserted; citadel and watch-tower are turned into open heath,

for ever the delight of wild asses and
pasture for flocks,

¹⁵until a spirit from on high is lavished
upon us. Then the wilderness will
become garden land and garden land will
be reckoned as common as scrub.

¹⁶Justice will make its home in the
wilderness, and righteousness dwell in
the grassland;

¹⁷righteousness will yield peace and
bring about quiet trust for ever.

¹⁸Then my people will live in tranquil
country, dwelling undisturbed in peace
and security;

¹⁹it will be cool on the slopes of the
forest then, and cities will lie peaceful in
the plain.

²⁰Happy will you be sowing everywhere
beside water and letting ox and donkey
roam freely.

33¹Woe betide you, destroyer,
yourself undestroyed, betrayer
still unbetrayed! After all your destroying,
you will be destroyed; after all your
betrayals, you yourself will be betrayed.

²LORD, show us your favour; our hope
is in you. Uphold us every morning, save
us when troubles come.

³At the crack of thunder peoples flee,
nations are scattered at your roar;

⁴they are stripped of spoil as if stripped
by young locusts, like a swarm of locusts
folk swarm over it.

⁵The LORD is supreme, for he dwells
on high; he has filled Zion with justice
and righteousness.

⁶Her strength will be in your unchanging
stability, her deliverance in wisdom and
knowledge; her treasure is the fear of
the LORD.

⁷Listen, how the valiant cry out aloud
for help, and envoys sent to sue for
peace weep bitterly!

⁸The highways are deserted, no one
travels the roads. Covenants are broken,
treaties are flouted; no one is held of
any account.

⁹The land is parched and wilting,
Lebanon is eroded and crumbling;
Sharon has become like a desert, Bashan
and Carmel are stripped bare.

¹⁰Now I shall arise, says the LORD;
now I shall exalt myself, now lift myself
up.

¹¹ You will conceive chaff, and bring forth stubble; a wind like fire will devour you.

¹² Whole nations will be heaps of white ash, or like thorns cut down and set on fire.

¹³ You dwellers afar off, hear what I have done; acknowledge my might, you that are near at hand.

¹⁴ Sinners in Zion quake with terror, the godless are seized with trembling; they ask, Can any of us live with a devouring fire? Can any of us live in perpetual flames?

¹⁵ The person who behaves uprightly and speaks the truth, who scorns to enrich himself by extortion, who keeps his hands clean from bribery, who stops his ears against talk of murder and closes his eyes against looking at evil --

¹⁶ he it is who will dwell on the heights, his refuge a fastness in the cliffs, his food assured and water never failing him.

¹⁷ Your eyes will see a king in his splendour and look on a land stretching into the distance.

¹⁸ You will call to mind what once you feared: Where then is he that reckoned,

where is he that weighed, where is he that counted the treasures?

¹⁹You will no longer see that barbarous people, that people whose language was so obscure, whose stuttering speech you could not comprehend.

²⁰Look to Zion, city of our sacred feasts, let your eyes rest on Jerusalem, a secure abode, a tent that will never be moved, whose pegs will never be pulled up, whose ropes will none of them be snapped.

²¹There we have the LORD in all his majesty in a place of rivers and broad streams; but no galleys will be rowed there, no stately ships sail by.

²²The LORD is our judge, the LORD our lawgiver, the LORD our king -- he it is who will save us.

²³(It may be said, Your rigging is slack; it will not hold the mast firm in its socket, nor can it spread the sails.) Then the blind will have a full share of the spoil and the lame will take part in the pillage.

²⁴No one dwelling there will say, I am sick; the sins of the people who live there will be pardoned.

34¹ APPROACH, you nations, and listen; attend, you peoples; let the earth listen and everything in it, the world and all that it yields;

²for the LORD's anger is against all the nations and his wrath against all their hordes; he gives them over to slaughter and destruction.

³Their slain will be flung out, stench will rise from their corpses, and the mountains will run with their blood.

⁴All the host of heaven will crumble into nothing, the heavens will be rolled up like a scroll, and all their host fade away, as the foliage withers from the vine and the ripened fruit from the fig tree.

⁵For my sword appears in heaven. See how it descends in judgement on Edom, on a people whom I have doomed to destruction.

⁶The LORD has a sword sated with blood, gorged with fat, the fat of rams' kidneys, and with the blood of lambs and goats; for the LORD has a sacrifice in Bozrah, a great slaughter in Edom.

⁷Wild oxen will go down also, bull and bison together, and their land will drink

deep of blood and their soil be enriched with fat.

⁸For the LORD has a day of vengeance, the champion of Zion has a time of retribution.

⁹Edom's torrents will be turned to pitch and its soil to brimstone; the land will become blazing pitch,

¹⁰never to be quenched night or day; smoke will rise from it for ever. Age after age it will lie waste, and no one will ever again pass through it.

¹¹Horned owl and bustard will make it their home; it will be the haunt of screech-owl and raven. The LORD has stretched over it a measuring line of chaos, and its boundaries will be a jumble of stones.

¹²No king will be acclaimed there, and all its princes will come to naught.

¹³Its palaces will be overgrown with thorns; nettles and briars will cover its strongholds. It will be the lair of wolves, the haunt of desert-owls.

¹⁴Marmots will live alongside jackals, and he-goats will congregate there. There too the nightjar will return to rest and find herself a place for repose;

¹⁵ there the sand-partridge will make her nest, lay her eggs and hatch them, and gather her brood under her wings; there will the kites gather, each with its mate.

¹⁶ Consult the book of the LORD and read it: not one of these will be missing, not one will lack its mate, for with his own mouth he has ordered it and by his spirit he has brought them together.

¹⁷ He it is who has allotted each its place, and his hand has measured out their portions; they will occupy it for all time, and each succeeding generation will dwell there.

35 ¹ Let the wilderness and the parched land be glad, let the desert rejoice and burst into flower.

² Let it flower with fields of asphodel, let it rejoice and shout for joy. The glory of Lebanon is given to it, the splendour too of Carmel and Sharon; these will see the glory of the LORD, the splendour of our God.

³ Brace the arms that are limp, steady the knees that give way;

⁴ say to the anxious, Be strong, fear not! Your God comes to save you with his vengeance and his retribution.

⁵ Then the eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped.

⁶ Then the lame will leap like deer, and the dumb shout aloud; for water will spring up in the wilderness and torrents flow in the desert.

⁷ The mirage will become a pool, the thirsty land bubbling springs; instead of reeds and rushes, grass will grow in country where wolves have their lairs.

⁸ And a causeway will appear there; it will be called the Way of Holiness. No one unclean will pass along it; it will become a pilgrim's way, and no fool will trespass on it.

⁹ No lion will come there, no savage beast go by; not one will be found there. But by that way those the LORD has redeemed will return.

¹⁰ The LORD's people, set free, will come back and enter Zion with shouts of triumph, crowned with everlasting joy. Gladness and joy will come upon them, while suffering and weariness flee away.

36 ¹IN the fourteenth year of King Hezekiah's reign, King Sennacherib of Assyria attacked and captured all the fortified towns of Judah.

²From Lachish he sent his chief officer with a strong force to King Hezekiah at Jerusalem. The officer halted by the conduit of the Upper Pool on the causeway leading to the Fuller's Field.

³There Eliakim son of Hilkiah, the comptroller of the household, came out to him, with Shebna the adjutant-general and Joah son of Asaph, the secretary of state.

⁴The 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?

⁵Do 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?

⁶On 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.

⁷ 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?

⁸ 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.

⁹ How then can you reject the authority of even the least of my master's servants and rely on Egypt for chariots and horsemen?

¹⁰ Do you think that I have come to attack this land and destroy it without the consent of the LORD? No; the LORD himself said to me, Go up and destroy this land.

¹¹ Eliakim, 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.

¹² The 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?

¹³Then he stood and shouted in Hebrew, Hear the message of the Great King, the king of Assyria!

¹⁴These are the king's words: Do not be taken in by Hezekiah. He is powerless to save you.

¹⁵Do 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.

¹⁶Do 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,

¹⁷until I come and take you to a land like your own, a land of grain and new wine, of bread and vineyards.

¹⁸Beware that Hezekiah does not mislead you by telling you that the LORD will save you. Did any god of the nations save his land from the king of Assyria's power?

¹⁹Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? Where are the gods of Sepharvaim? Where are the gods of Samaria? Did they save Samaria from me?

²⁰Among all the gods of these nations is there one who saved his land from me? So how is the LORD to save Jerusalem?

²¹The people remained silent and said not a word in reply, for the king had given orders that no one was to answer him.

²²Eliakim son of Hilkiah, comptroller of the household, Shebna the adjutant-general, and Joah son of Asaph, secretary, came to Hezekiah with their clothes torn and reported the words of the chief officer.

37 ¹When King Hezekiah heard their report, he tore his clothes, put on sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD.

²He 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 lacks the strength to bring to birth the child she is carrying.

⁴ It may be that the LORD your God will give heed to 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 officials 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.

⁹But 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

¹⁰to 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?

¹¹You yourself must have heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all countries: they utterly destroyed them. Can you then hope to escape?

¹²Did their gods save the nations which my predecessors wiped out: Gozan, Harran, Rezep, 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 temple and spread it out before the LORD

¹⁵with this prayer:

¹⁶LORD of Hosts, God of Israel, enthroned on the cherubim, you alone

are God of all the kingdoms of the world; you made heaven and earth.

¹⁷Incline your ear, LORD, and listen; open your eyes, LORD, and see; hear all the words that Sennacherib has sent to taunt the living God.

¹⁸LORD, it is true that the kings of Assyria have laid waste every country,

¹⁹and 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.

²⁰Now, LORD our God, save us from his power, so that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you alone, LORD, are God.

²¹Isaiah 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,

²²and 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.

²³Whom have you taunted and blasphemed? Against whom did you raise an outcry, casting haughty glances at the Holy One of Israel?

²⁴You sent your servants to taunt the Lord; you said: With my countless chariots 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 the highest peak, the most luxuriant forest.

²⁵I 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.

²⁶Have 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.

²⁷Their 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.

²⁸I know your rising up and your sitting down, your going out and your coming in.

²⁹The 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.

³⁰This 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.

³¹The survivors left in Judah will strike fresh root below ground and yield fruit above ground,

³²for a remnant will come out of Jerusalem and survivors from Mount Zion. The zeal of the LORD of Hosts will perform this.

³³Therefore, 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 his shield or cast up a siege-ramp against it.

³⁴By the way he came he will go back; he will not enter this city. This is the word of the LORD.

³⁵I shall shield this city to deliver it for my own sake and for the sake of my servant David.

³⁶The angel of the LORD went out and struck down a hundred and eighty-five thousand men in the Assyrian camp; when morning dawned, there they all lay dead.

³⁷King Sennacherib of Assyria broke camp and marched away; he went back to Nineveh and remained there.

³⁸One day, while he was worshipping in the temple of his god Nisroch, his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer assassinated him and made their escape to the land of Ararat. His son Esarhaddon succeeded him.

38¹ At 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, always doing what was pleasing to you. And he wept bitterly.

⁴Then the word of the LORD came to Isaiah:

⁵Go and say to Hezekiah: This is the word of the LORD the God of your father David: I have heard your prayer and seen your tears; I am going to add fifteen years to your life,

⁶and I shall deliver you and this city from the king of Assyria. I shall protect this city.

⁷Isaiah replied, This will be your proof from the LORD that he will do what he has promised:

⁸I shall bring back by ten steps the shadow cast by the setting sun on the stairway of Ahaz. And the sun went back ten steps on the stairway down which it had gone.

⁹A poem written by King Hezekiah of Judah on his recovery from his illness:

¹⁰I said, In the prime of life I must pass away; for the rest of my days I am consigned to the gates of Sheol.

¹¹I said, I shall no longer see the LORD as I did in the land of the living; I shall

no longer see my fellow-men as I did when I lived in the world.

¹²My dwelling is taken from me, pulled up like a shepherd's tent; you have rolled up my life like a weaver when he cuts the web from the thrum. Day and night you torment me;

¹³I am racked with pain till the morning. All my bones are broken, as if by a lion; day and night you torment me.

¹⁴I twitter as if I were a swallow, I moan like a dove. My eyes are raised to heaven: Lord, pay heed; stand surety for me.

¹⁵How can I complain, what can I say to the LORD when he himself has done this? I shall wander to and fro all my life long in bitterness of soul.

¹⁶Yet, Lord, because of you my soul will live. Give my spirit rest; restore me and give me life.

¹⁷Bitterness, not prosperity, had indeed been my lot, but your love saved me from the pit of destruction; for you have thrust all my sins behind you.

¹⁸Sheol cannot confess you, Death cannot praise you, nor can those who go down to the abyss hope for your truth.

¹⁹The living, only the living can confess you as I do this day, my God, just as a father makes your faithfulness known to his sons.

²⁰The LORD is at hand to save me; so let the music of our praises resound all our life long in the house of the LORD.

²¹Isaiah told them to prepare a fig-plaster; when it was made and applied to the inflammation, Hezekiah recovered.

²²He asked Isaiah what proof there was that he would go up to the house of the LORD.

39¹At 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.

²Hezekiah welcomed them and showed them his treasury, the silver and gold, the spices and fragrant oil, his entire armoury and everything to be found in his storehouses; there was nothing in his palace or in his whole realm that Hezekiah did not show them.

³The prophet Isaiah came to King Hezekiah and asked, What did these

men say? Where did they come from? They came to me from a distant country, Hezekiah answered, from Babylon.

⁴What did they see in your palace? Isaiah demanded. They saw everything, was the reply; there was nothing in my storehouses that I did not show them.

⁵Isaiah said to Hezekiah, Hear the word of the LORD of Hosts:

⁶The 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.

⁷And some of your sons, your own offspring, will be taken to serve as eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.

⁸Hezekiah answered, The word of the LORD which you have spoken is good, for he was thinking to himself that peace and security would last his lifetime.

40¹ COMFORT my people; bring comfort to them, says your God; ² speak kindly to Jerusalem and proclaim to her that her term of bondage is served, her penalty is paid; for she

has received at the LORD's hand double measure for all her sins.

³A voice cries: Clear a road through the wilderness for the LORD, prepare a highway across the desert for our God.

⁴Let every valley be raised, every mountain and hill be brought low, uneven ground be made smooth, and steep places become level.

⁵Then will the glory of the LORD be revealed and all mankind together will see it. The LORD himself has spoken.

⁶A voice says, Proclaim! and I asked, What shall I proclaim? All mortals are grass, they last no longer than a wild flower of the field.

⁷The grass withers, the flower fades, when the blast of the LORD blows on them. Surely the people are grass!

⁸The grass may wither, the flower fade, but the word of our God will endure for ever.

⁹Climb to a mountaintop, you that bring good news to Zion; raise your voice and shout aloud, you that carry good news to Jerusalem, raise it fearlessly; say to the cities of Judah, Your God is here!

¹⁰Here is the Lord GOD; he is coming in might, coming to rule with powerful arm. His reward is with him, his recompense before him.

¹¹Like a shepherd he will tend his flock and with his arm keep them together; he will carry the lambs in his bosom and lead the ewes to water.

¹²WHO has measured the waters of the sea in the hollow of his hand, or with its span gauged the heavens? Who has held all the soil of the earth in a bushel, or weighed the mountains on a balance, the hills on a pair of scales?

¹³Who has directed the spirit of the LORD? What counsellor stood at his side to instruct him?

¹⁴With whom did he confer to gain discernment? Who taught him this path of justice, or taught him knowledge, or showed him the way of wisdom?

¹⁵To him nations are but drops from a bucket, no more than moisture on the scales; to him coasts and islands weigh as light as specks of dust!

¹⁶Lebanon does not yield wood enough for fuel, beasts enough for a whole-offering.

¹⁷ All the nations are as naught in his sight; he reckons them as less than nothing.

¹⁸ What likeness, then, will you find for God or what form to resemble his?

¹⁹ An image which a craftsman makes, and a goldsmith overlays with gold and fits with studs of silver?

²⁰ Or should someone choose mulberry-wood, a wood that does not rot, and seek out a skilful craftsman for the task of setting up an image and making it secure? (41-6) Each workman helps his comrade, each encourages his fellow. (41-7) The craftsman encourages the goldsmith, the gilder him who strikes the anvil; he declares the soldering to be sound, and fastens the image with nails so that it will remain secure.

²¹ Do you not know, have you not heard, were you not told long ago, have you not perceived ever since the world was founded,

²² that God sits enthroned on the vaulted roof of the world, and its inhabitants appear as grasshoppers? He stretches out the skies like a curtain, spreads them out like a tent to live in;

²³ he reduces the great to naught and makes earthly rulers as nothing.

²⁴ Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown, scarcely have they taken root in the ground, before he blows on them and they wither, and a whirlwind carries them off like chaff.

²⁵ To whom, then, will you liken me, whom set up as my equal? asks the Holy One.

²⁶ Lift up your eyes to the heavens; consider who created these, led out their host one by one, and summoned each by name. Through his great might, his strength and power, not one is missing.

²⁷ Jacob, why do you complain, and you, Israel, why do you say, My lot is hidden from the LORD, my cause goes unheeded by my God?

²⁸ Do you not know, have you not heard? The LORD, the eternal God, creator of earth's farthest bounds, does not weary or grow faint; his understanding cannot be fathomed.

²⁹ He gives vigour to the weary, new strength to the exhausted.

³⁰Young men may grow weary and faint, even the fittest may stumble and fall;

³¹but those who look to the LORD will win new strength, they will soar as on eagles' wings; they will run and not feel faint, march on and not grow weary.

41 ¹Listen in silence to me, all you coasts and islands; let the peoples come to meet me. Let them draw near, then let them speak up; together we shall go to the place of judgement.

²Who has raised up from the east one greeted by victory wherever he goes, making nations his subjects and overthrowing their kings? He scatters them with his sword like dust and with his bow like chaff driven before the wind;

³he puts them to flight and passes on unscathed, swifter than any traveller on foot.

⁴Whose work is this, who has brought it to pass? Who has summoned the generations from the beginning? I, the LORD, was with the first of them, and I am with those who come after.

⁵ Coasts and islands saw it and were afraid, the world trembled from end to end.

⁶ (40: 20)

⁷ (40: 20)

⁸ But you, Israel my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, descendants of my friend Abraham,

⁹ I have taken you from the ends of the earth, and summoned you from its farthest corners; I have called you my servant, have chosen you and not rejected you:

¹⁰ have no fear, for I am with you; be not afraid, for I am your God. I shall strengthen you and give you help and uphold you with my victorious right hand.

¹¹ Now all who defy you will be confounded and put to shame; all who set themselves against you will be as nothing and will vanish.

¹² You will look for your assailants but you will not find them; those who take up arms against you will be reduced to nothing.

¹³For I, the LORD your God, take you by the right hand and say to you, Have no fear; it is I who help you.

¹⁴Have no fear, Jacob you worm and Israel you maggot. It is I who help you, declares the LORD; your redeemer is the Holy One of Israel.

¹⁵See, I shall make of you a sharp threshing-sledge, new and studded with teeth; you will thresh mountains and crush them to dust and reduce the hills to chaff;

¹⁶you will winnow them; the wind will carry them away and a gale will scatter them. Then you will rejoice in the LORD and glory in the Holy One of Israel.

¹⁷The poor and the needy look for water and find none; their tongues are parched with thirst. But I the LORD shall provide for their wants; I, the God of Israel, shall not forsake them.

¹⁸I shall open rivers on the arid heights, and wells in the valleys; I shall turn the desert into pools and dry land into springs of water;

¹⁹I shall plant cedars in the wilderness, acacias, myrtles, and wild olives; I shall

grow pines on the barren heath side by side with fir and box tree,

²⁰ that everyone may see and know, may once for all observe and understand that the LORD himself has done this: it is the creation of the Holy One of Israel.

²¹ Come, open your plea, says the LORD, present your case, says Jacob's King;

²² let these idols come forward and foretell the future for us. Let them declare the meaning of these past events that we may reflect on it; let them predict the future to us that we may know what it holds.

²³ Declare what is yet to happen; then we shall know you are gods. Do something, whether good or bad, anything that will strike us with dismay and fear.

²⁴ You cannot! You are sprung from nothing, your works are non-existent. To choose you is outrageous!

²⁵ I roused one from the north, and he has come; I called from the east one summoned in my name; he marches over rulers as if they were mud, like a potter treading clay.

²⁶Who has declared this from the beginning, that we might know it, or told us beforehand so that we might say, He was right? Not one of you declared, not one foretold, no one heard a sound from you.

²⁷I am the first to appoint a messenger to Zion, a bringer of good news to Jerusalem.

²⁸When I look round there is no one, and among those gods no one to give counsel; I ask a question and no one can answer.

²⁹What empty things they all are! Nothing they do amounts to anything, their effigies are so much wind, mere nothings.

42¹Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one, in whom I take delight! I have put my spirit on him; he will establish justice among the nations.

²He will not shout or raise his voice, or make himself heard in the street.

³He will not break a crushed reed or snuff out a smouldering wick; unfailingly he will establish justice.

⁴ He will never falter or be crushed until he sets justice on earth, while coasts and islands await his teaching.

⁵ These are the words of the LORD who is God, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who fashioned the earth and everything that grows in it, giving breath to its people and life to those who walk on it:

⁶ I the LORD have called you with righteous purpose and taken you by the hand; I have formed you, and destined you to be a light for peoples, a lamp for nations,

⁷ to open eyes that are blind, to bring captives out of prison, out of the dungeon where they lie in darkness.

⁸ I am the LORD; the LORD is my name; I shall not yield my glory to another god, nor my praise to any idol.

⁹ The earlier prophecies have come to pass, and now I declare new things; before they unfold, I announce them to you.

¹⁰ Sing a new song to the LORD, sing his praise throughout the world, you that sail the broad seas, and you that inhabit the coasts and islands.

¹¹ Let the wilderness and its settlements rejoice, and the encampments where Kedar lives. Let the inhabitants of Sela shout for joy, let them cry out from the hilltops.

¹² Let the coasts and islands ascribe glory to the LORD; let them sing his praise.

¹³ The LORD will go forth as a warrior, a soldier roused to the fury of battle; he will shout, he will raise the battle cry and triumph over his foes.

¹⁴ Long have I restrained myself, I kept silence and held myself in check; now I groan like a woman in labour, panting and gasping.

¹⁵ I shall lay waste mountain and hill and shrivel up all their herbage. I shall change rivers into desert wastes and dry up every pool.

¹⁶ I shall lead the blind on their way and guide them along paths they do not know; I shall turn darkness into light before them and make straight their twisting roads. These things I shall do without fail.

¹⁷ Those who put their trust in an image, and say to idols, You are our gods, will be repulsed in bitter shame.

¹⁸ You that are deaf, hear now; you that are blind, look and see.

¹⁹ Who is blind but my servant, who so deaf as the messenger I send? Who so blind as the one who has my trust, so deaf as the servant of the LORD?

²⁰ You have seen much but perceived little, your ears are open but you hear nothing.

²¹ Though it pleased the LORD to further his justice by making his law great and glorious,

²² yet here is a people taken as spoil and plundered, all of them shut up in holes and hidden away in dungeons. They are carried off as spoil without hope of rescue, as plunder with no one to demand their return.

²³ Who among you will pay heed to this? Who will give it close attention from now on?

²⁴ Who handed over Jacob for plunder, who gave up Israel for spoil? Was it not the LORD, against whom they sinned?

They would not follow his ways and refused obedience to his law;

²⁵so on Jacob he poured out his wrath, anger and the fury of battle. It wrapped him in flames, yet he did not learn, burnt him, yet he did not lay it to heart.

43¹ But now, Jacob, this is the word of the LORD, the word of your Creator, of him who fashioned you, Israel: Have no fear, for I have redeemed you; I call you by name; you are mine.

²When you pass through water I shall be with you; when you pass through rivers they will not overwhelm you; walk through fire, and you will not be scorched, through flames, and they will not burn you.

³I am the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, your deliverer; I give Egypt as ransom for you, Nubia and Seba in exchange for you.

⁴You are more precious to me than the Assyrians; you are honoured, and I love you. I would give the Edomites in exchange for you, and any other people for your life.

⁵ Have no fear, for I am with you; I shall bring your descendants from the east and gather you from the west.

⁶ To the north I shall say, Give them up, and to the south, Do not obstruct them. Bring my sons and daughters from afar, bring them back from the ends of the earth:

⁷ everyone who bears my name, all whom I have created, whom I have formed, whom I have made for my glory.

⁸ Bring forward this people, a people who have eyes but are blind, who have ears but are deaf.

⁹ All the nations are gathered together and the peoples assembled. Who among them can expound what has gone before or interpret this for us? Let them produce their witnesses and prove their case; let people hearing them say, That is the truth.

¹⁰ The LORD declares, You are my witnesses, you are my servants chosen by me to know me and put your trust in me and understand that I am the Lord. Before me no god existed, nor will there be any after me.

¹¹ I am the LORD, and I alone am your deliverer.

¹² I have made it known; I declared it, I and no alien god among you, and you are my witnesses, says the LORD. I am God;

¹³ from everlasting I am he. None can deliver from my hand; what I do, none can undo.

¹⁴ These are the words of the LORD your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: For your sakes I shall send an army to Babylon and lay the Chaldaeans prostrate as they flee; their cry of triumph will turn to lamentation.

¹⁵ Israel, I am the LORD, your Holy One, your Creator and your King.

¹⁶ This is the word of the LORD, who opened a way in the sea, a path through mighty waters,

¹⁷ who drew on chariot and horse to their destruction, an army in all its strength; they lay down, never to rise again; they were extinguished, snuffed out like a wick:

¹⁸ Stop dwelling on past events and brooding over days gone by.

¹⁹I am about to do something new; this moment it will unfold. Can you not perceive it? Even through the wilderness I shall make a way, and paths in the barren desert.

²⁰The wild beasts will do me honour, the wolf and the desert-owl, for I shall provide water in the wilderness and rivers in the barren desert, where my chosen people may drink,

²¹this people I have formed for myself, and they will proclaim my praises.

²²Yet, Jacob, you did not call upon me; much less did you, Israel, weary yourself in my service.

²³You did not bring me whole-offerings from your flock or honour me with your sacrifices; I did not exact grain-offerings from you or weary you with demands for frankincense.

²⁴You did not buy me aromatic cane with your money or sate me with the fat of your sacrifices. Rather you burdened me with your sins and wearied me with your crimes.

²⁵I am the LORD; for my own sake I wipe out your transgressions and remember your sins no more.

²⁶Cite me to appear, let us argue it out; set forth your pleading and establish your innocence.

²⁷Your first forefather transgressed, your spokesmen rebelled against me,

²⁸and your leaders desecrated my sanctuary; that is why I put Jacob under solemn curse and left Israel to be reviled.

44¹Hear me now, Jacob my servant; Israel, my chosen one, hear me.

²Thus says the LORD your maker, your helper, who fashioned you from birth: Have no fear, Jacob my servant, Jeshurun whom I have chosen,

³for I shall pour down rain on thirsty land, showers on dry ground. I shall pour out my spirit on your offspring and my blessing on your children.

⁴They will grow up like a green tamarisk, like willows by flowing streams.

⁵This person will say, I am the LORD's; that one will call himself a son of Jacob; another will write the LORD's name on his hand and the name of Israel will be added to his own.

⁶Thus says the LORD, Israel's King, the LORD of Hosts, his Redeemer: I am the

first and I am the last, and there is no god but me.

⁷Who is like me? Let him speak up; let him declare his proof and set it out for me: let him announce beforehand things to come, let him foretell what is yet to be.

⁸Take heart, have no fear. Did I not tell you this long ago? I foretold it, and you are my witnesses. Is there any god apart from me, any other deity? I know none!

⁹Those who make idols are all less than nothing; their cherished images profit nobody; their worshippers are blind; their ignorance shows up their foolishness.

¹⁰Whoever makes a god or casts an image, his labour is wasted.

¹¹All the votaries are put to shame; the craftsmen are but mortals. Let them all assemble and confront me; they will be afraid and utterly shamed.

¹²The blacksmith sharpens a graving tool and hammers out his work hot from the coals and shapes it with his strong arm. Should he go hungry his strength fails; if he has no water to drink he feels exhausted.

¹³The woodworker draws his line taut and marks out a figure with a scribe; he planes the wood and measures it with calipers, and he carves it to the shape of a man, comely as the human form, to be set up in a shrine.

¹⁴A man plants a cedar and the rain makes it grow, so that later on he will have a tree to cut down; or he picks out in the forest an ilex or an oak which he will raise into a stout tree for himself.

¹⁵It becomes fuel for his fire: some of it he uses to warm himself, some he kindles and bakes bread on it. Some he even makes into a god, and prostrates himself; he shapes it into an idol and bows down before it.

¹⁶One half of the wood he burns in the fire and on this he roasts meat, so that he may eat this and be satisfied; he also warms himself and he says, Good! I can feel the heat as I watch the flames.

¹⁷Then what is left of the wood he makes into a god, an image to which he bows down and prostrates himself; he prays to it and says, Save me; for you are my god.

¹⁸Such people neither know nor understand, their eyes made too blind to see, their minds too narrow to discern.

¹⁹Such a one will not use his reason; he has neither the wit nor the sense to say, Half of it I have burnt, and even used its embers to bake bread; I have roasted meat on them and eaten it; but the rest of it I turn into this abominable object; really I am worshipping a block of wood.

²⁰He feeds on ashes indeed! His deluded mind has led him astray, and he cannot recover his senses so far as to say, This thing I am holding is a sham.

²¹Jacob, remember all this; Israel, remember, for you are my servant: I have fashioned you, and you are in my service; Israel, never forget me.

²²I have swept away your transgressions like mist, and your sins are dispersed like clouds; turn back to me, for I have redeemed you.

²³Shout in triumph, you heavens, for it is the LORD's doing; cry out for joy, you lowest depths of the earth; break into songs of triumph, you mountains, you forest and all your trees; for the LORD

has redeemed Jacob and through Israel he wins glory.

²⁴ Thus says the LORD, your Redeemer, who formed you from birth: I am the LORD who made all things, by myself I stretched out the heavens, alone I fashioned the earth.

²⁵ I frustrate false prophets and their omens, and make fools of diviners; I reverse what wise men say and make nonsense of their wisdom.

²⁶ I confirm my servants' prophecies and bring about my messengers' plans. Of Jerusalem I say, She will be inhabited once more, and of the towns of Judah, They will be rebuilt; I shall restore their ruins.

²⁷ I say to the deep waters, Be dried up; I shall make your streams run dry.

²⁸ I say to Cyrus, You will be my shepherd to fulfil all my purpose, so that Jerusalem may be rebuilt and the foundations of the temple be laid.

45¹ Thus says the LORD to Cyrus his anointed, whom he has taken by the right hand, subduing nations before him and stripping kings of their strength;

before whom doors will be opened and no gates barred:

²I myself shall go before you and level the swelling hills; I shall break down bronze gates and cut through iron bars.

³I shall give you treasures from dark vaults, and hoards from secret places, so that you may know that I am the LORD, Israel's God, who calls you by name.

⁴For the sake of Jacob my servant and Israel my chosen one I have called you by name and given you a title, though you have not known me.

⁵I am the LORD, and there is none other; apart from me there is no god. Though you have not known me I shall strengthen you,

⁶so that from east to west all may know there is none besides me: I am the LORD, and there is none other;

⁷I make the light, I create the darkness; author alike of wellbeing and woe, I, the LORD, do all these things.

⁸Rain righteousness, you heavens, let the skies above pour it down, let the earth open for it that salvation may flourish with righteousness growing beside it. I, the LORD, have created this.

⁹Will the pot contend with the potter, or the earthenware with the hand that shapes it? Will the clay ask the potter what he is making or his handiwork say to him, You have no skill?

¹⁰Will the child say to his father, What are you begetting? or to his mother, What are you bringing to birth?

¹¹Thus says the LORD, Israel's Holy One, his Maker: Would you dare question me concerning my children, or instruct me in my handiwork?

¹²I alone made the earth and created mankind upon it. With my own hands I stretched out the heavens and directed all their host.

¹³With righteous purpose I have roused this man, and I shall smooth all his paths; he it is who will rebuild my city and set my exiles free -- not for a price nor for a bribe, says the LORD of Hosts.

¹⁴These are the words of the LORD: Toilers of Egypt and Nubian merchants and Sabaean bearing tribute will come into your power and be your slaves, will come and follow you in chains; they will bow in submission before you, and say,

Surely God is with you, and there is no other god.

¹⁵How then can you be a God who hides himself, God of Israel, the Deliverer?

¹⁶All the makers of idols are confounded and brought to shame, they perish in confusion together.

¹⁷But Israel has been delivered by the LORD, a deliverance for all time to come; they will never be confounded, never put to shame.

¹⁸Thus says the LORD, the Creator of the heavens, he who is God, who made the earth and fashioned it and by himself fixed it firmly, who created it not as a formless waste but as a place to be lived in: I am the LORD, and there is none other.

¹⁹I did not speak in secret, in realms of darkness; I did not say to Jacob's people, Look for me in the formless waste. I the LORD speak what is right, I declare what is just.

²⁰Gather together, come, draw near, you survivors of the nations, who in ignorance carry wooden idols in procession, praying to a god that cannot save.

²¹ Come forward and urge your case, consult together: who foretold this in days of old, who stated it long ago? Was it not I, the LORD? There is no god but me, none other than I, victorious and able to save.

²² From every corner of the earth turn to me and be saved; for I am God, there is none other.

²³ By my life I have sworn, I have given a promise of victory, a promise that will not be broken; to me every knee will bow, by me every tongue will swear,

²⁴ saying, In the LORD alone are victory and might. All who defy him will stand ashamed in his presence,

²⁵ but all Israel's descendants will be victorious and will glory in the LORD.

46¹ Bel has crouched down, Nebo stooped low: their images, once carried in your processions, have been loaded on to beasts and cattle, a burden for the weary creatures;

² though they stoop and crouch, they are not able to bring the burden to safety, but they themselves go into captivity.

³ Listen to me, house of Jacob and all who remain of the house of Israel, a load on me from your birth, upheld by me from the womb:

⁴ Till you grow old I am the LORD, and when white hairs come, I shall carry you still; I have made you and I shall uphold you, I shall carry you away to safety.

⁵ To whom will you liken me? Who is my equal? With whom can you compare me? Where is my like?

⁶ Those who squander their bags of gold and weigh out their silver with a balance hire a goldsmith to fashion it into a god; then they prostrate themselves before it in worship;

⁷ they hoist it shoulder-high and carry it and set it down on its place; there it must stand, it cannot stir from the spot. Let a man cry to it as he will, it does not answer; it cannot deliver him from his troubles.

⁸ Remember this and abandon hope; consider it well, you rebels.

⁹ Remember all that happened long ago, for I am God, and there is none other; I am God, and there is no one like me.

¹⁰From the beginning I reveal the end, from ancient times what is yet to be; I say, My purpose stands, I shall accomplish all that I please.

¹¹I summon a bird of prey from the east -- from a distant land a man to fulfil my design. I have spoken and I shall bring it to pass, I have planned it, and I shall carry it out.

¹²Listen to me, you stubborn of heart, for whom victory is far off:

¹³I bring my victory near, mine is not far off, and my deliverance will not be delayed; In Zion I shall grant deliverance for Israel my glory.

47 ¹Come down and sit in the dust, virgin daughter of Babylon. Descend from your throne and sit on the ground, daughter of the Chaldaeans; never again will you be called tender and delicate.

²Take the handmill, grind meal, remove your veil; strip off your skirt, bare your thighs, wade through rivers,

³so that your nakedness may be seen, your shame exposed. I shall take vengeance and show clemency to none,

⁴says our Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, whose name is the LORD of Hosts.

⁵Daughter of the Chaldaeans, go into the darkness and sit in silence; for never again will you be called queen of many kingdoms.

⁶I was angry with my people; I dishonoured my own possession and surrendered them into your power. You showed them no mercy; even on the aged you laid a very heavy yoke.

⁷You said, I shall reign a queen for ever; you gave no thought to your actions, nor did you consider their outcome.

⁸Now listen to this, you lover of luxury, carefree on your throne, saying to yourself, I am, and there is none other. I shall never sit in widow's mourning, never know the loss of children.

⁹Yet suddenly, in a single day, both these things will come upon you; they will both come upon you in full measure: loss of children and widowhood, despite your many sorceries, all your countless spells.

¹⁰Secure in your wicked ways you thought, No one can see me. It was

your wisdom and knowledge that led you astray. You said to yourself, I am, and there is none other.

¹¹Therefore evil will overtake you, and you will not know how to conjure it away; disaster will befall you, and you will not be able to avert it; ruin all unforeseen will suddenly come upon you.

¹²Persist in your spells and your many sorceries, in which you have trafficked all your life. Maybe you can get help from them! Maybe you will yet inspire terror!

¹³In spite of your many wiles you are powerless. Let your astrologers, your star-gazers who foretell your future month by month, persist, and save you!

¹⁴But they are like stubble and fire burns them up; they cannot snatch themselves from the flame. It is not a glowing coal to warm them, not a fire for them to sit by!

¹⁵So much for your magicians with whom you have trafficked all your life: they have wandered off, each his own way, and there is not one to save you.

48¹Hear this, you house of Jacob, who are called by the name of Israel, and have sprung from the seed of

Judah; who swear by the name of the LORD and invoke the God of Israel, but not with honesty and sincerity,

² though you call yourselves citizens of the Holy City and lean for support on the God of Israel, whose name is the LORD of Hosts:

³ Long ago I announced what would first happen, I revealed it with my own mouth; suddenly I acted and it came about.

⁴ Knowing your stubbornness, your neck being as stiff as iron, your brow like brass,

⁵ I told you of these things long ago, and declared them to you before they happened, so that you could not say, They were my idol's doing; my image, the god that I fashioned, ordained them.

⁶ You have heard what I said; consider it well, and admit the truth of it. From now on I show you new things, hidden things you did not know before.

⁷ They were not created long ago, but in this very hour; before today you had never heard of them. You cannot claim, I know them already.

⁸You neither heard nor knew; your ears were closed long ago. I knew that you were treacherous and rebellious from your birth.

⁹For the sake of my own name I was patient; rather than destroy you I held myself in check.

¹⁰I tested you, but not as silver is tested: it was in the furnace of affliction I purified you.

¹¹For my honour's sake, for my own honour I did it; I will not let my name be profaned or yield my glory to any other god.

¹²Listen to me, Jacob, and Israel whom I have called: I am the LORD; I am the first, I am the last also.

¹³My hand founded the earth, my right hand spread the expanse of the heavens; when I summoned them, they came at once into being.

¹⁴Assemble, all of you, and listen; which of you has declared what is coming, that he whom I love will carry out my purpose against Babylon and the Chaldaeans will be scattered?

¹⁵I myself have spoken, I have summoned him, I have brought him here, and his mission will prosper.

¹⁶Draw near to me and hear this: from the beginning I have never spoken in secret, and at its time of fulfilment I was there.

¹⁷Thus says the LORD your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: I am the LORD your God: I teach you for your own wellbeing and lead you in the way you should go.

¹⁸If only you had listened to my commands, your prosperity would have rolled on like a river, your success like the waves of the sea;

¹⁹your children would have been like the sand in number, your descendants countless as its grains; their name would never be erased or blotted from my sight.

²⁰Go out from Babylon, hasten away from the Chaldeans; proclaim it with joyful song, sending out the news to the ends of the earth; tell them, The LORD has redeemed his servant Jacob.

²¹Though he led them through desert places, they suffered no thirst; he made

water flow for them from the rock, for them he split the rock and streams gushed forth.

²²There is no peace for the wicked, says the LORD.

49¹LISTEN to me, you coasts and islands, pay heed, you peoples far distant: the LORD called me before I was born, he named me from my mother's womb.

²He made my tongue a sharp sword and hid me under the shelter of his hand; he made me into a polished arrow, in his quiver he concealed me.

³He said to me, Israel, you are my servant through whom I shall win glory.

⁴Once I said, I have toiled in vain; I have spent my strength for nothing, and to no purpose. Yet my cause is with the LORD and my reward with my God.

⁵The LORD had formed me in the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob back to him that Israel should be gathered to him, so that I might rise to honour in the LORD's sight and my God might be my strength.

⁶And now the LORD has said to me: It is too slight a task for you, as my

servant, to restore the tribes of Jacob, to bring back the survivors of Israel: I shall appoint you a light to the nations so that my salvation may reach earth's farthest bounds.

⁷These are the words of the Holy One, the LORD who redeems Israel, to one who is despised, and whom people abhor, the slave of tyrants: Kings will rise when they see you, princes will do homage, because of the LORD who is faithful, because of Israel's Holy One who has chosen you.

⁸These are the words of the LORD: In the time of my favour I answered you; on the day of deliverance I came to your aid. I have formed you, and destined you to be a light for peoples, restoring the land and allotting once more its desolate holdings.

⁹I said to the prisoners, Go free, and to those in darkness, Come out into the open. Along every path they will find pasture and grazing in all the arid places.

¹⁰They will neither hunger nor thirst, nor will scorching heat or sun distress them; for one who loves them will guide them and lead them by springs of water.

¹¹ I shall make every hill a path and raise up my highways.

¹² They are coming: some from far away, some from the north and the west, and others from the land of Syene.

¹³ Shout for joy, you heavens; earth, rejoice; break into songs of triumph, you mountains, for the LORD has comforted his people and has had pity on them in their distress.

¹⁴ But Zion says, The LORD has forsaken me; my Lord has forgotten me.

¹⁵ Can a woman forget the infant at her breast, or a mother the child of her womb? But should even these forget, I shall never forget you.

¹⁶ I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands; your walls are always before my eyes.

¹⁷ Those who rebuild you make better speed than those who pulled you down, while those who laid you waste leave you and go.

¹⁸ Raise your eyes and look around: they are all assembling, flocking back to you. By my life I, the LORD, swear it: you will wear them as your jewels, and adorn yourself with them like a bride;

¹⁹I did indeed make you waste and desolate, I razed you to the ground, but now the land is too small for its inhabitants, while they who made you a ruin are far away.

²⁰Children born during your bereavement will say, Make room for us to live here, the place is too cramped.

²¹Then you will say to yourself, Who bore these children for me, bereaved and barren as I was? Who reared them when I was left alone, left by myself; where did I get them?

²²These are the words of the Lord GOD: I shall beckon to the nations and hoist my signal to the peoples, and they will bring your sons in their arms and your daughters will be carried on their shoulders;

²³kings will be your foster-fathers, their princesses serve as your nurses. They will bow to the earth before you and lick the dust from your feet. You will know that I am the LORD; none who look to me will be disappointed.

²⁴ Can spoil be snatched from the strong man, or a captive liberated from the ruthless?

²⁵ Yes, says the LORD, the captive will be taken even from the strong, and the spoil of the ruthless will be liberated; I shall contend with all who contend against you and deliver your children from them.

²⁶ I shall make your oppressors eat their own flesh, and they will be drunk with their own blood as if with wine, and all mankind will know that I the LORD am your Deliverer, your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob.

50¹ These are the words of the Lord: Is there anywhere a deed of divorce by which I put your mother away? Which creditor of mine was there to whom I sold you? No; for your own wickedness you were sold and for your misconduct your mother was put away.

² Why did I find no one when I came? Why, when I called, did no one answer? Can my arm not reach out to deliver? Do you think I lacked the power to save? Did I not by my rebuke dry up the sea and turn rivers into desert, the fish in

them stinking for lack of water and dying of thirst?

³Did I not clothe the heavens with mourning, and cover them with sackcloth?

⁴The Lord GOD has given me the tongue of one who has been instructed to console the weary with a timely word; he made my hearing sharp every morning, that I might listen like one under instruction.

⁵The Lord GOD opened my ears and I did not disobey or turn back in defiance.

⁶I offered my back to the lash, and let my beard be plucked from my chin, I did not hide my face from insult and spitting.

⁷But the Lord GOD is my helper; therefore no insult can wound me; I know that I shall not be put to shame, therefore I have set my face like flint.

⁸One who will clear my name is at my side. Who dare argue against me? Let us confront one another. Who will dispute my cause? Let him come forward.

⁹The Lord GOD is my helper; who then can declare me guilty? They will all wear out like a garment; the moth will devour them.

¹⁰Whoever among you fears the LORD, let him obey his servant's commands. The one who walks in dark places with no light, let him trust in the name of the LORD and rely on his God.

¹¹But all who kindle a fire and set firebrands alight, walk by the light of your fire and the firebrands you have set ablaze. This is your fate at my hands: you shall lie down in torment.

51 ¹Listen to me, all who follow after the right, who seek the LORD: consider the rock from which you were hewn, the quarry from which you were cut;

²consider Abraham your father and Sarah who gave you birth: when I called him he was but one; I blessed him and made him many.

³The LORD has comforted Zion, comforted all her ruined homes, turning her wilderness into an Eden, her arid plains into a garden of the LORD. Gladness and joy will be found in her, thanksgiving and melody.

⁴Pay heed to me, my people, and listen to me, my nation, for instruction will

shine forth from me and my judgement will be a light to peoples.

⁵In an instant I bring near my victory; my deliverance will appear and my arm will rule the peoples; coasts and islands will wait for me and look to me for protection.

⁶Raise your eyes heavenwards; look on the earth beneath: though the heavens be dispersed as smoke and the earth wear out like a garment and its inhabitants die like flies, my deliverance will be everlasting and my saving power will remain unbroken.

⁷Listen to me, my people who know what is right, you that lay my instruction to heart: do not fear the taunts of enemies, do not let their reviling dismay you;

⁸for they will be like a garment devoured by grubs, like wool consumed by moths, but my saving power will last for ever and my deliverance to all generations.

⁹Awake, awake! Arm of the LORD, put on strength; awake as you did in days of old, in ages long past. Was it not you

who hacked Rahab in pieces and ran the dragon through?

¹⁰Was it not you who dried up the sea, the waters of the great abyss, and made the ocean depths a path for the redeemed?

¹¹The LORD's people, set free, will come back and enter Zion with shouts of triumph, crowned with everlasting joy. Gladness and joy will come upon them, while suffering and weariness flee away.

¹²I am he who comforts you; why then fear man who must die, who must perish like grass?

¹³Why have you forgotten the LORD your maker, who stretched out the heavens and founded the earth? Why are you in constant fear all the day long? Why dread the fury of the oppressors bent on your destruction? Where is the oppressors' fury?

¹⁴He who cowers under it will soon be set free; he will not be consigned to a dungeon and die there lacking food.

¹⁵I am the LORD your God, who stirred up the sea so that its waves roared. The LORD of Hosts is my name.

¹⁶I have put my words in your mouth and kept you covered under the shelter of my hand. I who fixed the heavens in place and established the earth say to Zion, You are my people.

¹⁷Arouse yourself; rise up, Jerusalem. From the LORD's hand you have drunk the cup of his wrath, drained to its dregs the bowl of drunkenness;

¹⁸of all the sons you have borne there is not one to guide you, of all you have reared not one to take you by the hand.

¹⁹This twofold disaster has overtaken you: havoc and ruin -- who can condole with you? Famine and sword -- who can comfort you?

²⁰Your children lie in a stupor at every street corner, like antelopes caught in a net. They are gluttoned with the wrath of the LORD, with the rebuke of your God.

²¹Therefore listen to this in your affliction, you that are drunk, but not with wine.

²²Thus says the LORD, your Lord and God, who will plead his people's cause: I take from your hand the cup of drunkenness. Never again will you drink from the bowl of my wrath;

²³I shall hand it to your tormentors, those who said to you, Lie down for us to walk over you. You flattened your back like ground beneath their feet, like a road for them to walk over.

52¹Awake, awake, Zion, put on your strength; Jerusalem, Holy City, put on your splendid garments! For the uncircumcised and the unclean will never again come into you.

²Arise, captive Jerusalem, shake off the dust; undo the ropes about your neck, you captive daughter of Zion.

³The LORD says, You were sold but no price was paid, and without payment you will be redeemed.

⁴The Lord GOD says: At its beginning my people went down into Egypt to live there, and in the end it was the Assyrians who oppressed them.

⁵But now what do I find here? says the LORD. My people carried off and no price paid, their rulers wailing, and my name reviled increasingly all day long, says the LORD.

⁶But on that day my people will know my name and know that it is I the LORD who speak; here I am.

⁷ How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of the herald, the bringer of good news, announcing deliverance, proclaiming to Zion, Your God has become king.

⁸ Your watchmen raise their voices and shout together in joy; for with their own eyes they see the LORD return to Zion.

⁹ Break forth together into shouts of joy, you ruins of Jerusalem; for the LORD has comforted his people, he has redeemed Jerusalem.

¹⁰ The LORD has bared his holy arm in the sight of all nations, and the whole world from end to end shall see the deliverance wrought by our God.

¹¹ Go out, leave Babylon behind, touch nothing unclean. Leave Babylon behind, keep yourselves pure, you that carry the vessels of the LORD.

¹² But you will not come out in urgent haste or leave like fugitives; for the LORD will go before you, your rearguard will be Israel's God.

¹³ My servant will achieve success, he will be raised to honour, high and exalted.

¹⁴Time was when many were appalled at you, my people; so now many nations recoil at the sight of him, and kings curl their lips in disgust. His form, disfigured, lost all human likeness; his appearance so changed he no longer looked like a man. They see what they had never been told and their minds are full of things unheard before.

¹⁵(52:14)

53¹Who could have believed what we have heard? To whom has the power of the LORD been revealed?

²He grew up before the LORD like a young plant whose roots are in parched ground; he had no beauty, no majesty to catch our eyes, no grace to attract us to him.

³He was despised, shunned by all, pain-racked and afflicted by disease; we despised him, we held him of no account, an object from which people turn away their eyes.

⁴Yet it was our afflictions he was bearing, our pain he endured, while we thought of him as smitten by God, struck down by disease and misery.

⁵But he was pierced for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; the chastisement he bore restored us to health and by his wounds we are healed.

⁶We had all strayed like sheep, each of us going his own way, but the LORD laid on him the guilt of us all.

⁷He was maltreated, yet he was submissive and did not open his mouth; like a sheep led to the slaughter, like a ewe that is dumb before the shearers, he did not open his mouth.

⁸He was arrested and sentenced and taken away, and who gave a thought to his fate -- how he was cut off from the world of the living, stricken to death for my people's transgression?

⁹He was assigned a grave with the wicked, a burial-place among felons, though he had done no violence, had spoken no word of treachery.

¹⁰Yet the LORD took thought for his oppressed servant and healed him who had given himself as a sacrifice for sin. He will enjoy long life and see his children's children, and in his hand the LORD's purpose will prosper.

¹¹ By his humiliation my servant will justify many; after his suffering he will see light and be satisfied; it is their guilt he bears.

¹² Therefore I shall allot him a portion with the great, and he will share the spoil with the mighty, because he exposed himself to death and was reckoned among transgressors, for he bore the sin of many and interceded for transgressors.

54 ¹ Sing, barren woman who never bore a child; break into a shout of joy, you that have never been in labour; for the deserted wife will have more children than she who lives with her husband, says the LORD.

² Enlarge the space for your dwelling, extend the curtains of your tent to the full; let out its ropes and drive the tent-pegs home;

³ for you will spread from your confines right and left, your descendants will dispossess nations and will people cities now desolate.

⁴ Fear not, you will not be put to shame; do not be downcast, you will not suffer disgrace. It is time to forget the shame

of your younger days and remember no more the reproach of your widowhood;

⁵for your husband is your Maker; his name is the LORD of Hosts. He who is called God of all the earth, the Holy One of Israel, is your redeemer.

⁶The LORD has acknowledged you a wife again, once deserted and heart-broken; your God regards you as a wife still young, though you were once cast off.

⁷For a passing moment I forsook you, but with tender affection I shall bring you home again.

⁸In an upsurge of anger I hid my face from you for a moment; but now have I pitied you with never-failing love, says the LORD, your Redeemer.

⁹For this to me is like the days of Noah; as I swore that the waters of Noah's flood should never again pour over the earth, so now I swear to you never again to be angry with you or rebuke you.

¹⁰Though the mountains may move and the hills shake, my love will be immovable and never fail, and my covenant promising peace will not be

shaken, says the LORD in his pity for you.

¹¹ Storm-battered city, distressed and desolate, now I shall set your stones in the finest mortar and lay your foundations with sapphires;

¹² I shall make your battlements of red jasper and your gates of garnet; all your boundary stones will be precious jewels.

¹³ Your children will all be instructed by the LORD, and they will enjoy great prosperity.

¹⁴ You will be restored triumphantly. You will be free from oppression and have nothing to fear; you will be free from terror, for it will not come near you.

¹⁵ Should anyone attack you, it will not be my doing; for his attempt the aggressor will perish.

¹⁶ It was I who created the smith to fan the coals in the fire and forge weapons for every purpose; and I created the destroyer to deal out havoc.

¹⁷ But the weapon that will prevail against you has not been made, and the accuser who rises in court against you will be refuted. These benefits are enjoyed by the servants of the LORD;

their victory comes from me. This is the word of the LORD.

55 ¹ Come for water, all who are thirsty; though you have no money, come, buy grain and eat; come, buy wine and milk, not for money, not for a price.

² Why spend your money for what is not food, your earnings on what fails to satisfy? Listen to me and you will fare well, you will enjoy the fat of the land.

³ Come to me and listen to my words, hear me and you will have life: I shall make an everlasting covenant with you to love you faithfully as I loved David.

⁴ I appointed him a witness to peoples, a prince ruling over them;

⁵ and you in turn will summon nations you do not know, and nations that do not know you will hasten to you, because the LORD your God, Israel's Holy One, has made you glorious.

⁶ Seek the LORD while he is present, call to him while he is close at hand.

⁷ Let the wicked abandon their ways and the evil their thoughts: let them return to the LORD, who will take pity on

them, and to our God, for he will freely forgive.

⁸For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways. This is the word of the LORD.

⁹But as the heavens are high above the earth, so are my ways high above your ways and my thoughts above your thoughts.

¹⁰As the rain and snow come down from the heavens and do not return there without watering the earth, making it produce grain to give seed for sowing and bread to eat,

¹¹so is it with my word issuing from my mouth; it will not return to me empty without accomplishing my purpose and succeeding in the task for which I sent it.

¹²You will go out with joy and be led forth in peace. Before you mountains and hills will break into cries of joy, and all the trees in the countryside will clap their hands.

¹³Pine trees will grow in place of camel-thorn, myrtles instead of briars; all this will be a memorial for the LORD, a sign that for all time will not be cut off.

56 ¹THESE are the words of the LORD: Maintain justice, and do what is right; for my deliverance is close at hand, and my victory will soon be revealed.

²Happy is the person who follows these precepts and holds fast to them, who keeps the sabbath unprofaned, who keeps his hand from all wrongdoing!

³The foreigner who has given his allegiance to the LORD must not say, The LORD will exclude me from his people. The eunuch must not say, I am naught but a barren tree.

⁴These are the words of the LORD: The eunuchs who keep my sabbaths, who choose to do my will and hold fast to my covenant,

⁵will receive from me something better than sons and daughters, a memorial and a name in my own house and within my walls; I shall give them everlasting renown, an imperishable name.

⁶So too with the foreigners who give their allegiance to me, to minister to me and love my name and become my servants, all who keep the sabbath

unprofaned and hold fast to my covenant:

⁷ these I shall bring to my holy hill and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their offerings and sacrifices will be acceptable on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations.

⁸ This is the word of the Lord GOD, who gathers those driven out of Israel: I shall add to those who have already been gathered.

⁹ All you beasts of the open country and of the forest, come and eat your fill.

¹⁰ For all Israel's watchmen are blind, perceiving nothing; they are all dumb dogs that cannot bark, dreaming, as they lie stretched on the ground, loving their sleep,

¹¹ greedy dogs that can never have enough. They are shepherds who understand nothing, all of them going their own way, one and all intent on their own gain.

¹² Come, says each of them, let me fetch wine, strong drink, and we shall swill it down; tomorrow will be like today, or better still!

57 ¹ The righteous perish, and no one is concerned; all who are loyal to their faith are swept away and no one gives it a thought. The righteous are swept away by the onset of evil;

² those who have followed a straight course shall achieve peace at the last, as they lie on their deathbeds.

³ Come near, you children of a soothsayer. You spawn of an adulterer and a harlot,

⁴ who is the target of your jests? Against whom do you open your mouths and stick out your tongues? Children of sin, spawn of a lie,

⁵ you are burning with lust under the sacred oaks, under every spreading tree, and sacrificing children in the wadis, under the rocky clefts.

⁶ And you, woman, your place is with the deceitful gods of the wadi; that is where you belong. To them you have poured a libation and presented an offering of grain. In spite of this am I to relent?

⁷ On a high mountaintop you have made your bed; there too you have gone up to offer sacrifice.

⁸Beside door and doorpost you have put up your sign. Deserting me, you have stripped and lain down on the wide bed which you have made; you drove bargains with men for the pleasure of sleeping together and making love.

⁹You drenched your tresses with oil, were lavish in your use of perfumes; you sent out your procurers far and wide even down to the confines of Sheol.

¹⁰Though worn out by your unending excesses, you never thought your plight desperate. You found renewed vigour and so had no anxiety.

¹¹Whom do you fear so much, that you should be false, that you never remembered me or spared me a thought? Did I not keep silent and look away while you showed no fear of me?

¹²Now I shall expose your conduct that you think so righteous. Your idols will not help you when you cry; they will not save you. The wind will carry them off, one and all, a puff of air will take them away; but he who makes me his refuge will possess the land and inherit my holy hill.

¹³(57:12)

¹⁴Then the LORD will say: Build up a highway, clear the road, remove all that blocks my people's path.

¹⁵These are the words of the high and exalted One, who is enthroned for ever, whose name is holy: I dwell in a high and holy place and with him who is broken and humble in spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, to revive the courage of the broken.

¹⁶I shall not be always accusing, I shall not continually nurse my wrath, else the spirit of the creatures whom I made would be faint because of me.

¹⁷For a brief time I was angry at the guilt of Israel. I smote him in my anger and withdrew my favour, but he was wayward and went his own way.

¹⁸I have seen his conduct, yet I shall heal him and give him relief; I shall bring him comfort in full measure, and on the lips of those who mourn him

¹⁹I shall create words of praise. Peace, peace, for all, both far and near; I shall heal them, says the LORD.

²⁰But the wicked are like a storm-tossed sea, a sea that cannot be still, whose waters cast up mud and dirt.

²¹ There is no peace for the wicked, says my God.

58¹ Shout aloud without restraint; lift up your voice like a trumpet. Declare to my people their transgression, to the house of Jacob their sins,

² although they ask guidance of me day after day and say they delight in knowing my ways. As if they were a nation which had acted rightly and had not abandoned the just laws of their God, they ask me for righteous laws and delight in approaching God.

³ Why should we fast, if you ignore it? Why mortify ourselves, if you pay no heed? In fact you serve your own interests on your fast-day and keep all your men hard at work.

⁴ Your fasting leads only to wrangling and strife and to lashing out with vicious blows. On such a day the fast you are keeping is not one that will carry your voice to heaven.

⁵ Is this the kind of fast that I require, a day of mortification such as this: that a person should bow his head like a bulrush and use sackcloth and ashes for

a bed? Is that what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the LORD?

⁶Rather, is not this the fast I require: to loose the fetters of injustice, to untie the knots of the yoke, and set free those who are oppressed, tearing off every yoke?

⁷Is it not sharing your food with the hungry, taking the homeless poor into your house, clothing the naked when you meet them, and never evading a duty to your kinsfolk?

⁸Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and new skin will speedily grow over your wound; your righteousness will be your vanguard and the glory of the LORD your rearguard.

⁹Then, when you call, the LORD will answer; when you cry to him, he will say, Here I am. If you cease to pervert justice, to point the accusing finger and lay false charges,

¹⁰if you give of your own food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the wretched, then light will rise for you out of darkness and dusk will be for you like noonday;

¹¹ the LORD will be your guide continually and will satisfy your needs in the bare desert; he will give you strength of limb; you will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.

¹² Buildings long in ruins will be restored by your own kindred and you will build on ancient foundations; you will be called the rebuilder of broken walls, the restorer of houses in ruins.

¹³ If you refrain from sabbath journeys and from doing business on my holy day, if you call the sabbath a day of joy and the LORD's holy day worthy of honour, if you honour it by desisting from work and not pursuing your own interests or attending to your own affairs,

¹⁴ then you will find your joy in the LORD, and I shall make you ride on the heights of the earth, and the holding of your father Jacob will be yours to enjoy. The LORD himself has spoken.

59 ¹ The LORD's arm is not too short to save nor his ear too dull to hear;

² rather, it is your iniquities that raise a barrier between you and your God; it is

your sins that veil his face, so that he does not hear.

³Your hands are stained with blood and your fingers with crime; your lips speak lies and your tongues utter injustice.

⁴No one sues with just cause, no one makes an honest plea in court; all rely on empty words, they tell lies, they conceive mischief and bring forth wickedness.

⁵They hatch snakes' eggs; they weave cobwebs. Whoever eats those eggs will die, for rottenness hatches from rotten eggs.

⁶Their webs are useless for making cloth; no one can use them for clothing. Their works breed wickedness and their hands are full of acts of violence.

⁷They rush headlong into crime in furious haste to shed innocent blood; their schemes are harmful and leave a trail of havoc and ruin.

⁸They are strangers to the path of peace, no justice guides their steps; all the ways they choose are crooked; no one who walks in them feels safe.

⁹That is why justice is far removed from us, and righteousness is out of

our reach. We look for light, but all is darkness; for daybreak, but we must walk in deep gloom.

¹⁰We grope like blind men along a wall, feeling our way like those whose sight has gone; we stumble at noonday as if it were nightfall, like the dead in the desolate underworld.

¹¹All of us growl like bears, we keep moaning like doves; we wait for justice, but there is none, for deliverance, but it is far from us.

¹²Our transgressions against you are many, and our sins bear witness against us; our transgressions are on our minds, and well we know our guilt:

¹³we have rebelled and broken faith with the LORD, we have relapsed and forsaken our God; we have conceived lies in our hearts and repeated them in slanderous and treacherous words.

¹⁴Justice is rebuffed and flouted while righteousness stands at a distance; truth stumbles in court and honesty is kept outside,

¹⁵so truth is lost to sight, and those who shun evil withdraw. There was no

justice, and when the LORD saw it he was displeased.

¹⁶He saw that there was no help forthcoming and was outraged that no one intervened; so his own might brought him the victory and his righteousness supported him.

¹⁷He put on righteousness as a breastplate and salvation as a helmet on his head; he put on the garments of vengeance and wrapped zeal about him like a cloak.

¹⁸According to their deeds he will repay: for his adversaries, anger; for his enemies, retribution!

¹⁹So from the west the LORD's name will be feared, and his glory revered from the rising of the sun. His glory will come like a swift river on which the wind of the LORD moves.

²⁰He will come as a redeemer to Zion and to those in Jacob who repent of their rebellion. This is the word of the LORD.

²¹This, says the LORD, is my covenant, which I make with them: My spirit which rests on you and my words which I have put into your mouth will never fail you from generation to generation of your

descendants from now on, for evermore.
The LORD has said it.

60¹ ARISE, shine, Jerusalem, for
your light has come; and over you
the glory of the LORD has dawned.

² Though darkness covers the earth
and dark night the nations, on you the
LORD shines and over you his glory will
appear;

³ nations will journey towards your light
and kings to your radiance.

⁴ Raise your eyes and look around: they
are all assembling, flocking back to you;
your sons are coming from afar, your
daughters walking beside them.

⁵ You will see it, and be radiant with joy,
and your heart will thrill with gladness;
sea-borne riches will be lavished on you
and the wealth of nations will be yours.

⁶ Camels in droves will cover the land,
young camels from Midian and Ephah,
all coming from Sheba laden with gold
and frankincense, heralds of the LORD's
praise.

⁷ Kedar's flocks will all be gathered for
you, rams of Nebaioth will serve your
needs, acceptable offerings on my altar;

I shall enhance the splendour of my temple.

⁸Who are these that sail along like clouds, that fly like doves to their dovecots?

⁹They are vessels assembling from the coasts and islands, ships of Tarshish leading the convoy; they bring your children from far away, their silver and gold with them, to the honour of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel; for he has made you glorious.

¹⁰Foreigners will rebuild your walls and their kings will be your servants; though in my wrath I struck you down, now in my favour I show you pity.

¹¹Your gates will stand open at all times; day and night they will never be shut, so that through them may be brought the wealth of nations and their kings under escort.

¹²For the nation or kingdom which refuses to serve you will perish; and there will be widespread devastation among such nations.

¹³The glory of Lebanon will come to you, pine, fir, and boxwood all together,

to adorn my holy sanctuary, to honour the place where I stand.

¹⁴The sons of your oppressors will come forward to do homage, all who reviled you will bow low at your feet; they will address you as City of the LORD, Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

¹⁵No longer will you be deserted, like a wife hated and neglected; I shall make you an object of everlasting acclaim, and a source of never-ending joy.

¹⁶You will suck the milk of nations and be suckled at royal breasts. Then you will know that I, the LORD, am your Deliverer; your Redeemer is the Mighty One of Jacob.

¹⁷For copper I shall bring you gold and for iron I shall bring silver, copper for timber and iron for stone; I shall appoint peace to govern you and make righteousness rule over you.

¹⁸No longer will the sound of violence be heard in your land, nor havoc and ruin within your borders; but you will name your walls Deliverance and your gates Praise.

¹⁹The sun will no longer be your light by day, nor the moon shine on you by

night; the LORD will be your everlasting light, your God will be your splendour.

²⁰Never again will your sun set nor your moon withdraw her light; but the LORD will be your everlasting light and your days of mourning will be ended.

²¹Your people, all of them righteous, will possess the land for ever. They are a shoot of my own planting, a work of my own hands for my adornment.

²²The few will become a thousand; the handful, a great nation. At its appointed time I the LORD shall bring this swiftly to pass.

61 ¹The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me because the LORD has anointed me; he has sent me to announce good news to the humble, to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to captives, release to those in prison;

²to proclaim a year of the LORD's favour and a day of the vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn,

³to give them garlands instead of ashes, oil of gladness instead of mourners' tears, a garment of splendour for the heavy heart. They will be called

trees of righteousness, planted by the LORD for his adornment.

⁴Buildings long in ruins will be rebuilt and sites long desolate restored; they will repair the ruined cities which for generations have lain desolate.

⁵Foreigners will serve as shepherds of your flocks, aliens will till your land and tend your vines,

⁶but you will be called priests of the LORD and be named ministers of our God. You will enjoy the wealth of nations and succeed to their riches.

⁷And so, because shame in double measure and insults and abuse have been my people's lot, they will receive in their own land a double measure of wealth, and everlasting joy will be theirs.

⁸For I the LORD love justice and hate robbery and crime; I shall grant them a sure reward and make an everlasting covenant with them;

⁹their posterity will be renowned among the nations and their descendants among the peoples; all who see them will acknowledge that they are a race blessed by the LORD.

¹⁰Let me rejoice in the LORD with all my heart, let me exult in my God; for he has robed me in deliverance and arrayed me in victory, like a bridegroom with his garland, or a bride decked in her jewels.

¹¹As the earth puts forth her blossom or plants in the garden burst into flower, so will the Lord GOD make his victory and renown blossom before all the nations.

62 ¹For Zion's sake I shall not keep silent, for Jerusalem's sake I shall not be quiet, until her victory shines forth like the sunrise, her deliverance like a blazing torch,

²and the nations see your victory and all their kings your glory. Then you will be called by a new name which the LORD himself will announce;

³you will be a glorious crown in the LORD's hand, a royal diadem held by your God.

⁴No more will you be called Forsaken, no more will your land be called Desolate, but you will be named Hephzibah and your land Beulah; for the LORD will take delight in you and to him your land will be linked in wedlock.

⁵As a young man weds a maiden, so will you be wedded to him who rebuilds you, and as a bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so will your God rejoice over you.

⁶Jerusalem, on your walls I have posted watchmen, who day and night without ceasing will cry: You that invoke the LORD's name, take no rest,

⁷and give no rest to him until he makes Jerusalem a theme of praise throughout the world.

⁸The LORD has sworn with raised right hand and mighty arm: Never again will I give your grain to feed your foes, never again let foreigners drink the vintage for which you have toiled;

⁹but those who harvest the grain will eat it and give praise to the LORD, and those who gather the grapes will drink the wine within my sacred courts.

¹⁰Pass through the gates, go out, clear a road for my people; build a highway, build it up, remove the boulders; hoist a signal for the peoples.

¹¹This is the LORD's proclamation to earth's farthest bounds: Tell the daughter of Zion, See, your deliverance

comes. His reward is with him, his recompense before him.

¹²They will be called the Holy People, the Redeemed of the LORD; and you will be called Sought After, City No Longer Forsaken.

63¹ WHO is this coming from Edom, from Bozrah with his garments stained red, one splendidly attired, striding along with mighty power? It is I, proclaiming victory, I, who am strong to save.

²Why are your clothes all red, like the garments of one treading grapes in the winepress?

³I have trodden the press alone, for none of my people was with me. I trod the nations in my anger, I trampled them in my fury, and their blood bespattered my garments and all my clothing was stained.

⁴I resolved on a day of vengeance; the year for redeeming my own had come.

⁵I looked for a helper but found none; I was outraged that no one upheld me; yet my own might brought me victory, my fury alone upheld me.

⁶I stamped on peoples in my anger, I shattered them in my fury and spilled their blood over the ground.

⁷I shall recount the LORD's unfailing love, the prowess of the LORD, according to all he has done for us, his great goodness to the house of Israel, what he has done for them in his tenderness and by his many acts of faithful love.

⁸He said, Surely they are my people, children who will not play me false; and he became their deliverer

⁹in all their troubles. No envoy, no angel, but he himself delivered them, redeemed them in his love and pity; he lifted them up and carried them through all the days of old.

¹⁰Yet they rebelled and grieved his holy spirit; so he turned hostile to them and himself fought against them.

¹¹Then they recalled days long past and him who drew out his people: where is he who brought up from the Nile the shepherd of his flock? Where is he who put within him his holy spirit,

¹²who sent his glorious power to walk at Moses' right hand? Where is he who

divided the waters before them, to win for himself everlasting renown,

¹³who brought them through the deep sure-footed as horses in open country,

¹⁴like cattle moving down into a valley guided by the spirit of the LORD? Thus you led your people to win yourself a glorious name.

¹⁵Look down from heaven and see from the heights where you dwell holy and glorious. Where is your zeal, your valour, your burning and tender love? Do not stand aloof,

¹⁶for you are our Father. Though Abraham were not to know us nor Israel to acknowledge us, you, LORD, are our Father; our Redeemer from of old is your name.

¹⁷Why, LORD, do you let us wander from your ways and harden our hearts until we cease to fear you? Turn again for the sake of your servants, the tribes that are your possession.

¹⁸Why have the wicked trespassed on your sanctuary, why have our enemies trampled on your shrine?

¹⁹We have long been reckoned as beyond your sway, as if we had not been named your own.

64¹ Why did you not tear asunder the heavens and come down, that, when you appeared, the mountains might shake,

² that fire might blaze as it blazes in brushwood when it makes water boil? Then would your name be known to your adversaries, and nations would tremble before you.

³ You surprised us with awesome things; the mountains shook when you appeared.

⁴ Never has ear heard or eye seen any other god who acts for those who wait for him.

⁵ You welcome him who rejoices to do what is right, who is mindful of your ways. When you showed your anger, we sinned and, in spite of it, we have done evil from of old.

⁶ We all became like something unclean and all our righteous deeds were like a filthy rag; we have all withered like leaves and our iniquities carry us away like the wind.

⁷ There is no one who invokes you by name or rouses himself to hold fast to you; for you have hidden your face from us and left us in the grip of our iniquities.

⁸ Yet, LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, you the potter, and all of us are your handiwork.

⁹ Do not let your anger pass all bounds, LORD, and do not remember iniquity for ever; look on us all, look on your people.

¹⁰ Your holy cities are a wilderness, Zion a wilderness, Jerusalem desolate;

¹¹ our holy and glorious sanctuary, in which our forefathers praised you, has been burnt to the ground and all that we cherished lies in ruins.

¹² Despite this, LORD, will you stand aloof, will you keep silent and punish us beyond measure?

65 ¹ I WAS ready to respond, but no one asked, ready to be found, but no one sought me. I said, Here am I! Here am I! to a nation that did not invoke me by name.

² All day long I held out my hands appealing to a rebellious people who went their evil way, in pursuit of their own devices;

³ they were a people who provoked me perpetually to my face, offering sacrifice in the gardens, burning incense on brick altars.

⁴ They crouch among graves, keeping vigil all night long, eating the flesh of pigs, their cauldrons full of a foul brew.

⁵ Keep clear! they cry, Do not touch me, for my holiness will infect you. Such people are a smouldering fire, smoke in my nostrils all day long.

⁶ Your record lies before me; I shall not keep silent; I shall fully repay

⁷ your iniquities, both yours and your forefathers', says the LORD, for having sacrificed on the mountains and shamed me on the hills; I shall first measure out their reward and then repay them in full.

⁸ These are the words of the LORD: As there is juice in a cluster of grapes and folk say, Do not destroy it; there is blessing in it, so shall I act for the sake of my servants: I shall not destroy the whole nation.

⁹ I shall give descendants to Jacob, and to Judah heirs who will possess my mountains; my chosen ones will take

possession of the land, and those who serve me will live there.

¹⁰Flocks will range over Sharon, and the valley of Achor become a pasture for cattle; they will belong to my people who seek me.

¹¹But you that forsake the LORD and ignore my holy mountain, who spread a table for the god of Fate, and fill bowls of spiced wine in honour of Destiny,

¹²I shall destine you for the sword, and you will all submit to slaughter, because, when I called, you did not respond, when I spoke, you would not listen. You did what was wrong in my sight, and chose what displeased me.

¹³Therefore these are the words of the Lord GOD: My servants will eat, while you go hungry; my servants will drink, while you go thirsty; my servants will rejoice, while you are put to shame;

¹⁴my servants in the gladness of their hearts will shout for joy, while you cry from an aching heart and wail from anguish of spirit.

¹⁵Your name will be used as a curse by my chosen ones: May the Lord GOD give

you over to death! but his servants he will call by another name.

¹⁶Anyone in the land invoking a blessing on himself will do so by God whose name is Amen, and anyone in the land taking an oath will do so by God whose name is Amen, for past troubles are forgotten; they have vanished from my sight.

¹⁷See, I am creating new heavens and a new earth! The past will no more be remembered nor will it ever come to mind.

¹⁸Rejoice and be for ever filled with delight at what I create; for I am creating Jerusalem as a delight and her people as a joy;

¹⁹I shall take delight in Jerusalem and rejoice in my people; the sound of weeping, the cry of distress will be heard in her no more.

²⁰No child there will ever again die in infancy, no old man fail to live out his span of life. He who dies at a hundred is just a youth, and if he does not attain a hundred he is thought accursed!

²¹ My people will build houses and live in them, plant vineyards and eat their fruit;

²² they will not build for others to live in or plant for others to eat. They will be as long-lived as a tree, and my chosen ones will enjoy the fruit of their labour.

²³ They will not toil to no purpose or raise children for misfortune, because they and their issue after them are a race blessed by the LORD.

²⁴ Even before they call to me, I shall answer, and while they are still speaking I shall respond.

²⁵ The wolf and the lamb will feed together and the lion will eat straw like the ox, and as for the serpent, its food will be dust. Neither hurt nor harm will be done in all my holy mountain, says the LORD.

66 ¹ These are the words of the LORD: The heavens are my throne and the earth is my footstool. Where will you build a house for me, where will my resting-place be?

² These are all of my own making, and all belong to me. This is the word of the LORD. The one for whom I have regard is

oppressed and afflicted, one who reveres my word.

³Sacrificing an ox is like killing a man, slaughtering a sheep like breaking a dog's neck, making an offering of grain like offering pigs' blood, burning frankincense as a token like worshipping an idol. Because people have adopted these practices and revelled in loathsome rites,

⁴I in turn shall adopt a wilful course and bring on them the very things they dread, since, when I called, no one responded, when I spoke, no one listened. They did what was wrong in my sight and chose what displeased me.

⁵Hear the word of the LORD, you that revere his word: Your fellow-countrymen, who are hostile to you and spurn you because you bear my name, have said, Let the LORD show his glory, that we may see you rejoice! But they themselves will be put to shame.

⁶That roar from the city, that uproar in the temple, is the sound of the LORD dealing retribution to his foes.

⁷ Without birth-pains Zion has given birth, borne a son before the onset of labour.

⁸ Who has heard of anything like this? Who has witnessed such a thing? Can a country be born in a single day, a nation be brought to birth in a trice? Yet Zion, at the onset of her pangs, bore her children.

⁹ Shall I bring to the point of birth and not deliver? says the LORD; shall I who deliver close the womb? says your God

¹⁰ Rejoice with Jerusalem and exult in her, all you that love her; share her joy with all your heart, all you that mourned over her.

¹¹ Then you may suck comfort from her and be satisfied, taking with enjoyment her plentiful milk.

¹² These are the words of the LORD: I shall make prosperity flow over her like a river, and the wealth of nations like a stream in spate; her babes will be carried in her arms and dandled on her knees.

¹³ As a mother comforts her son so shall I myself comfort you; in Jerusalem you will find comfort.

¹⁴At the sight your heart will be glad, you will flourish like grass in spring; the LORD will make his power known among his servants and his indignation felt among his foes.

¹⁵See, the LORD is coming in fire, his chariots like a whirlwind, bringing retribution with his furious anger and with the flaming fire of his rebukes.

¹⁶The LORD will judge with fire, by his sword he will test all mankind, and many will be slain by him.

¹⁷Those who consecrate and purify themselves for garden-rites, one after another in a magic ring, those who eat swine flesh, rats, and vile vermin will all meet their end, says the LORD,

¹⁸for I know their deeds and their thoughts. I am coming to gather peoples of every tongue; they will come to see my glory.

¹⁹I shall put a sign on them, and those survivors I shall send to the nations, to Tarshish, Put, and Lud, to Meshech, Rosh, Tubal, and Javan, distant shores which have never yet heard of me or seen my glory; these will declare that glory among the nations.

²⁰From every nation your countrymen will be brought on horses, in chariots and wagons, on mules and dromedaries, as an offering to the LORD on my holy mountain Jerusalem, says the LORD, just as the Israelites themselves bring grain-offerings in purified vessels to the LORD's house;

²¹and some of them I shall take for priests and for Levites, says the LORD.

²²As the new heavens and the new earth which I am making will endure before me, says the LORD, so will your posterity and your name endure.

²³Month after month at the new moon, week after week on the sabbath, all mankind will come to bow before me, says the LORD.

²⁴As they go out they will see the corpses of those who rebelled against me, where the devouring worm never dies and the fire is not quenched. All mankind will view them with horror.

Jeremiah

1 ¹THE words of Jeremiah son of Hilkiah, one of the priests at Anathoth in Benjamin.

²The word of the LORD came to him in the thirteenth year of the reign of Josiah son of Amon, king of Judah.

³It came also during the reign of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah, until the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah son of Josiah, king of Judah. In the fifth month the inhabitants of Jerusalem were carried off into exile.

⁴THIS word of the LORD came to me:

⁵Before I formed you in the womb I chose you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I appointed you a prophet to the nations.

⁶Ah! Lord GOD, I answered, I am not skilled in speaking; I am too young.

⁷But the LORD said, Do not plead that you are too young; for you are to go to whatever people I send you, and say whatever I tell you to say.

⁸Fear none of them, for I shall be with you to keep you safe. This was the word of the LORD.

⁹Then the LORD stretched out his hand, and touching my mouth said to me, See, I put my words into your mouth.

¹⁰This day I give you authority over nations and kingdoms to uproot and to pull down, to destroy and to demolish, to build and to plant.

¹¹The word of the LORD came to me: What is it that you see, Jeremiah? A branch of an almond tree, I answered.

¹²You are right, said the LORD to me, for I am on the watch to carry out my threat.

¹³The word of the LORD came to me a second time: What is it that you see? A cauldron on a fire, I said; it is fanned by the wind and tilted away from the north.

¹⁴The LORD said: From the north disaster will be let loose against all who live in the land.

¹⁵For now I am summoning all the peoples of the kingdoms of the north, says the LORD; their kings will come and each will set his throne in place before the gates of Jerusalem; they will encircle

her walls and besiege every town in Judah.

¹⁶I shall state my case against my people for all their wickedness in forsaking me, in burning sacrifices to other gods, and in worshipping the work of their own hands.

¹⁷Brace yourself, Jeremiah; stand up and speak to them. Tell them everything I bid you; when you confront them do not let your spirit break, or I shall break you before their eyes.

¹⁸This day I make you a fortified city, an iron pillar, a bronze wall, to withstand the whole land, the kings and princes of Judah, its priests, and its people.

¹⁹Though they attack you, they will not prevail, for I shall be with you to keep you safe. This is the word of the LORD.

2¹ THE word of the LORD came to me:
²Go, make this proclamation in the hearing of Jerusalem: These are the words of the LORD: I remember in your favour the loyalty of your youth, your love during your bridal days, when you followed me through the wilderness, through a land unsown.

³ Israel was holy to the LORD, the firstfruits of his harvest; no one who devoured her went unpunished, disaster overtook them. This is the word of the LORD.

⁴ Listen to the word of the LORD, people of Jacob, all you families of Israel.

⁵ These are the words of the LORD: What fault did your forefathers find in me, that they went so far astray from me, pursuing worthless idols and becoming worthless like them;

⁶ that they did not ask, Where is the LORD, who brought us up from Egypt and led us through the wilderness, through a barren and broken country, a country parched and forbidding, where no one ever travelled, where no one made his home?

⁷ I brought you into a fertile land to enjoy its fruit and every good thing in it; but when you entered my land you defiled it and made loathsome the home I gave you.

⁸ The priests no longer asked, Where is the LORD? Those who handled the law had no real knowledge of me, the shepherds of the people rebelled against

me; the prophets prophesied in the name of Baal and followed gods who were powerless to help.

⁹Therefore I shall bring a charge against you once more, says the LORD, against you and against your descendants.

¹⁰Cross to the coasts and islands of Kittim and see, send to Kedar and observe closely, see whether there has been anything like this:

¹¹has a nation ever exchanged its gods, and these no gods at all? Yet my people have exchanged their glory for a god altogether powerless.

¹²Be aghast at this, you heavens, shudder in utter horror, says the LORD.

¹³My people have committed two sins: they have rejected me, a source of living water, and they have hewn out for themselves cisterns, cracked cisterns which hold no water.

¹⁴Is Israel a slave? Was he born in slavery? If not, why has he become spoil?

¹⁵Lions roar loudly at him; his land has been laid waste, his towns razed to the ground and abandoned.

¹⁶The people of Noph and Tahpanhes will break your heads.

¹⁷Is it not your rejection of the LORD your God when he guided you on the way that brings all this upon you?

¹⁸And now, why should you make off to Egypt to drink the waters of the Nile? Or why make off to Assyria to drink the waters of the Euphrates?

¹⁹It is your own wickedness that will punish you, your own apostasy that will condemn you. See for yourselves how bitter a thing it is and how evil, to reject the LORD your God, to hold me in dread no longer. This is the word of the Lord GOD of Hosts.

²⁰Many ages ago you shattered your yoke and snapped your traces, crying, I will not serve you; and you sprawled in promiscuous vice on all the hilltops, under every spreading tree.

²¹I planted you as a choice red vine, a wholly pure strain, yet now you are turned into a vine that has reverted to its wild state!

²²Though you wash with soda and use soap lavishly, the stain of your sin is still

there for me to see. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

²³How can you say, I am not defiled; I have not followed the baalim? Look at your conduct in the valley; recall what you have done: you have been like a she-camel, twisting and turning as she runs,

²⁴rushing off into the wilderness, snuffing the wind in her lust; in her heat who can restrain her? None need tire themselves out in pursuit of her; she is easily found at mating time.

²⁵Stop before your feet are bare and your throat is parched. But you said, No; I am desperate. I love foreign gods and I must go after them.

²⁶As a thief is ashamed when he is found out, so the people of Israel feel ashamed, they, their kings, their princes, their priests, and their prophets,

²⁷who say to a block of wood, You are our father and cry Mother to a stone. On me they have turned their backs and averted their faces from me. Yet in their time of trouble they say, Rise up and save us!

²⁸Where are the gods you made for yourselves? In your time of trouble let them arise and save you. For you, Judah, have as many gods as you have towns.

²⁹Why argue your case with me? You are rebels, every one of you. This is the word of the LORD.

³⁰In vain I punished your people -- the lesson was not learnt; your sword devoured your prophets like a ravaging lion.

³¹Have I shown myself to Israel as some wilderness or waterless land? Why do my people say, We have broken away; we shall come to you no more?

³²Will a girl forget her finery or a bride her wedding ribbons? Yet times without number my people have forgotten me.

³³You pick your way so well in search of lovers; even wanton women can learn from you.

³⁴Yes, and there is blood on the corners of your robe -- the life-blood of the innocent poor, though you did not catch them housebreaking. For all these things I shall punish you.

³⁵You say, I am innocent; surely his anger has passed away. But I shall

challenge your claim to have done no sin.

³⁶Why do you so lightly change your course? You will be let down by Egypt as you were by Assyria;

³⁷you will go into exile from here with your hands on your heads, for the LORD rejects those on whom you rely, and from them you will gain nothing.

3¹ If a man divorces his wife and she leaves him, and if she then becomes another's, may he go back to her again? Is not that woman defiled, a forbidden thing? You have been unfaithful with many lovers, says the LORD, and yet you would come back to me?

²Look up to the bare heights and see: where have you not been lain with? Like an Arab lurking in the desert you sat by the wayside to catch lovers; you defiled the land with your adultery and debauchery.

³Therefore the showers were withheld and the spring rain failed. But yours was a prostitute's brazenness, and you were resolved to show no shame.

⁴Not so long since you called me Father, teacher of my youth,

⁵ thinking, Will he keep up his anger for ever? Will he rage to the end? This is how you spoke, but you have done evil and gone unchallenged.

⁶ In the reign of King Josiah the LORD said to me: Do you see what apostate Israel has done, how she went to every hilltop and under every spreading tree, and there committed adultery?

⁷ Even after she had done all this I thought she would come back to me, but she did not. That faithless woman, her sister Judah, saw it;

⁸ she saw too that I had put apostate Israel away and given her a certificate of divorce because she had committed adultery. Yet that faithless woman, her sister Judah, was not afraid; she too went and committed adultery.

⁹ She defiled the land with her casual prostitution and her adulterous worship of stone and wood.

¹⁰ In spite of all this Judah, that faithless woman, has not come back to me in sincerity, but only in pretence. This is the word of the LORD.

¹¹ The LORD said to me: Apostate Israel is less to blame than that faithless woman Judah.

¹² Go and proclaim this message towards the north: Come back, apostate Israel, says the LORD; I shall no longer frown on you. For my love is unfailing, says the LORD; I shall not keep up my anger for ever.

¹³ Only acknowledge your wrongdoing, your rebellion against the LORD your God, your promiscuous traffic with foreign gods under every spreading tree, and your disobedience to my commands. This is the word of the LORD.

¹⁴ Come back, apostate people, says the LORD, for I am patient with you, and I shall take you, one from each city and two from each clan, and bring you to Zion.

¹⁵ There I shall give you shepherds after my own heart, and they will lead you with knowledge and understanding.

¹⁶ In those days, when you have increased and become fruitful in the land, says the LORD, no one will speak any more of the Ark of the Covenant of the LORD; no one will think of it or

remember it or resort to it; that will be done no more.

¹⁷At that time Jerusalem will be called the Throne of the LORD, and all nations will gather in Jerusalem to honour the LORD's name; never again will they follow the promptings of their evil and stubborn hearts.

¹⁸In those days Judah will be united with Israel, and together they will come from a northern land into the land I gave their fathers as their holding.

¹⁹I said: How gladly would I treat you as a son, giving you a pleasant land, a holding fairer than that of any nation! You would call me Father, I thought, and never cease to follow me.

²⁰But like a woman who through illicit love has been unfaithful, so you, Israel, were unfaithful to me. This is the word of the LORD.

²¹Weeping is heard on the bare places, Israel's people pleading for mercy, because they have taken to crooked ways and ignored the LORD their God.

²²Come back, you apostate people; I shall heal your apostasy. Here we are

coming to you, for you are the LORD our God.

²³There is no help in worship on the hilltops, no help from clamour on the heights; truly in the LORD our God lies Israel's salvation.

²⁴From our early days Baal has devoured the fruits of our fathers' labours, their flocks and herds, their sons and daughters.

²⁵Let us lie down in our shame, covered by dishonour, for we have sinned against the LORD our God, both we and our fathers, from our early days even till now, and we have not obeyed the LORD our God.

4¹ Israel, if you will come back, if you will come back to me, says the LORD, if you will banish your loathsome idols from my sight, and go astray no more,

²if you swear by the life of the LORD in truth, justice, and uprightness, then the nations will pray to be blessed like you and in you they will boast.

³These are the words of the LORD to the people of Judah and Jerusalem: Break up your ground that lies unploughed, do not sow among thorns;

⁴ circumcise yourselves to the service of the LORD, circumcise your hearts, you people of Judah, you dwellers in Jerusalem, or the fire of my fury may blaze up and burn unquenched, because of your evil actions.

⁵ Declare this in Judah, proclaim it in Jerusalem. Blow the trumpet throughout the land. Shout aloud the command: Assemble! Let us move back to the fortified towns.

⁶ Raise the signal -- to Zion! Make for safety without delay, for I am about to bring disaster out of the north and dire destruction.

⁷ A lion has risen from his lair, the destroyer of nations; he has broken camp and marched out to devastate your land and make your cities waste and empty.

⁸ Therefore put on sackcloth, beat the breast and wail, for the fierce anger of the LORD is not averted from us.

⁹ On that day, says the LORD, the courage of the king and his officers will fail, priests will be aghast and prophets appalled.

¹⁰I said: Ah, Lord GOD, you surely deceived this people and Jerusalem in promising peace while the sword is at our throats.

¹¹At that time this people and Jerusalem will be told: A scorching wind from the desert heights sweeps down on my people; it is no breeze for winnowing or for cleansing.

¹²A wind too strong for these will come at my bidding, and now I shall state my case against my people.

¹³Like clouds the enemy advances, like a whirlwind with his chariots; his horses are swifter than eagles: Woe to us, for we are lost!

¹⁴Jerusalem, cleanse the wrongdoing from your heart and you may yet be saved. How long will you harbour within you your evil schemes?

¹⁵News comes from Dan, evil tidings from Mount Ephraim.

¹⁶Tell this to the nations, proclaim the doom of Jerusalem: hordes of invaders are on the way from a distant land, giving voice against the cities of Judah.

¹⁷As a field surrounded by guards she is encircled by them, because she has

rebelled against me. This is the word of the LORD.

¹⁸Your own ways and deeds have brought these things on you; this is your punishment, for your rebellion is seated deep within you.

¹⁹Oh, how I writhe in anguish, how my heart throbs! I cannot keep silence, for I hear the sound of the trumpet, the clamour of the battle cry.

²⁰Crash follows crash, for the whole land goes down in ruin. Suddenly my tents are thrown down, the curtains in an instant.

²¹How long must I see the standard raised and hear the trumpet-call?

²²My people are foolish, they know nothing of me; senseless children, lacking all understanding, clever only in wrongdoing, but of doing right they know nothing.

²³I looked at the earth, and it was chaos, at the heavens, and their light was gone,

²⁴at the mountains, and they were reeling, and all the hills rocked to and fro.

²⁵I looked: no one was there, and all the birds of heaven had taken wing.

²⁶I looked: the fertile land was wilderness, its towns all razed to the ground before the LORD, before his fierce anger.

²⁷These are the words of the LORD: The whole land will be desolate, and I shall make an end of it.

²⁸The earth will be in mourning for this and the heavens above turn black; for I have made known my purpose, and I shall not relent or change it.

²⁹At the sound of the horsemen and archers every town is in flight; people crawl into the thickets, scramble up among the crags. Every town is deserted, no one lives there.

³⁰And you, what are you doing? When you dress yourself in scarlet, deck yourself out with gold ornaments, and enlarge your eyes with antimony, you are beautifying yourself to no purpose. Your lovers spurn you and seek your life.

³¹I hear a sound as of a woman in labour, the sharp cry of one bearing her first child. It is Zion, gasping for breath,

stretching out her hands. Ah me! she cries. I am weary, weary of slaughter.

5¹ Go up and down the streets of Jerusalem, see, take note; search through her wide squares: can you find anyone who acts justly, anyone who seeks the truth, that I may forgive that city?

² People may swear by the life of the LORD, but in fact they perjure themselves.

³ LORD, are your eyes not set upon the truth? You punished them, but they took no heed; you pierced them to the heart, but they refused to learn. They made their faces harder than flint; they refused to repent.

⁴ I said, After all, these are the poor, these are folk without understanding, who do not know the way of the LORD, the ordinances of their God.

⁵ I shall go to the great ones and speak with them; for they will know the way of the LORD, the ordinances of their God. But they too have broken the yoke and snapped their traces.

⁶ So a lion out of the scrub will strike them down, a wolf from the plains will

savage them; a leopard will prowl about their towns and maul any who venture out, for their rebellious deeds are many, their apostasies past counting.

⁷How can I forgive you for all this? Your children have forsaken me, swearing by gods that are no gods. I gave them all they needed, yet they committed adultery and frequented brothels;

⁸each neighs after another man's wife, like a well-fed and lusty stallion.

⁹Shall I fail to punish them for this, says the LORD, shall I not exact vengeance on such a people?

¹⁰Go along her rows of vines; destroy them, make an end of them. Lop off her green branches, for they are not the LORD's.

¹¹Faithless are Israel and Judah, both faithless to me. This is the word of the LORD.

¹²They have denied the LORD, saying, He does not matter. No harm will come to us; we shall see neither sword nor famine.

¹³The prophets will prove mere wind; the word is not in them.

¹⁴Therefore, because they talk in this way, these are the words of the LORD the God of Hosts to me: I shall make my words a fire in your mouth, and it will burn up this people like brushwood.

¹⁵Israel, I am bringing against you a distant nation, an ancient people established long ago, says the LORD, a people whose language you do not know, whose speech you will not understand;

¹⁶they are all mighty warriors, their jaws are a grave, wide open,

¹⁷to devour your harvest and your food, to devour your sons and your daughters, to devour your flocks and your herds, to devour your vines and your fig trees. They will beat down with the sword the walled cities in which you trust.

¹⁸But in those days, the LORD declares, I shall not make an end of you.

¹⁹When it is asked, Why has the LORD our God done all this to us? you are to answer, As you have forsaken the LORD and served alien gods in your own land, so you will serve foreigners in a land that is not your own.

²⁰Announce this to the people of Jacob, proclaim it in Judah:

²¹ Listen, you foolish and senseless people, who have eyes and see nothing, ears and hear nothing.

²² Have you no fear of me, says the LORD, will you not tremble before me, who set the sand as bounds for the sea, a limit it never can pass? Its waves may heave and toss, but they are powerless; roar as they may, they cannot pass.

²³ But this people has a rebellious and defiant heart; they have rebelled and gone their own way.

²⁴ They did not say to themselves, Let us fear the LORD our God, who gives the rains of autumn and spring showers in their turn, who brings us unfailingly fixed harvest seasons.

²⁵ But your wrongdoing has upset nature's order, and your sins have kept away her bounty.

²⁶ For among my people there are scoundrels who, like fowlers, lay snares and set deadly traps; they prey on their fellows.

²⁷ Their houses are full of fraud, as a cage is full of birds. They grow great and rich,

²⁸sleek and bloated; they turn a blind eye to wickedness and refuse to do justice; the claims of the fatherless they do not uphold, nor do they defend the poor at law.

²⁹Shall I fail to punish them for this, says the LORD; shall I not exact vengeance on such a people?

³⁰An appalling thing, an outrage, has appeared in this land:

³¹prophets prophesy lies and priests are in league with them, and my people love to have it so! How will you fare at the end of it all?

6¹ People of Benjamin, save yourselves, flee from Jerusalem; sound the trumpet in Tekoa, light the beacon on Beth-hakkerem, for calamity looms from the north and great disaster.

²Zion, delightful and lovely, her end is near --

³she against whom the shepherds will come, they and their flocks with them. They will pitch their tents all around her, each grazing his own strip of pasture:

⁴Prepare for battle against her; come, let us attack her at noon. Too late! The day declines and the shadows lengthen.

⁵Come then, let us attack by night and destroy her palaces.

⁶These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: Cut down the trees of Jerusalem and cast up siege-ramps against her, a city ripe for punishment; oppression is rampant within her.

⁷As a well keeps its water fresh, so she keeps fresh her wickedness. Violence and outrage echo in her streets; sickness and wounds ever confront me.

⁸Learn your lesson, Jerusalem, or I shall be estranged from you, and leave you devastated, a land without inhabitants.

⁹These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: Glean like a vine the remnant of Israel; one last time, like a vintager, pass your hand over the branches.

¹⁰To whom shall I speak, to whom give warning? Who will hear me? Their ears are blocked: they are incapable of listening; they treat the LORD's word as a reproach; it has no appeal for them.

¹¹But I am full of the anger of the LORD, I cannot hold it back. I must pour it out on the children in the street, on the young men in their gatherings. Man

and wife alike will be caught in it, the ageing and the aged.

¹²Their houses will be turned over to others, fields and women together, because, says the LORD, I shall raise my hand against the inhabitants of the land.

¹³For all, high and low, are out for ill-gotten gain; prophets and priests are frauds, every one of them;

¹⁴they dress my people's wound, but on the surface only, with their saying, All is well. All well? Nothing is well!

¹⁵They ought to be ashamed because they practised abominations; yet they have no sense of shame, they could never be put out of countenance.

Therefore they will fall with a great crash, and be brought to the ground on the day of my reckoning. The LORD has said it.

¹⁶These are the words of the LORD: Take your stand and watch at the crossroads; enquire about the ancient paths; ask which is the way that leads to what is good. Take that way, and you will find rest for yourselves. But they said, We refuse.

¹⁷I appointed watchmen to direct them. Listen for the trumpet-call, I used to say. But they said, We refuse.

¹⁸Therefore hear, you nations, and all who witness it take note of the plight of this people.

¹⁹Let the earth listen: I am about to bring ruin on them, the fruit of all their scheming; for they have given no heed to my words and have spurned my instruction.

²⁰What good is it to me if frankincense is brought from Sheba and fragrant cane from a distant land? Your whole-offerings are not acceptable to me, your sacrifices do not please me.

²¹Therefore these are the words of the LORD: I shall set obstacles before this people which will bring them to the ground; fathers and sons, friends and neighbours will all perish together.

²²These are the words of the LORD: See, an army is coming from a northern land, a great nation rouses itself from earth's farthest corners.

²³Armed with bow and scimitar, they are cruel and pitiless; bestriding their horses, they sound like the thunder of

the sea; they are like men arrayed for battle against you, Zion.

²⁴News of them has reached us and our hands hang limp; agony grips us, pangs as of a woman in labour.

²⁵Do not go out into the country, do not walk by the high road; for the foe, sword in hand, spreads terror all around.

²⁶Daughter of my people, wrap yourself in sackcloth, sprinkle ashes over yourself, wail bitterly as one who mourns an only son; for in an instant the despoiler will be upon us.

²⁷I have appointed you an assayer and tester of my people; you will know how to assay their conduct:

²⁸arch-rebels all of them, mischief-makers, corrupt to a man.

²⁹The bellows blow, the fire is ready; lead, copper, and iron -- in vain the refiner refines; the impurities are not removed.

³⁰Call them reject silver, for the LORD has rejected them.

7¹THIS word came from the LORD to Jeremiah.

²Stand at the gate of the LORD's house and there make this proclamation: Hear

the word of the LORD, all you of Judah who come in through these gates to worship him.

³These are the words of the LORD of Hosts the God of Israel: Amend your ways and your deeds, that I may let you live in this place.

⁴You keep saying, This place is the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD! This slogan of yours is a lie; put no trust in it.

⁵If you amend your ways and your deeds, deal fairly with one another,

⁶cease to oppress the alien, the fatherless, and the widow, if you shed no innocent blood in this place and do not run after other gods to your own ruin,

⁷then I shall let you live in this place, in the land which long ago I gave to your forefathers for all time.

⁸You gain nothing by putting your trust in this lie.

⁹You steal, you murder, you commit adultery and perjury, you burn sacrifices to Baal, and you run after other gods whom you have not known;

¹⁰will you then come and stand before me in this house which bears my name,

and say, We are safe? Safe, you think, to indulge in all these abominations!

¹¹ Do you regard this house which bears my name as a bandits' cave? I warn you, I myself have seen all this, says the LORD.

¹² Go to my shrine at Shiloh, which once I made a dwelling for my name, and see what I did to it because of the wickedness of my people Israel.

¹³ Now you have done all these things, says the LORD; though I spoke to you again and again, you did not listen, and though I called, you did not respond.

¹⁴ Therefore what I did to Shiloh I shall do to this house which bears my name, the house in which you put your trust, the place I gave to you and your forefathers;

¹⁵ I shall fling you away out of my presence, as I did with all your kinsfolk, all Ephraim's offspring.

¹⁶ Offer up no prayer for this people, Jeremiah, raise no plea or prayer on their behalf, and do not intercede with me, for I shall not listen to you.

¹⁷ Do you not see what they are doing in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem?

¹⁸ Children are gathering wood, fathers lighting the fire, women kneading dough to make crescent-cakes in honour of the queen of heaven; and drink-offerings are poured out to other gods -- all to grieve me.

¹⁹ But is it I, says the LORD, whom they grieve? No; it is themselves, to their own confusion.

²⁰ Therefore, says the Lord GOD, my anger and my fury will pour out on this place, on man and beast, on trees and crops, and it will burn unquenched.

²¹ These are the words of the LORD of Hosts the God of Israel: Add your whole-offerings to your sacrifices and eat the flesh yourselves.

²² For when I brought your forefathers out of Egypt, I gave them no instructions or commands about whole-offering or sacrifice.

²³ What I did command them was this: Obey me, and I shall be your God and you will be my people. You must

conform to all my commands, if you are to prosper.

²⁴ But they did not listen; they paid no heed, and persisted in their own plans with evil and stubborn hearts; they turned their backs and not their faces to me,

²⁵ from the day when your forefathers left Egypt until now. Again and again I sent to them all my servants the prophets;

²⁶ but instead of listening and paying heed to me, they in their stubbornness proved even more wicked than their forefathers.

²⁷ Tell them all this, but they will not listen to you; call them, but they will not respond.

²⁸ Then say to them: This is the nation who did not obey the LORD their God or accept correction. Truth has perished; it is heard no more on their lips.

²⁹ Jerusalem, cut off your hair and throw it away; raise a lament on the bare heights. For the LORD has spurned and forsaken the generation that roused his wrath.

³⁰The people of Judah have done what is wrong in my eyes, says the LORD. They set up their loathsome idols in the house which bears my name and so defiled it;

³¹they have built shrines of Topheth in the valley of Ben-hinnom, at which to burn their sons and daughters. That was no command of mine; indeed it never entered my mind.

³²Therefore the time is coming, says the LORD, when it will no longer be called Topheth or the valley of Ben-hinnom, but the valley of Slaughter; for the dead will be buried in Topheth until there is no room left.

³³So the corpses of this people will become food for the birds of the air and the wild beasts, with none to scare them away.

³⁴From the towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem I shall banish all sounds of joy and gladness, the voices of bridegroom and bride; for the whole land will become desert.

8¹At that time, says the LORD, the bones of the kings of Judah, of the officers, priests, and prophets, and of

all who have lived in Jerusalem, will be brought out from their graves.

²They will be exposed to the sun, the moon, and all the host of heaven, which they loved and served and adored, from which they sought guidance and to which they bowed in worship. Those bones will not be gathered up and reburied; they will be dung spread over the ground.

³All the survivors of this wicked race, wherever I have banished them, would rather die than live. This is the word of the LORD of Hosts.

⁴You are to say to them: These are the words of the LORD. Does someone fall and not get up, or default and not return?

⁵Then why are this people so wayward, incurable in their waywardness? Why have they persisted in their treachery and refused to return?

⁶I have listened to them and heard not one word of truth, not one sinner crying remorsefully, What have I done? Each one breaks away in headlong career as a war-horse plunges into battle.

⁷The stork in the heavens knows the time to migrate, the dove and the swift

and the wryneck know the season of return; but my people do not know the ordinances of the LORD.

⁸How can you say, We are wise, we have the law of the LORD, when scribes with their lying pens have falsified it?

⁹The wise are put to shame; they are dismayed and entrapped. They have spurned the word of the LORD, so what sort of wisdom is theirs?

¹⁰Therefore I shall give their wives to other men and their lands to new owners. For all, high and low, are out for ill-gotten gain; prophets and priests are frauds, every one of them;

¹¹they dress my people's wound, but on the surface only, with their saying, All is well. All well? Nothing is well!

¹²They ought to be ashamed because they have practised abominations, yet they have no sense of shame, they could never be put out of countenance. Therefore they will fall with a great crash, and be brought to the ground on the day of reckoning. The LORD has said it.

¹³I shall gather them all in, says the LORD; there will be no grapes on the

vine, no figs on the fig tree; even the foliage will be withered.

¹⁴Why do we sit idle? Assemble! Let us move to the fortified towns and there meet our doom, since the LORD our God has doomed us, giving us a draught of bitter poison, for we have sinned against him.

¹⁵We hoped to prosper, but nothing went well; we hoped for respite, but terror struck.

¹⁶The snorting of their horses is heard from Dan; at the neighing of their stallions the whole land trembles. The enemy come; they devour the land and all its store, city and citizens alike.

¹⁷I am sending snakes against you, vipers such as no one can charm, and they will bite you. This is the word of the LORD.

¹⁸There is no cure for my grief; I am sick at heart.

¹⁹Hear my people's cry of distress from a distant land: Is the LORD not in Zion? Is her King no longer there? Why do they provoke me with their images and with their futile foreign gods?

²⁰Harvest is past, summer is over, and we are not saved.

²¹I am wounded by my people's wound; I go about in mourning, overcome with horror.

²²Is there no balm in Gilead, no physician there? Why has no new skin grown over their wound?

9¹Would that my head were a spring of water, my eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of my people.

²Would that I had in the wilderness a wayside shelter, that I might leave my people and go away! They are all adulterers, a faithless mob.

³The tongue is their weapon, a bow ready bent. Lying, not truth, holds sway in the land. They proceed from one wrong to another and care nothing for me. This is the word of the LORD.

⁴Be on your guard, each against his friend; put no trust even in a brother. Brother supplants brother as Jacob did, and friend slanders friend.

⁵They deceive their friends and never speak the truth; they have trained their

tongues to lying; deep in sin, they weary themselves going astray.

⁶Wrong follows wrong, deceit follows deceit; they refuse to acknowledge me. This is the word of the LORD.

⁷Therefore these are the words of the LORD of Hosts: I shall refine and assay them. How else should I deal with my people?

⁸Their tongues are deadly arrows, their mouths speak lies. One person talks amicably to another, while inwardly planning a trap.

⁹Shall I fail to punish them for this, says the LORD, shall I not exact vengeance on such a people?

¹⁰Over the mountains I shall raise weeping and wailing, and over the open pastures I shall chant a dirge. They are scorched and untrodden, they hear no lowing of cattle; birds of the air and beasts have fled and are gone.

¹¹I shall make Jerusalem a heap of ruins, a haunt of wolves, and the towns of Judah waste, without inhabitants.

¹²Who is wise enough to understand this, and who has the LORD's command to proclaim it? Why has the land become

a dead land, scorched like the desert and untrodden?

¹³The LORD said: It is because they rejected my law which I set before them; they neither obeyed me nor followed it.

¹⁴They followed the promptings of their own stubborn hearts and followed the baalim as their forefathers had taught them.

¹⁵Therefore these are the words of the LORD of Hosts the God of Israel: I shall give this people wormwood to eat and bitter poison to drink.

¹⁶I shall disperse them among nations whom neither they nor their forefathers have known; I shall harry them with the sword until I have made an end of them.

¹⁷These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: Summon the wailing women to come, send for the women skilled in keening

¹⁸to come quickly and raise a lament for us, that our eyes may stream with tears and our eyelids be wet with weeping.

¹⁹The sound of lamenting is heard from Zion: How fearful is our ruin! How great our shame! We have left our land, our houses have been overthrown.

²⁰ Listen, you women, to the words of the LORD, that your ears may catch what he says. Teach your daughters the lament; teach your neighbours this dirge:

²¹ Death has climbed in through our windows and entered our palaces, cutting off the children in the street and the young men in the thoroughfare.

²² Corpses will fall and lie like dung in the fields, like swathes behind the reaper with no one to gather them.

²³ These are the words of the LORD: Let not the wise boast of their wisdom, nor the valiant of their valour; let not the wealthy boast of their wealth;

²⁴ but if anyone must boast, let him boast of this: that he understands and acknowledges me. For I am the LORD, I show unfailing love, I do justice and right on the earth; for in these I take pleasure. This is the word of the LORD.

²⁵ The time is coming, says the LORD, when I shall punish all the circumcised,

²⁶ Egypt and Judah and Edom, Ammon and Moab, and all who live in the fringes of the desert, for all alike, the nations and Israel, are uncircumcised in heart.

10¹ Listen, Israel, to these words that the LORD has spoken against you:

² Do not fall into the ways of the nations, do not be terrified by signs in the heavens. It is the nations who go in terror of these.

³ For the carved images of the nations are a sham; they are nothing but timber cut from the forest, shaped by a craftsman with his chisel

⁴ and decorated with silver and gold. They are made fast with hammer and nails to keep them from toppling over.

⁵ They are as dumb as a scarecrow in a plot of cucumbers; they have always to be carried, for they cannot walk. Do not be afraid of them: they can do no harm, nor have they any power to do good.

⁶ Where can one be found like you, LORD? You are great, and great is the might of your name.

⁷ Who would not fear you, King of the nations, for fear is a fitting tribute for you? Where among the wisest of the nations and among all their royalty can any be found like you?

⁸One and all they are stupid and foolish, learning their nonsense from a piece of wood.

⁹Beaten silver is brought from Tarshish and gold from Ophir; they are the work of craftsmen and goldsmiths; they are draped in violet and purple, all made by skilled workers.

¹⁰But the LORD is God in truth, a living God, an everlasting King. The earth quakes under his fury; no nation can endure his wrath.

¹¹You say this of them: The gods who did not make heaven and earth will perish from the earth and from under these heavens.

¹²God made the earth by his power, fixed the world in place by his wisdom, and by his knowledge unfurled the skies.

¹³When he speaks in the thunder the waters in the heavens are in tumult; he brings up the mist from the ends of the earth, he opens rifts for the rain, and brings the wind out of his storehouses.

¹⁴Everyone is brutish and ignorant; every goldsmith is discredited through his idols; for the figures he casts are a sham, there is no breath in them.

¹⁵They are worthless, objects of mockery, which perish when their day of reckoning comes.

¹⁶Jacob's chosen God is not like these, for he is the creator of the universe. Israel is the people he claims as his own; the LORD of Hosts is his name.

¹⁷Gather up your goods and flee the country, for you are living under siege.

¹⁸These are the words of the LORD: This time I shall throw out the whole population of the land, and I shall press them and squeeze them dry.

¹⁹Oh, the pain of my wounds! The injuries I suffer are cruel. I am laid low, I said, and must endure it.

²⁰My tent is wrecked, my tent-ropes all severed, my children have left me and are gone, there is no one left to pitch my tent again, no one to put up its curtains.

²¹The shepherds of the people are brutish; they never consult the LORD, and so they do not act wisely, and their entire flock is scattered.

²²Listen, a rumour comes flying, a great uproar from the land of the north, an army to make Judah's cities desolate, a haunt of wolves.

²³I am aware, LORD, that no one's ways are of his own choosing; nor is it within his power to determine his course in life.

²⁴Correct me, LORD, but with justice, not in anger, or you will bring me almost to nothing.

²⁵Pour out your fury on the nations that have not acknowledged you, on tribes that have not invoked you by name; for they have devoured Jacob and made an end of him and have left his home a waste.

11 ¹THE word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD:

²Listen to the terms of this covenant and repeat them to the inhabitants of Judah and the citizens of Jerusalem,

³telling them: These are the words of the LORD the God of Israel: A curse on everyone who does not observe the terms of this covenant

⁴which I enjoined on your forefathers when I brought them out of Egypt, from the smelting furnace. I said: If you obey me and do all that I command, you will become my people and I shall become your God.

⁵I shall thus make good the oath I swore to your forefathers, that I would give them a land flowing with milk and honey, the land you now possess. I answered, Amen, LORD.

⁶Then the LORD said: Proclaim these terms throughout the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. Say: Listen to the terms of this covenant and carry them out.

⁷I gave solemn warning to your forefathers, from the time when I brought them out of Egypt till this day; I was at pains to warn them: Obey me, I said.

⁸But they did not obey; they paid no attention to me, and each followed the promptings of his own stubborn and wicked heart. So I brought on them all the penalties laid down in this covenant which I had enjoined upon them, but whose terms they did not observe.

⁹The LORD said to me: The inhabitants of Judah and the citizens of Jerusalem have entered into a conspiracy:

¹⁰they have gone back to the sins of their earliest forefathers and refused to listen to me. They have followed other

gods and served them; Israel and Judah have broken the covenant which I made with their forefathers.

¹¹Therefore these are the words of the LORD: I am about to bring on them a disaster from which they cannot escape. They may cry to me for help, but I shall not listen.

¹²The inhabitants of the towns of Judah and of Jerusalem may go and cry for help to the gods to whom they have burnt sacrifices, but assuredly they will not save them in the hour of disaster.

¹³For you, Judah, have as many gods as you have towns; you have set up as many altars to burn sacrifices to Baal as there are streets in Jerusalem.

¹⁴So, Jeremiah, offer up no prayer for this people; raise no plea or prayer on their behalf, for I shall not listen when they call to me in the hour of their disaster.

¹⁵What right has my beloved in my house with her shameless ways? Can the flesh of fat offerings on the altar ward off the disaster that threatens you? Now you will feel sharp anguish.

¹⁶Once the LORD called you an olive tree, leafy and fair; with a great roaring noise he has set it on fire and its branches are consumed.

¹⁷The LORD of Hosts who planted you has threatened you with disaster, because of the evil which Israel and Judah have done, provoking him to anger by burning sacrifices to Baal.

¹⁸It was the LORD who showed me, and so I knew; he opened my eyes to what they were doing.

¹⁹I had been like a pet lamb led trustingly to the slaughter; I did not realize they were hatching plots against me and saying, Let us destroy the tree while the sap is in it; let us cut him off from the land of the living, so that his name will be wholly forgotten.

²⁰LORD of Hosts, most righteous judge, testing the heart and mind, to you I have committed my cause; let me see your vengeance on them.

²¹Therefore these are the words of the LORD about the men of Anathoth who seek to take your life, and say, Prophecy no more in the name of the LORD or we shall kill you --

²² these are his words: I am about to punish them: their young men shall die by the sword, their sons and daughters by famine.

²³ Not one of them will survive; for in the year of reckoning for them I shall bring disaster on the people of Anathoth.

12 ¹ LORD, even if I dispute with you, you remain in the right; yet I shall plead my case before you. Why do the wicked prosper and the treacherous all live at ease?

² You have planted them and their roots strike deep, they grow and bear fruit. You are ever on their lips, yet far from their hearts.

³ But you know me, LORD, you see me; you test my devotion to you. Drag them away like sheep to the shambles; set them apart for the day of slaughter.

⁴ How long must the country lie parched and all its green grass wither? No birds and beasts are left, because its people are so wicked, because they say, God does not see what we are doing.

⁵ If you have raced with men running on foot and they have worn you down, how then can you hope to compete

with horses? If in easy country you fall headlong, how will you fare in Jordan's dense thickets?

⁶Even your brothers and kinsmen deal treacherously with you, they are in full cry after you; do not trust them, for all the fair words they use.

⁷I have abandoned the house of Israel, I have cast off my own people. I have given my beloved into the power of her foes.

⁸My own people have turned on me like lions from the jungle; they roar against me, therefore I hate them.

⁹Is this land of mine a hyena's lair, with birds of prey hovering all around it? Come, all you wild beasts; come, flock to the feast.

¹⁰Many shepherds have ravaged my vineyard and trampled down my portion of land, they have made my pleasant portion a desolate wilderness;

¹¹they have made it a desolation, to my sorrow. The whole land is desolate, but no one pays heed.

¹²Plunderers have swarmed across the open regions of the wilderness; a sword of the LORD devours the land from end

to end; there is no peace for any living thing.

¹³Men sow wheat and reap thistles; they sift but get no grain. Their harvest is a disappointment to them because of the fierce anger of the LORD.

¹⁴These are the words of the LORD about all those evil neighbours who encroach on the land which I allotted to my people Israel as their holding: I shall uproot them from their own soil. Also I shall uproot Judah from among them;

¹⁵but after I have uprooted them, I shall have pity on them again and bring each man back to his holding and land.

¹⁶If they will learn the ways of my people, swearing by my name, by the life of the LORD, as they taught my people to swear by the Baal, they will establish families among my people.

¹⁷But the nation that will not listen, I shall uproot and destroy. This is the word of the LORD.

13¹These were the words of the LORD to me: Go and buy yourself a linen loincloth and wrap it round your body, but do not put it in water.

² So I bought one as instructed by the LORD and wrapped it round me.

³ The LORD spoke to me a second time:

⁴ Take the loincloth which you bought and are wearing and go now to Perath, where you are to hide it in a crevice in the rocks.

⁵ I went and hid it at Perath, as the LORD had ordered me.

⁶ A long time afterwards the LORD said to me: Set out now for Perath and fetch the loincloth which I told you to hide there.

⁷ So I went to Perath and looked for the place where I had hidden it, but when I picked it up, I saw that it was ruined and no good for anything.

⁸ The LORD spoke to me:

⁹ Thus shall I ruin the enormous pride of Judah and Jerusalem.

¹⁰ This wicked people who refuse to listen to my words, who follow the promptings of their stubborn hearts and go after other gods to serve and worship them, will become like this loincloth, no good for anything.

¹¹ Just as a loincloth is bound close to a man's body, so I bound all Israel and all

Judah to myself, says the LORD, so that they should become my people to be a source of renown and praise and glory to me; but they did not listen.

¹²You are to say this to them: These are the words of the LORD the God of Israel: Wine jars should be filled with wine. They will answer, We are well aware that wine jars should be filled with wine.

¹³Then say to them, These are the words of the LORD: I shall fill all the inhabitants of this land with wine until they are drunk -- kings of David's line who sit on his throne, priests, prophets, and all who live in Jerusalem.

¹⁴I shall dash them one against the other, fathers and sons together, says the LORD; I shall show them no compassion or pity or tenderness, nor refrain from destroying them.

¹⁵Pay heed; be not too proud to listen, for it is the LORD who speaks.

¹⁶Ascribe glory to the LORD your God before the darkness falls, before your feet stumble against the hillside in the twilight, before he turns the light

you look for to deep gloom and thick darkness.

¹⁷If in those depths you will not listen, then for very anguish I can only weep bitterly; my eyes must stream with tears, for the LORD's flock is carried off into captivity.

¹⁸Say to the king and the queen mother: Take a humble seat, for your proud crowns are fallen from your heads.

¹⁹The towns in the Negeb are besieged, and no one can relieve them; all Judah has been swept into exile, swept clean away.

²⁰Look up and see those who are coming from the north. Where is the flock that was entrusted to you, the sheep that were your pride?

²¹What will you say when your leaders are missing, though trained by you to be your head? Will not pangs seize you like the pangs of a woman in labour,

²²when you wonder, Why has this happened to me? For your many sins your skirts are stripped off you, your limbs uncovered.

²³ Can a Nubian change his skin, or a leopard its spots? No more can you do good, you who are schooled in evil.

²⁴ I shall scatter you like chaff before the desert wind.

²⁵ This is your lot, your portion as a rebel, decreed by me, says the LORD, because you have quite forgotten me and trusted in false gods.

²⁶ So I myself have torn off your skirts and laid bare your shame:

²⁷ your adulteries, your lustful neighing, your wanton lewdness. On the hills and the open fields I have seen your foul deeds. Woe to you, Jerusalem, in your uncleanness! How long will you delay?

14¹ This came to Jeremiah as the word of the LORD concerning the drought:

² Judah droops, her towns languish, the inhabitants sit on the ground in mourning; and a crying goes up from Jerusalem.

³ Masters send their servants for water, but when they come to the pools they find none there, and go back with their vessels empty; disappointed and shamed, they uncover their heads.

⁴ Because the ground is cracked through lack of rain in the land, the farmers' hopes are wrecked; they uncover their heads in grief.

⁵ The hind calves in the open country, and because there is no grass she abandons her young.

⁶ Wild asses stand on the bare heights and snuff the wind as wolves do, and their eyes begin to fail for lack of herbage.

⁷ Though our sins testify against us, yet take action, LORD, for your own name's sake. Our disloyalties indeed are many; we have sinned against you.

⁸ Hope of Israel, their saviour in time of trouble, must you be like a stranger in the land, like a traveller breaking his journey to find a night's lodging?

⁹ Must you be like a man suddenly overcome, like a warrior powerless to save himself? You are in our midst, LORD, and we bear your name. Do not forsake us.

¹⁰ The LORD says of this people: They love to stray from my ways; they wander where they will. Therefore the LORD has no more pleasure in them; he

remembers their guilt now, and punishes their sins.

¹¹The LORD said to me: Do not pray for the wellbeing of this people.

¹²Though they fast, I shall not listen to their cry; though they sacrifice whole-offering and grain-offering, I shall not accept them. I shall make an end of them with sword, famine, and pestilence.

¹³But I said: Ah, Lord GOD, the prophets keep saying to them that they will see no sword and suffer no famine; for you will give them lasting prosperity in this place.

¹⁴The LORD answered me: These are lies the prophets are prophesying in my name. I have not sent them; I have given them no charge; I have not spoken to them. The prophets are offering false visions, worthless augury, and their own day-dreams.

¹⁵Therefore these are the words of the LORD about the prophets who, with no commission from me, prophesy in my name and say that neither sword nor famine will touch this land: By sword and by famine those prophets will meet their end.

¹⁶The people to whom they prophesy will be flung out into the streets of Jerusalem, victims of famine and sword: they, their wives, their sons, and their daughters, and there will be no one to bury them. I shall pour down on them the disaster they deserve.

¹⁷This is what you are to say to them: Let my eyes stream with tears ceaselessly night and day. For the virgin daughter of my people, struck by a cruel blow, is grievously wounded.

¹⁸If I go out into the open country, I see those slain by the sword; if I enter the city, I see the victims of famine. Prophet and priest alike wander without rest in the land.

¹⁹Have you spurned Judah utterly? Do you loathe Zion? Why have you wounded us past all healing? We hoped to prosper, but nothing went well. We hoped for respite, but terror struck.

²⁰We acknowledge our wickedness, the guilt of our forefathers; LORD, we have sinned against you.

²¹Do not despise the place where your name dwells or bring contempt on your glorious throne. Remember your

covenant with us and do not make it void.

²²Can any of the false gods of the nations give rain? Or do the heavens of themselves send showers? Is it not in you, LORD our God, that we put our hope? You alone made all these things.

15¹The LORD said to me: Even if Moses and Samuel stood before me, I would not be moved to pity this people. Banish them from my presence; let them be gone.

²Should they ask where to go, say to them: These are the words of the LORD: Those who are for the plague shall go to the plague, and those for the sword to the sword; those who are for famine to famine, and those for captivity to captivity.

³Four kinds of doom I ordain for them, says the LORD: the sword to kill, dogs to drag away, birds of prey and wild beasts to devour and destroy.

⁴I shall make them abhorrent to all the kingdoms of the earth, because of the crimes committed in Jerusalem by Manasseh son of Hezekiah, king of Judah.

⁵Who will take pity on you, Jerusalem, who will offer you consolation? Who will turn aside to ask about your wellbeing?

⁶You yourselves cast me off, says the LORD, you turned your backs on me, so I stretched out my hand to bring you to ruin; I was weary of relenting.

⁷I winnowed them and scattered them in every town in the land; I brought bereavement on them, I destroyed my people; they would not abandon their ways.

⁸I made widows among them more in number than the sands of the seas; I brought upon the mother of young warriors a plunderer at noonday. I made the terror of invasion fall upon her all in a moment.

⁹The mother of seven sons grew faint, she sank into despair; her light was quenched while it was yet day; she was left humbled and shamed. The remnant I shall give to the sword, to perish at the hand of their enemies. This is the word of the LORD.

¹⁰ALAS, my mother, that ever you gave birth to me, a man doomed to strife with the whole world against me! I have

borrowed from no one, I have lent to no one, yet everyone abuses me.

¹¹The LORD said: Have I not utterly dismissed you? Shall I not bring the enemy against you in a time of trouble and distress?

¹²Can iron break steel from the north?

¹³I shall hand over your wealth as spoil, and your treasure for no payment, because of all your sin throughout your borders.

¹⁴I shall make you serve your enemies in a land you do not know; for my anger is a blazing fire and it will flare up against you.

¹⁵LORD, you know; remember me, and vindicate me, avenge me on my persecutors. Be patient with me and do not put me off, see what reproaches I endure for your sake.

¹⁶When I came on your words I devoured them; they were joy and happiness to me, for you, LORD God of Hosts, have named me yours.

¹⁷I have never kept company with revellers, never made merry with them; because I felt your hand upon me I have

sat alone, for you have filled me with indignation.

¹⁸Why then is my pain unending, and my wound desperate, past all healing? You are to me like a brook that fails, whose waters are not to be relied on.

¹⁹This was the LORD's answer: If you turn back to me, I shall take you back and you will stand before me. If you can separate the precious from the base, you will be my spokesman. This people may turn again to you, but you are not to turn to them.

²⁰To withstand them I shall make you strong, an unscaled wall of bronze. Though they attack you, they will not prevail, for I am with you to save and deliver you, says the LORD;

²¹I shall deliver you from the clutches of the wicked, I shall rescue you from the grasp of the ruthless.

16¹THE word of the LORD came to me:

²You are not to marry or to have sons and daughters in this place.

³For these are the words of the LORD about any sons and daughters born in this place, about the mothers who bear

them and the fathers who beget them in this land:

⁴They shall die a horrible death; there must be no wailing for them and no burial; they will be dung spread over the ground. They will perish by sword or famine, and their corpses will be food for birds and beasts.

⁵For these are the words of the LORD: Do not enter a house where there is a funeral feast; do not go in to wail or to bring comfort, for, says the LORD, I have withdrawn my peace from this people, my love and compassion.

⁶High and low will die in this land, but there must be no burial, no wailing for them; no one is to gash himself or shave his head.

⁷No one is to offer the mourner a portion of bread to console him for the dead or give him a cup of consolation for the loss of his father or mother.

⁸Nor may you enter a house where there is feasting, to sit eating and drinking there.

⁹For these are the words of the LORD of Hosts, the God of Israel: In your own days and in the sight of you all, I shall

silence in this place every sound of joy and gladness, the voices of bridegroom and bride.

¹⁰When you tell this people all these things they will ask you, Why has the LORD decreed that this great disaster is to come on us? What wrong have we done? What sin have we committed against the LORD our God?

¹¹You are to answer: Because your forefathers forsook me, says the LORD, and followed other gods, serving and worshipping them. They forsook me and did not keep my law.

¹²And you yourselves have done worse than your forefathers; for each of you follows the promptings of his wicked and stubborn heart instead of obeying me.

¹³So I shall fling you headlong out of this land into a country unknown to you and your forefathers; there serve other gods day and night, for I shall show you no favour.

¹⁴Therefore the time is coming, says the LORD, when people will no longer swear by the life of the LORD who brought the Israelites up from Egypt;

¹⁵instead they will swear by the life of the LORD who brought the Israelites back from a northern land and from all the lands to which he had dispersed them; and I shall bring them back to the soil which I gave to their forefathers.

¹⁶I shall send for many fishermen, says the LORD, and they will fish for them. After that I shall send for many hunters, and they will hunt them from every mountain and hill and from the crevices in the rocks.

¹⁷For my eyes are on all their ways; they are not hidden from my sight, nor is their wrongdoing concealed from me.

¹⁸I shall first make them pay double for the wrong they have done and the sin they have committed by defiling the land which belongs to me; they have filled my possession with their lifeless idols and abominations.

¹⁹LORD, my strength and my stronghold, my refuge in time of trouble, to you the nations will come from the ends of the earth and say: Our forefathers inherited only a sham, an idol vain and worthless.

²⁰Can man make gods for himself?
They would be no gods.

²¹Therefore I am teaching them, I shall teach them once for all my power and my might, and they will learn that my name is the LORD.

17 ¹The sin of Judah is recorded with an iron stylus, engraved with a diamond point on the tablet of their hearts, on the horns of their altars

²to witness against them. Their altars and their sacred poles stand by every spreading tree, on the heights

³and the hills in the mountain country. I shall hand over your wealth as spoil, and all your treasure for no payment, because of sin throughout your borders.

⁴You will lose possession of the holding which I gave you. I shall make you serve your enemies in a land you do not know; for the fire of my anger is kindled by you and it will burn for ever.

⁵These are the words of the LORD: A curse on anyone who trusts in mortals and leans for support on human kind, while his heart is far from the LORD!

⁶He will be like a juniper in the steppeland; when good comes he

is unaware of it. He will live among the rocks in the wilderness, in a salt, uninhabited land.

⁷Blessed is anyone who trusts in the LORD, and rests his confidence on him.

⁸He will be like a tree planted by the waterside, that sends out its roots along a stream. When the heat comes it has nothing to fear; its foliage stays green. Without care in a year of drought, it does not fail to bear fruit.

⁹The heart is deceitful above any other thing, desperately sick; who can fathom it?

¹⁰I, the LORD, search the mind and test the heart, requiting each one for his conduct and as his deeds deserve.

¹¹Like a partridge sitting on a clutch of eggs which it has not laid, so is he who amasses wealth unjustly. Before his days are half done it will leave him, and he will be a fool at the last.

¹²A glorious throne, exalted from the beginning, is the site of our sanctuary;

¹³LORD, on whom Israel's hope is fixed, all who reject you will be put to shame; those who forsake you will be inscribed

in the dust, for they have rejected the source of living water, the LORD.

¹⁴Heal me, LORD, and I shall be healed, save me and I shall be saved; for you are my praise.

¹⁵They say to me, Where is the word of the LORD? Let it come, if it can!

¹⁶It is not the prospect of disaster that makes me press after you, and I did not desire this day of despair. You know all that has passed my lips; you are fully aware of it.

¹⁷Do not become a terror to me; you are my refuge on an evil day.

¹⁸May my persecutors be foiled, not I; may they, not I, be terrified. Bring on them an evil day; destroy them, destroy them utterly.

¹⁹These were the words of the LORD to me: Go and stand at the Benjamin Gate, through which the kings of Judah pass in and out, and stand also at all the gates of Jerusalem.

²⁰Say: Hear the words of the LORD, you kings of Judah, all you people of Judah, and all you citizens of Jerusalem who come in through these gates.

²¹ These are the words of the LORD: Do not put your lives at risk by carrying any load on the sabbath day or bringing it through the gates of Jerusalem.

²² You are not to bring any load out of your houses or do any work on the sabbath, but you are to keep the sabbath day holy as I commanded your forefathers.

²³ They, however, did not obey or pay attention, but stubbornly refused to hear or receive instruction.

²⁴ Now if you will obey me, says the LORD, and refrain from bringing any load through the gates of this city on the sabbath, and keep that day holy by doing no work on it,

²⁵ then kings will come through the gates of this city, kings who will sit on David's throne. They will come riding in chariots or on horseback, escorted by their officers, by the people of Judah, and by the citizens of Jerusalem; and this city will be inhabited for ever.

²⁶ People will come from the towns of Judah, the country round Jerusalem, the territory of Benjamin, the Shephelah, the hill-country, and the Negeb, bringing

whole-offerings, sacrifices, grain-offerings, and frankincense, bringing also thank-offerings to the house of the LORD.

²⁷ But if you do not obey me by keeping the sabbath day holy and by carrying no load as you come through the gates of Jerusalem on the sabbath, then I shall set fire to the gates; it will consume the palaces of Jerusalem and will not be put out.

18 ¹ THESE are the words which came to Jeremiah from the LORD:

² Go down now to the potter's house, and there I shall tell you what I have to say.

³ I went down to the potter's house, where I found him working at the wheel.

⁴ Now and then a vessel he was making from the clay would be spoilt in his hands, and he would remould it into another vessel to his liking.

⁵ Then the word of the LORD came to me:

⁶ Israel, can I not deal with you as this potter deals with his clay? says the LORD. House of Israel, you are clay in my hands like the clay in his.

⁷At any moment I may threaten to uproot a nation or a kingdom, to pull it down and destroy it.

⁸But if the nation which I have threatened turns back from its wicked ways, then I shall think again about the disaster I had in mind for it.

⁹At another moment I may announce that I shall build or plant a nation or a kingdom.

¹⁰But if it does evil in my sight by disobeying me, I shall think again about the good I had in mind for it.

¹¹Go now and tell the people of Judah and the citizens of Jerusalem that these are the words of the LORD: I am framing disaster for you and perfecting my designs against you. Turn back, every one of you, from his evil conduct; mend your ways and your actions.

¹²But they will answer, Things are past hope. We must stick to our own plans, and each of us follow the promptings of his wicked and stubborn heart.

¹³Therefore these are the words of the LORD: Enquire among the nations: whoever heard the like of this? The virgin Israel has done a thing most horrible.

¹⁴ Does the snow cease to fall from the rocky slopes of Lebanon? Does the cool rain streaming in torrents ever fail?

¹⁵ No, but my people have forgotten me: they burn sacrifices to idols which cause them to stumble as they tread the ancient ways, and they take to byways and unmade roads;

¹⁶ their own land they lay waste, an object of lasting derision, at which all passers-by shake their heads in horror.

¹⁷ As with a wind from the east I shall scatter them before their enemies. In the hour of their downfall I shall turn my back and not my face towards them.

¹⁸ The cry was raised: Let us consider how to deal with Jeremiah. There will still be priests to guide us, still wise men to give counsel, still prophets to proclaim the word. Let us invent some charges against him; let us pay no heed to anything he says.

¹⁹ But pay heed, LORD, and hear what my opponents are saying against me.

²⁰ Is good to be repaid with evil, that they have dug a pit for me? Remember how I stood before you, interceding on

their behalf to avert your wrath from them.

²¹ Therefore give their children over to famine, leave them at the mercy of the sword. Let their women be childless and widowed, let their men be slain by pestilence, their young men cut down in battle.

²² Bring raiders on them without warning, and let screaming be heard from their houses. They have dug a pit to catch me and have laid snares for my feet.

²³ Well you know, LORD, all their murderous plots against me. Do not blot out their wrongdoing or wipe away their sin from your sight; when they are brought stumbling before you, deal with them on the day of your anger.

19¹ These are the words of the LORD: Go and buy from the potter an earthenware jar, and taking with you some of the elders of the people and some priests,

² go out to the valley of Ben-hinnom, on which the Gate of the Potsherd opens, and there proclaim what I tell you.

³Say: Hear the word of the LORD, you princes of Judah and citizens of Jerusalem. These are the words of the LORD of Hosts the God of Israel: I am about to bring on this place such a disaster as will ring in the ears of all who hear of it,

⁴because they have forsaken me, and made this a place of alien worship. They have burnt sacrifices to other gods whom neither they nor their forefathers nor the kings of Judah ever knew, and they have filled this place with the blood of the innocent.

⁵They have built shrines to Baal, at which to burn their sons as whole-offerings to Baal. That was no command of mine, a thing I never spoke of, nor did it ever enter my mind.

⁶Therefore the time is coming, says the LORD, when it will no longer be called Topheth or the valley of Ben-hinnom, but the valley of Slaughter.

⁷In this place I shall make void the plans of Judah and Jerusalem; I shall make the people fall by the sword before their enemies, at the hands of those who seek to kill them; I shall give

their corpses to the birds and beasts to devour.

⁸I shall make this city a scene of desolation, an object of astonishment, so that every passer-by will be desolated and appalled at the sight of all her wounds.

⁹I shall make people eat the flesh of their sons and their daughters; they will devour one another's flesh in the dire straits to which their enemies and those who would kill them will reduce them in the siege.

¹⁰Then you are to smash the jar before the eyes of the men who accompany you

¹¹and say to them: These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: Thus shall I smash this people and this city as an earthen vessel is smashed beyond all repair, and the dead will be buried in Topheth until there is no room left to bury them.

¹²That is how I shall deal with this place and with those who live there, says the LORD: I shall make this city like Topheth.

¹³Because of their defilement, the houses of Jerusalem and those of the kings of Judah will be like the site of Topheth, every one of the houses on

whose roofs men have burnt sacrifices to all the host of heaven and poured drink-offerings to other gods.

¹⁴When Jeremiah came in from Topheth, where the LORD had sent him to prophesy, he stood in the court of the LORD's house and said to all the people:

¹⁵These are the words of the LORD of Hosts the God of Israel: I am about to bring on this city and on all its dependent towns the whole disaster with which I have threatened it, for its people have remained stubborn and refused to listen to me.

20¹ The priest Pashhur son of Immer, the chief officer in the house of the LORD, heard Jeremiah prophesying these things,

²and had him flogged and put him in the stocks at the Upper Benjamin Gate, in the house of the LORD.

³When next morning Pashhur released him from the stocks, Jeremiah said to him: The LORD has called you not Pashhur but Magor-missabib.

⁴For these are the words of the LORD: I shall make you a terror to yourself and to all your friends; they will fall by the

sword of the enemy before your very eyes. I shall hand over all Judah to the king of Babylon, and he will deport them to Babylon or put them to the sword.

⁵I shall give all this city's store of wealth and riches and all the treasures of the kings of Judah to their enemies; they will seize them as spoil and carry them off to Babylon.

⁶You, Pashhur, and all your household will go into captivity. You will come to Babylon; there you will die and there you will be buried, you and all your friends to whom you have been a false prophet.

⁷YOU HAVE duped me, LORD, and I have been your dupe; you have outwitted me and prevailed. All the day long I have been made a laughing-stock; everyone ridicules me.

⁸Whenever I speak I must needs cry out, calling, Violence! and Assault! I am reproached and derided all the time for uttering the word of the LORD.

⁹Whenever I said, I shall not call it to mind or speak in his name again, then his word became imprisoned within me like a fire burning in my heart. I was

weary with holding it under, and could endure no more.

¹⁰For I heard many whispering, Terror let loose! Denounce him! Let us denounce him. All my friends were on the watch for a false step, saying, Perhaps he may be tricked; then we can catch him and have our revenge on him.

¹¹But the LORD is on my side, a powerful champion; therefore my persecutors will stumble and fall powerless. Their abasement will be bitter when they fail, and their dishonour will long be remembered.

¹²But, LORD of Hosts, you test the righteous and search the depths of the heart. To you I have committed my cause; let me see your vengeance on them.

¹³Sing to the LORD, praise the LORD; for he rescues the poor from those who would do them wrong.

¹⁴A curse on the day when I was born! The day my mother bore me, may it be for ever unblessed!

¹⁵A curse on the man who brought word to my father, A child is born to you, a son, and gladdened his heart!

¹⁶May that man fare like the cities which the LORD overthrew without mercy. May he hear cries of alarm in the morning and uproar at noon,

¹⁷since death did not claim me before birth, and my mother did not become my grave, her womb great with me for ever.

¹⁸Why did I come from the womb to see only sorrow and toil, to end my days in shame?

21 ¹THE word which came from the LORD to Jeremiah when King Zedekiah sent to him Pashhur son of Malchiah and the priest Zephaniah son of Maaseiah with this request:

²King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon has declared war on us; enquire of the LORD on our behalf. Perhaps the LORD will perform a miracle as he has done in times past, so that Nebuchadrezzar will raise the siege.

³But Jeremiah answered them: Tell Zedekiah

⁴that these are the words of the LORD the God of Israel: I shall turn against you your own weapons with which you are fighting the king of Babylon and the Chaldaeans who are besieging you

outside the wall; and I shall bring them into the heart of this city.

⁵I myself shall fight against you in burning rage and great fury, with an outstretched hand and a strong arm.

⁶I shall strike down those who live in this city, men and cattle alike; they will die of a great pestilence.

⁷After that, says the LORD, I shall take King Zedekiah of Judah, his courtiers, and the people, all in this city who survive pestilence, sword, and famine, and hand them over to King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, to their enemies and those who would kill them. He will put them to the sword and show no pity or mercy or compassion.

⁸You are to say further to this people: These are the words of the LORD: I offer you now a choice between the way of life and the way of death.

⁹Whoever remains in this city will die by sword, famine, or pestilence, but whoever goes out and surrenders to the Chaldeans now laying siege to you will survive; he will escape with his life.

¹⁰I have set my face against this city, determined to do them harm, not good,

says the LORD. It will be handed over to the king of Babylon, and he will burn it to the ground.

¹¹To the royal house of Judah: Listen to the word of the LORD;

¹²house of David, these are the words of the LORD: Dispense justice betimes, rescue the victim from his oppressor, or the fire of my fury may blaze up and burn unquenchably because of your evil actions.

¹³The LORD says: I am against you, you inhabitants of the valley, the rock in the plain, who say, Who can come down upon us? Who can penetrate our retreats?

¹⁴I shall punish you as your deeds deserve, says the LORD, I shall set fire to your heathland, and it will devour everything round about.

22¹These are the words of the LORD: Go down to the palace of the king of Judah with this message:

²King of Judah, occupant of David's throne, listen to the words of the LORD, you and your courtiers and your people who come in at these gates.

³These are the words of the LORD: Deal justly and fairly, rescue the victim from his oppressor, do not ill-treat or use violence towards the alien, the fatherless, and the widow, and do not shed innocent blood in this place.

⁴If you obey, then kings who succeed to David's throne will come riding through the gates of this palace in chariots and on horses, with their retinue of courtiers and subjects.

⁵But if you do not obey my words, then by myself I solemnly swear, says the LORD, this palace will become a ruin.

⁶For these are the words of the LORD about the royal house of Judah: Though you are dear to me as Gilead or as the crest of Lebanon, I swear that I shall turn you into a wilderness, a land of towns no longer inhabited.

⁷I shall consecrate an armed host to fight against you, a destructive horde; they will cut down your choicest cedars, felling them for fuel.

⁸People of many nations will pass by this city and say to one another, Why has the LORD done such a thing to this great city?

⁹The answer will be, Because they forsook their covenant with the LORD their God by worshipping other gods and serving them.

¹⁰Weep not for him who is dead nor lament his loss. Weep rather for him who is going into exile, for he will return no more, never again see the land of his birth.

¹¹For these are the words of the LORD concerning Shallum son of Josiah, king of Judah, who succeeded his father on the throne and has gone from this place: He will never return;

¹²he will die in the place of his exile without ever seeing this land again.

¹³Woe betide him who builds his palace on unfairness and completes its roof-chambers with injustice, compelling his countrymen to work without payment, giving them no wage for their labour!

¹⁴Woe to him who says, I shall build myself a spacious palace with airy roof-chambers and windows set in it; it will be panelled with cedar and painted with vermilion.

¹⁵Though your cedar is so splendid, does that prove you a king? Think of

your father: he ate and drank, dealt justly and fairly; all went well with him.

¹⁶He upheld the cause of the lowly and poor; then all was well. Did not this show he knew me? says the LORD.

¹⁷But your eyes and your heart are set on naught but gain, set only on the innocent blood you can shed, on the cruel acts of tyranny you perpetrate.

¹⁸Therefore these are the words of the LORD concerning Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah: For him no mourner will say, Alas, brother, dear brother! no one say, Alas, lord and master!

¹⁹He will be buried like a dead donkey, dragged along and flung out beyond the gates of Jerusalem.

²⁰Go up to Lebanon and cry aloud, make your voice heard in Bashan, cry aloud from Abarim, for all who love you are broken.

²¹I spoke to you in your days of prosperous ease, but you said, I shall not listen. Since your youth this is how you have behaved; you have never obeyed me.

²²A wind will carry away all your friends; those who love you will go into captivity. Then you will be abashed and put to shame for all your evil deeds.

²³You dwellers in Lebanon, nestling among the cedars, how you will groan when pains come on you, like the pangs of a woman in labour!

²⁴By my life, says the LORD, although you, Coniah son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, are the signet ring on my right hand, I shall pull you off

²⁵and hand you over to those who seek your life, to those you fear, to King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon and to the Chaldaeans.

²⁶I shall fling you headlong, you and the mother who bore you, into another land, not that of your birth, and there you will both die.

²⁷You will never come back to your own land, the land for which you long.

²⁸This man Coniah, then, is he a mere puppet, despised and broken, a thing unwanted? Why else are he and his children flung out headlong and hurled into a country they do not know?

²⁹Land, land, land! Hear the words of the LORD:

³⁰These are the words of the LORD: Write this man down as stripped of all honour, one who in his lifetime will not prosper, nor leave descendants to sit in prosperity on David's throne or rule again over Judah.

23¹Woe betide the shepherds who let the sheep of my flock scatter and be lost! says the LORD.

²Therefore these are the words of the LORD the God of Israel to the shepherds who tend my people: You have scattered and dispersed my flock. You have not watched over them; but I am watching you to punish you for your misdeeds, says the LORD.

³I myself shall gather the remnant of my sheep from all the lands to which I have dispersed them. I shall bring them back to their homes, and they will be fruitful and increase.

⁴I shall appoint shepherds who will tend them, so that never again will they know fear or dismay or punishment. This is the word of the LORD.

⁵The days are coming, says the LORD, when I shall make a righteous Branch spring from David's line, a king who will rule wisely, maintaining justice and right in the land.

⁶In his days Judah will be kept safe, and Israel will live undisturbed. This will be the name to be given to him: The LORD our Righteousness.

⁷Therefore the time is coming, says the LORD, when people will no longer swear by the life of the LORD who brought the Israelites up from Egypt;

⁸instead they will swear by the life of the LORD who brought the descendants of the Israelites back from a northern land and from all the lands to which he had dispersed them; and they will live on their own soil.

⁹Of the prophets: Within my breast my heart gives way, there is no strength in my bones; because of the LORD, because of his holy words, I have become like a drunken man, like one overcome by wine.

¹⁰For the land is full of adulterers, and because of them the earth lies parched, the open pastures have dried up. The

lives they lead are wicked, and the powers they possess are misused.

¹¹For prophet and priest alike are godless; even in my house I have witnessed their evil deeds. This is the word of the LORD.

¹²Therefore their path will turn slippery beneath their feet; they will be dispersed in the dark and fall headlong, for I shall bring disaster on them, their day of reckoning. This is the word of the LORD.

¹³Among the prophets of Samaria I found a lack of sense: they prophesied in Baal's name and led my people Israel astray.

¹⁴Among the prophets of Jerusalem I see a thing most horrible: adulterers and hypocrites. They encourage evildoers, so that no one turns back from sin; to me all her inhabitants are like those of Sodom and Gomorrah.

¹⁵These then are the words of the LORD of Hosts about the prophets: I shall give them wormwood to eat and bitter poison to drink; for from the prophets of Jerusalem a godless spirit has spread to the whole country.

¹⁶These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: Do not listen to what is prophesied to you by the prophets, who buoy you up with false hopes; they give voice to their own fancies; it is not the LORD's words they speak.

¹⁷They say to those who spurn the word of the LORD, Prosperity will be yours; and to all who follow their stubborn hearts they say, No harm will befall you.

¹⁸For which of them has stood in the council of the LORD, has been aware of his word and listened to it? Which of them has heeded his word and obeyed?

¹⁹See what a scorching wind has gone out from the LORD, a furious whirlwind which whirls round the heads of the wicked.

²⁰The LORD's anger is not to be turned aside, until he has fully accomplished his purposes. In days to come you will truly understand.

²¹I did not send these prophets, yet they went in haste; I did not speak to them, yet they prophesied.

²²But if they had stood in my council, they would have proclaimed my words

to my people and turned them from their evil ways and their evil doings.

²³Am I a God near at hand only, not a God when far away?

²⁴Can anyone hide in some secret place and I not see him? Do I not fill heaven and earth? This is the word of the LORD.

²⁵I have heard what the prophets say, the prophets who speak lies in my name; they cry, I have had a dream, I have had a dream!

²⁶How much longer will these prophets be minded to prophesy lies and give voice to their own inventions?

²⁷By these dreams which they tell one another they think they will make my people forget my name, just as their fathers forgot my name for the name of Baal.

²⁸If a prophet has a dream, let him tell his dream; if he has my word, let him speak my word faithfully. Chaff and grain are quite distinct, says the LORD.

²⁹Are not my words like fire, says the LORD; are they not like a hammer that shatters rock?

³⁰Therefore I am against those prophets, the impostors who steal my words from the others, says the LORD.

³¹I am against those prophets, says the LORD, who concoct words of their own and then say, This is his word.

³²I am against those prophets, says the LORD, who deal in false dreams and relate them to mislead my people with wild and reckless falsehoods. It was not I who sent them or commissioned them, and they will do this people no good service. This is the word of the LORD.

³³When you are asked by this people or by a prophet or a priest what is the burden of the LORD, you shall answer: You are the burden, and I shall throw you down, says the LORD.

³⁴If anyone, prophet, priest, or layman, mentions the LORD's burden, I shall punish that person and his family.

³⁵The form of words you shall use in speaking amongst yourselves is: What answer has the LORD given? or, What has the LORD said?

³⁶You must never again mention the burden of the LORD; for how can his word be a burden to anyone? But you

pervert the words of the living God, the LORD of Hosts our God.

³⁷ This is the form you are to use in speaking to a prophet: What answer has the LORD given? or, What has the LORD said?

³⁸ But to any of you who do say the burden of the LORD, the LORD speaks thus: Because you say the burden of the LORD, though I sent to tell you not to say it,

³⁹ therefore I myself shall carry you like a burden and throw you away out of my sight, both you and the city which I gave to you and to your forefathers.

⁴⁰ I shall inflict on you endless reproach, endless shame which will never be forgotten.

24¹ THIS is what the LORD showed me: I saw two baskets of figs set out in front of the temple of the LORD. This was after King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon had deported from Jerusalem Jeconiah son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, with the officers of Judah, the craftsmen, and the smiths, and taken them to Babylon.

²In one basket the figs were very good, like those that are first ripe; in the other the figs were very bad, so bad that they were not fit to eat.

³The LORD said to me, What are you looking at, Jeremiah? Figs, I answered, the good very good, and the bad so bad that they are not fit to eat.

⁴Then this word came to me from the LORD:

⁵These are the words of the LORD the God of Israel: I count the exiles of Judah whom I sent away from this place to the land of the Chaldeans as good as these good figs.

⁶I shall look to their welfare, and restore them to this land; I shall build them up and not pull them down, plant them and not uproot them.

⁷I shall give them the wit to know me, for I am the LORD; they will be my people and I shall be their God, for they will come back to me wholeheartedly.

⁸But King Zedekiah of Judah, his officers, and the survivors of Jerusalem, both those who remain in this land and those who have settled in Egypt -- all

these I shall treat as bad figs, says the LORD, so bad that they are not fit to eat.

⁹I shall make them abhorrent to all the kingdoms of the earth, a reproach, a byword, an object of taunting and cursing wherever I banish them.

¹⁰I shall send sword, famine, and pestilence against them until they have vanished from the land which I gave to them and to their forefathers.

25¹This came to Jeremiah as the word concerning all the people of Judah in the fourth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah, which was the first year of King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon.

²This is what the prophet Jeremiah said to all Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem:

³For twenty-three years, from the thirteenth year of Josiah son of Amon, king of Judah, up to the present day, I have been receiving the words of the LORD and speaking to you again and again, but you would not listen.

⁴Again and again the LORD has sent you all his servants the prophets, but you

would not listen or show any inclination to listen.

⁵He promised that if each of you would turn from his wicked ways and evil conduct, then you would live for ever on the soil which the LORD gave to you and to your forefathers.

⁶You must not follow other gods, serving and worshipping them, nor must you provoke me to anger with the idols your hands have made; then I shall not harm you.

⁷But you would not listen to me, says the LORD; you provoked me to anger with the idols your hands had made and so brought harm upon yourselves.

⁸Therefore these are the words of the LORD of Hosts: Because you have not listened to my words,

⁹I shall summon all the tribes of the north, says the LORD, and I shall send for my servant King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon. I shall bring them against this land and all its inhabitants and against all these nations round it; I shall exterminate them and make them an object of horror and astonishment, ruined for ever.

¹⁰I shall silence every sound of joy and gladness among them, the voices of bridegroom and bride, and the sound of the handmill; the light of every lamp will be quenched.

¹¹For seventy years this whole country will be a ruin, an object of horror, and these nations will be in subjection to the king of Babylon.

¹²When the seventy years are up, I shall punish the king of Babylon and his people, says the LORD, for all their misdeeds, and make the land of the Chaldeans a waste for ever.

¹³I shall bring on that country all I have pronounced against it, all that is written in this scroll, all that Jeremiah has prophesied against all the nations.

¹⁴Mighty nations and great kings will reduce them to servitude, and thus I shall requite them for their actions and their deeds.

¹⁵These were the words of the LORD the God of Israel to me: Receive from my hand this cup of the wine of wrath, and make all the nations to whom I send you drink from it.

¹⁶When they have drunk they will vomit and become crazed; such is the sword which I am sending among them.

¹⁷I took the cup from the LORD's hand and made all the nations to whom he sent me drink it:

¹⁸Jerusalem and the towns of Judah, its kings and officers, turning them into a ruin, an object of horror, derision, and cursing, as they still are;

¹⁹Pharaoh king of Egypt, his courtiers, his officers, all his people,

²⁰and all his mixed crowd of followers, all the kings of the land of Uz, all the kings of the Philistines, of Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron, and the remnant of Ashdod;

²¹also Edom, Moab, and the Ammonites,

²²all the kings of Tyre, of Sidon, and of the overseas coastlands;

²³also Dedan, Tema, Buz, and all who live in the fringes of the desert,

²⁴all the kings of Arabia living in the desert,

²⁵all the kings of Zimri, of Elam, and of the Medes,

²⁶all the kings of the north, neighbours or distant from each other -- all the kingdoms on the face of the earth. Last of all the king of Sheshak will have to drink.

²⁷Say to them: These are the words of the LORD of Hosts the God of Israel: Drink this, get drunk, and be sick; fall down, never to rise again, because of the sword I am sending among you.

²⁸If they refuse to accept the cup from you and to drink, say to them: These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: Most certainly you are to drink.

²⁹I shall first punish the city which bears my name; do you think that you can be exempt? No, you will not be exempt, for I am summoning a sword against all the inhabitants of the earth. This is the word of the LORD of Hosts.

³⁰Prophecy to them and tell them all I have said: The LORD roars from on high, he thunders from his holy dwelling-place. He roars loudly against his land; like those who tread the grapes he utters a shout against all the inhabitants of the land.

³¹ The great noise reaches to the ends of the earth, for the LORD brings a charge against the nations; he arraigns all mankind and has handed the wicked over to the sword. This is the word of the LORD.

³² These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: Ruin spreads from nation to nation, a mighty tempest is blowing up from the far corners of the earth.

³³ Those whom the LORD has slain on that day will lie scattered from one end of the earth to the other; they will not be mourned or taken up for burial; they will be dung spread over the ground.

³⁴ Wail, you shepherds, cry aloud, sprinkle yourselves with ashes, you masters of the flock. It is your time to go to the slaughter, and you will fall like fine rams.

³⁵ The shepherds will have nowhere to flee, the flockmasters no way of escape.

³⁶ The shepherds cry out, the flockmasters wail, for the LORD is ravaging their pasture,

³⁷ and their peaceful homesteads lie in ruins beneath the LORD's fierce anger.

³⁸They flee like a young lion abandoning his lair, for the land has become a waste under the sword of the oppressor and the fierce anger of the LORD.

26 ¹AT the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came from the LORD:

²These are the words of the LORD: Stand in the court of the LORD's house and speak to the inhabitants of all the towns of Judah who come to worship there. Tell them everything that I charge you to say to them; do not cut it short by one word.

³Perhaps they may listen, and everyone may turn back from evil ways. If they do, I shall relent, and give up my plan to bring disaster on them for their evil deeds.

⁴Say to them: These are the words of the LORD: If you do not obey me, if you do not live according to the law I have set before you,

⁵and listen to the words of my servants the prophets, whom again and again I have been sending to you, though you have never listened to them,

⁶ then I shall do to this house as I did to Shiloh, and make this city an object of cursing to all nations on earth.

⁷ The priests, the prophets, and all the people heard Jeremiah say this in the LORD's house

⁸ and, when he came to the end of what the LORD had charged him to say to them, the priests and prophets and all the people seized him and threatened him with death.

⁹ Why, they demanded, do you prophesy in the LORD's name that this house will become like Shiloh and this city an uninhabited ruin? The people all crowded round Jeremiah in the LORD's house.

¹⁰ When the chief officers of Judah heard what was happening, they went up from the royal palace to the LORD's house and took their places there at the entrance of the New Gate.

¹¹ The priests and the prophets said to the officers and all the people, This man deserves to be condemned to death, because he has prophesied against this city, as you yourselves have heard.

¹² Then Jeremiah said to all the officers and people, The LORD it was who sent

me to prophesy against this house and this city all the things you have heard.

¹³Now, if you mend your ways and your actions and obey the LORD your God, he may relent and revoke the disaster which he has pronounced against you.

¹⁴But here I am in your hands; do with me whatever you think right and proper.

¹⁵Only you may be certain that, if you put me to death, you and this city and those who live in it will be guilty of murdering an innocent man; for truly it was the LORD who sent me to you to say all this to you.

¹⁶The officers and all the people then said to the priests and the prophets, This man ought not to be condemned to death, for he has spoken to us in the name of the LORD our God.

¹⁷Some of the elders of the land also stood up and said to the whole assembled people,

¹⁸In the time of King Hezekiah of Judah, Micah of Moresheth was prophesying and said to all the people of Judah: These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: Zion will become a ploughed field, Jerusalem a

heap of ruins, and the temple hill rough heath.

¹⁹Did King Hezekiah and all Judah put him to death? Did not the king show reverence for the LORD and seek to placate him, so that the LORD relented and revoked the disaster which he had pronounced on them? But we are on the point of inflicting great disaster on ourselves.

²⁰There was another man too who prophesied in the name of the LORD: Uriah son of Shemaiah, from Kiriath-jearim. He prophesied against this city and this land, just as Jeremiah had done.

²¹King Jehoiakim with his bodyguard and all his officers heard what he said and sought to put him to death. On hearing of this, Uriah fled in fear to Egypt.

²²King Jehoiakim dispatched Elnathan son of Akbor with some others

²³to fetch Uriah from Egypt. When they brought him to the king, he had him put to the sword and his body flung into the burial-place of the common people.

²⁴But Ahikam son of Shaphan used his influence on Jeremiah's behalf to

save him from death at the hands of the people.

27 ¹ AT the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from the LORD:

² These are the words of the LORD to me: Take the cords and crossbars of a yoke and put them on your neck.

³ Then send to the kings of Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, and Sidon by their envoys who have come to King Zedekiah of Judah in Jerusalem,

⁴ and give them the following message for their masters: These are the words of the LORD of Hosts the God of Israel: Say to your masters:

⁵ It was I who by my great power and outstretched arm made the earth, along with mankind and the animals all over the earth, and I give it to whom I see fit.

⁶ Now I have handed over all these lands to my servant King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, and I have given him even the creatures of the wild to serve him.

⁷ All nations will serve him, his son, and his grandson, until the destined hour of

his own land comes; mighty nations and great kings will be subject to him.

⁸If any nation or kingdom will not serve King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon or submit to his yoke, I shall punish them with sword, famine, and pestilence, says the LORD, until I have ensured their destruction at his hand.

⁹Therefore do not listen to your prophets, your diviners, your women dreamers, your soothsayers, and your sorcerers who keep on saying to you that you will not become subject to the king of Babylon.

¹⁰Their prophecy to you is a lie; you will be carried away far from your native soil, and I shall banish you and you will perish.

¹¹But the nation which submits to the yoke of the king of Babylon and serves him I shall leave on their own soil, says the LORD; they will cultivate it and live there.

¹²My message to King Zedekiah of Judah is no different: If you will submit to the yoke of the king of Babylon and serve him and his people, then you will save your lives.

¹³Why should you and your people die by sword, famine, and pestilence, the fate with which the LORD has threatened any nation which does not serve the king of Babylon?

¹⁴Do not listen to the prophets who say to you that you will not become subject to the king of Babylon. Their prophecy to you is a lie.

¹⁵I have not sent them, says the LORD; they are prophesying falsely in my name; I shall banish you and you will perish, you and the prophets who prophesy to you.

¹⁶I said to the priests and all this people: These are the words of the LORD: Do not listen to your prophets who tell you that very shortly the vessels of the LORD's house will be brought back from Babylon. Their prophecy to you is a lie.

¹⁷Do not listen to them; serve the king of Babylon, and save your lives. Why should this city become a ruin?

¹⁸If they are really prophets and have the word of the LORD, let them intercede with the LORD of Hosts to grant that the things still left in the LORD's house, in

the royal palace, and in Jerusalem, may not be carried off to Babylon.

¹⁹For these are the words of the LORD of Hosts about the pillars, the Sea, the trolleys, and all the other furnishings still left in this city,

²⁰which King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon did not take when he deported Jeconiah son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, from Jerusalem to Babylon, together with all the nobles of Judah and Jerusalem.

²¹These are the words of the LORD of Hosts the God of Israel about everything still left in the LORD's house, in the royal palace, and in Jerusalem:

²²They will be carried off to Babylon and remain there until I recall them, says the LORD; then I shall bring them back and restore them to this place.

28¹That same year, at the beginning of the reign of King Zedekiah of Judah in the fifth month of the first year, Hananiah son of Azzur, the prophet from Gibeon, said to Jeremiah in the house of the LORD before the priests and all the people,

²These are the words of the LORD of Hosts the God of Israel: I shall break the yoke of the king of Babylon.

³Within two years I shall restore to this place everything which King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon took from the LORD's house and carried off to Babylon.

⁴I shall also bring back to this place, says the LORD, Jeconiah son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and all the Judaeans exiles who went to Babylon; for I shall break the yoke of the king of Babylon.

⁵The prophet Jeremiah gave this reply to Hananiah the prophet in the presence of the priests and all the people standing there in the LORD's house:

⁶May it be so! May the LORD indeed do this: may he fulfil all that you have prophesied, by bringing back the furnishings of the LORD's house together with all the exiles from Babylon to this place!

⁷Only hear what I have to say to you and to all the people:

⁸The prophets who preceded you and me from earliest times have foretold war,

famine, and pestilence for many lands and for great kingdoms.

⁹If a prophet foretells prosperity, it will be known that the LORD has sent him only when his words come true.

¹⁰Then the prophet Hananiah took the yoke from the neck of the prophet Jeremiah and broke it,

¹¹announcing to all the people, These are the words of the LORD: So shall I break the yoke of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon; I shall break it off the necks of all nations within two years. Then the prophet Jeremiah went his way.

¹²After Hananiah had broken the yoke which had been on Jeremiah's neck, the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah:

¹³Go and say to Hananiah: These are the words of the LORD: You have broken bars of wood; in their place you will get bars of iron.

¹⁴For these are the words of the LORD of Hosts the God of Israel: I shall lay an iron yoke on the necks of all these nations, making them serve King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. They will be enslaved to him. I have given him even the creatures of the wild.

¹⁵Then Jeremiah said to Hananiah, Listen, Hananiah. The LORD never sent you, and you have led this nation to trust in false prophecies.

¹⁶Therefore these are the words of the LORD: I shall remove you from the face of the earth; within a year you will die, because you have preached rebellion against the LORD.

¹⁷The prophet Hananiah died in the seventh month of that same year.

29¹Jeremiah sent a letter from Jerusalem to the elders who were left among the exiles, to the priests, prophets, and all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had deported from Jerusalem to Babylon,

²after King Jeconiah, with the queen mother and the eunuchs, the officers of Judah and Jerusalem, the craftsmen, and the smiths, had left Jerusalem.

³The prophet entrusted the letter to Elasah son of Shaphan and Gemariah son of Hilkiah, whom King Zedekiah of Judah had sent to Babylon to King Nebuchadnezzar. This is what he wrote:

⁴These are the words of the LORD of Hosts the God of Israel: To all the exiles

whom I deported from Jerusalem to Babylon:

⁵Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat the produce;

⁶marry wives and rear families; choose wives for your sons and give your daughters to husbands, so that they may bear sons and daughters. Increase there and do not dwindle away.

⁷Seek the welfare of any city to which I have exiled you, and pray to the LORD for it; on its welfare your welfare will depend.

⁸For these are the words of the LORD of Hosts the God of Israel: Do not be deceived by the prophets and diviners among you, and pay no attention to the women whom you set to dream dreams.

⁹They prophesy falsely to you in my name; I did not send them. This is the word of the LORD.

¹⁰These are the words of the LORD: When a full seventy years have passed over Babylon, I shall take up your cause and make good my promise to bring you back to this place.

¹¹I alone know my purpose for you, says the LORD: wellbeing and

not misfortune, and a long line of descendants after you.

¹²If you invoke me and come and pray to me, I shall listen to you:

¹³when you seek me, you will find me; if you search wholeheartedly,

¹⁴I shall let you find me, says the LORD. I shall restore your fortunes; I shall gather you from all the nations and all the places to which I have banished you, says the LORD, and restore you to the place from which I carried you into exile.

¹⁵You say that the LORD has raised up prophets for you in Babylon.

¹⁶These are the words of the LORD concerning the king who sits on the throne of David and all the people who live in this city, your fellow-countrymen who have not gone into exile with you.

¹⁷These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: I am bringing sword, famine, and pestilence on them, making them like rotten figs, too bad to eat.

¹⁸I shall pursue them with sword, famine, and pestilence, and make them abhorrent to all the kingdoms of the earth, an object of execration and horror,

of derision and reproach among all the nations to which I have banished them.

¹⁹Just as they did not listen to my words, says the LORD, when time and again I sent my servants the prophets, so you did not listen, says the LORD.

²⁰But now listen to the words of the LORD, all you exiles whom I have sent from Jerusalem to Babylon.

²¹These are the words of the LORD of Hosts the God of Israel about Ahab son of Kolaiah and Zedekiah son of Maaseiah, who prophesy lies to you in my name. I am handing them over to King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, and he will put them to death before your eyes.

²²Their names will be used by all the exiles of Judah in Babylon when they curse anyone; they will say: May the LORD treat you like Zedekiah and Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted to death in the fire!

²³For their conduct in Israel was an outrage: they committed adultery with their neighbours' wives, and prophesied in my name without my authority, and what they prophesied was false. I am he

who knows and can testify. This is the word of the LORD.

²⁴To Shemaiah the Nehelamite.

²⁵These are the words of the LORD of Hosts the God of Israel: You have sent a letter on your own authority to Zephaniah son of Maaseiah the priest, in which you say:

²⁶The LORD has appointed you to be priest in place of Jehoiada the priest, and it is your duty, as officer in charge of the LORD's house, to put every crazy person who poses as a prophet into the stocks and the pillory.

²⁷Why, then, have you not restrained Jeremiah of Anathoth, who acts the prophet among you?

²⁸On the strength of this he has sent us a message in Babylon to say, Your exile will be long; build houses and live in them, plant gardens and eat their produce.

²⁹When Zephaniah the priest read this letter to Jeremiah the prophet,

³⁰this word of the LORD came to Jeremiah:

³¹Send and tell all the exiles that these are the words of the LORD concerning

Shemaiah the Nehelamite: Because Shemaiah has prophesied to you, though I did not send him, and has led you to trust in false prophecies,

³²these are now the words of the LORD: I shall punish Shemaiah and his posterity. He will leave no one to take his place in this nation and witness the wellbeing which I shall bestow on my people, says the LORD, because he has urged rebellion against me.

30¹THE word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD.

²These are the words of the LORD the God of Israel: Write on a scroll all that I have said to you.

³The time is coming when I shall restore the fortunes of my people, both Israel and Judah, says the LORD, and bring them back to take possession of the land which I gave to their ancestors.

⁴This is what the LORD has said to Israel and Judah.

⁵These are the words of the LORD: We have heard a cry of terror, of fear without relief.

⁶Enquire and see: can a man bear a child? Why then do I see every man

gripping his sides like a woman in labour? Why has every face turned deadly pale?

⁷How awful is that day: when has there been its like? A time of anguish for Jacob, yet he will come through it safely.

⁸On that day, says the LORD of Hosts, I shall break their yoke off their necks and snap their cords; foreigners will no longer reduce them to servitude;

⁹they will serve the LORD their God and David their king, whom I shall raise up for them.

¹⁰But do not be afraid, Jacob my servant; Israel, do not despair, says the LORD. For I shall bring you back safe from afar, and your posterity from the land where they are captives. Jacob will be at rest once more, secure and untroubled.

¹¹For I am with you to save you, says the LORD. I shall make an end of all the nations among whom I have dispersed you, but I shall not make an end of you. I shall discipline you only as you deserve, I shall not leave you wholly unpunished.

¹²For these are the words of the LORD to Zion: Your wound is past healing; the blow you suffered was cruel.

¹³There can be no remedy for your sore; the new skin cannot grow.

¹⁴All your friends have forgotten you; they look for you no longer. I have struck you down as an enemy strikes, and have punished you cruelly, because of your great wickedness, your flagrant sins.

¹⁵Why complain of your injury, that your sore cannot be healed? Because of your great wickedness, your flagrant sins, I have done this to you.

¹⁶Yet all who devoured you will themselves be devoured; all your oppressors will go into captivity; those who plunder you will be plundered, and those who despoil you I shall give up to be spoiled.

¹⁷I shall cause the new skin to grow and heal your wounds, says the LORD, although you are called outcast, Zion, forsaken by all.

¹⁸These are the words of the LORD: I shall restore the fortunes of Jacob's clans and show my love for his dwellings. Every city will be rebuilt on its own

mound, every mansion will occupy its traditional site.

¹⁹From them praise will be heard and sounds of merrymaking. I shall increase them, they will not diminish; I shall raise them to honour, no longer to be despised.

²⁰Their children will be what once they were, and their community will be established in my sight. I shall punish all their oppressors.

²¹A ruler will appear, one of themselves; a governor will arise from their own number. I shall myself bring him near and let him approach me, for who dare risk his life by approaching me? says the LORD.

²²So you will be my people, and I shall be your God.

²³See what a scorching wind has gone out from the LORD, a sweeping whirlwind which whirls round the heads of the wicked.

²⁴The LORD's fierce anger is not to be turned aside until he has fully accomplished his purposes. In days to come you will understand.

31 ¹ At that time, says the LORD, I shall be the God of all the families of Israel, and they will be my people.

² These are the words of the LORD: A people that escaped the sword found favour in the wilderness. The LORD went to give rest to Israel;

³ from afar he appeared to them: I have dearly loved you from of old, and still I maintain my unflinching care for you.

⁴ Virgin Israel, I shall build you up again, and you will be rebuilt. Again you will provide yourself with tambourines, and go forth with the merry throng of dancers.

⁵ Again you will plant vineyards on the hills of Samaria, and those who plant them will enjoy the fruit;

⁶ for a day will come when the watchmen cry out on Ephraim's hills, Come, let us go up to Zion, to the LORD our God.

⁷ For these are the words of the LORD: Break into shouts of joy for Jacob's sake, lead the nations, crying loud and clear, sing out your praises and say: The LORD has saved his people; he has preserved a remnant of Israel.

⁸See how I bring them from a northern land; I shall gather them from the far ends of the earth, among them the blind and lame, the woman with child and the woman in labour. A vast company,

⁹they come home, weeping as they come, but I shall comfort them and be their escort. I shall lead them by streams of water; their path will be smooth, they will not stumble. For I have become a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my eldest son.

¹⁰Listen to the word of the LORD, you nations, announce it, make it known to coastlands far away: He who scattered Israel will gather them again and watch over them as a shepherd watches his flock.

¹¹For the LORD has delivered Jacob and redeemed him from a foe too strong for him.

¹²They will come with shouts of joy to Zion's height, radiant at the bounty of the LORD: the grain, the new wine, and the oil, the young of flock and herd. They will be like a well-watered garden and never languish again.

¹³Girls will then dance for joy, and men young and old will rejoice; I shall turn their grief into gladness, comfort them, and give them joy after sorrow.

¹⁴I shall satisfy the priests with the fat of the land and my people will have their fill of my bounty. This is the word of the LORD.

¹⁵These are the words of the LORD: Lamentation is heard in Ramah, and bitter weeping: Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.

¹⁶These are the words of the LORD to her: Cease your weeping, shed no more tears; for there will be a reward for your toil, and they will return from the enemy's land.

¹⁷There will be hope for your posterity; your children will return within their own borders.

¹⁸I listened intently; Ephraim was rocking in his grief: I was like a calf unbroken to the yoke; you disciplined me, and I accepted your discipline. Bring me back and let me return, for you are the LORD my God.

¹⁹Though I broke away I have repented: now that I am submissive I beat my breast; in shame and remorse I reproach myself for the sins of my youth.

²⁰Is Ephraim still so dear a son to me, a child in whom I so delight that, as often as I speak against him, I must think of him again? Therefore my heart yearns for him; I am filled with tenderness towards him. This is the word of the LORD.

²¹Build cairns to mark your way, set up signposts; make sure of the road, the path which you will tread. Come back, virgin Israel, come back to your cities and towns.

²²How long will you waver, my wayward child? For the LORD has created a new thing in the earth: a woman will play a man's part.

²³These are the words of the LORD of Hosts the God of Israel: Once more will these words be heard in the land of Judah and in her towns, when I restore their fortunes: The LORD bless you, abode of righteousness, holy mountain.

²⁴ Ploughmen and shepherds with their flocks will live together in Judah and all her towns.

²⁵ For I have given deep draughts to the thirsty, and satisfied those who were faint with hunger.

²⁶ Thereupon I woke and looked about me, and my sleep had been pleasant.

²⁷ The days are coming, says the LORD, when I shall sow Israel and Judah with the seed of man and the seed of cattle.

²⁸ As I watched over them with intent to pull down and to uproot, to demolish and destroy and inflict disaster, so now I shall watch over them to build and to plant. This is the word of the LORD.

²⁹ In those days it will no longer be said, Parents have eaten sour grapes and the children's teeth are set on edge;

³⁰ for everyone will die for his own wrongdoing; he who eats the sour grapes will find his own teeth set on edge.

³¹ The days are coming, says the LORD, when I shall establish a new covenant with the people of Israel and Judah.

³² It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them

by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, a covenant they broke, though I was patient with them, says the LORD.

³³For this is the covenant I shall establish with the Israelites after those days, says the LORD: I shall set my law within them, writing it on their hearts; I shall be their God, and they will be my people.

³⁴No longer need they teach one another, neighbour or brother, to know the LORD; all of them, high and low alike, will know me, says the LORD, for I shall forgive their wrongdoing, and their sin I shall call to mind no more.

³⁵These are the words of the LORD, who gave the sun for a light by day and the moon and stars in their courses for a light by night, who cleft the sea and its waves roared; the LORD of Hosts is his name.

³⁶Israel could no more cease to be a nation in my sight, says the LORD, than could this fixed order vanish before my eyes.

³⁷These are the words of the LORD: I could no more spurn the whole of Israel because of what they have done,

than anyone could measure the heaven above or fathom the depths of the earth beneath. This is the word of the LORD.

³⁸The days are coming, says the LORD, when Jerusalem will be rebuilt in the LORD's honour from the Tower of Hananel to the Corner Gate.

³⁹The measuring line will then be laid straight out over the hill of Gareb and round Goath.

⁴⁰All the valley and every field as far as the wadi Kidron to the corner by the Horse Gate eastwards will be holy to the LORD. Never again will it be pulled down or demolished.

32¹The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD in the tenth year of King Zedekiah of Judah, which was the eighteenth year of Nebuchadrezzar.

²At that time the forces of the Babylonian king were besieging Jerusalem, and the prophet Jeremiah was imprisoned in the court of the guardhouse attached to the royal palace.

³King Zedekiah had imprisoned him after demanding what he meant by this prophecy: These are the words of

the LORD: I shall give this city into the power of the king of Babylon, and he will capture it.

⁴Nor will King Zedekiah of Judah escape from the Chaldeans; he will be surrendered to the king of Babylon and will speak with him face to face and see him with his own eyes.

⁵Zedekiah will be taken to Babylon and will remain there until the day I visit him, says the LORD. However much you fight against the Chaldeans you will have no success.

⁶Jeremiah said: This word of the LORD came to me:

⁷Hanamel son of your uncle Shallum is coming to you; he will say, Buy my field at Anathoth; as next-of-kin you have the right of redemption to buy it.

⁸Just as the LORD had foretold, my cousin Hanamel came to me in the court of the guardhouse and said, Buy my field at Anathoth in Benjamin. You have the right of redemption and possession as next-of-kin, so buy it for yourself. I recognized that this instruction came from the LORD,

⁹so I bought the field at Anathoth from my cousin Hanamel and weighed out the price for him, seventeen shekels of silver.

¹⁰I signed and sealed the deed, had it witnessed, and then weighed the money on the scales.

¹¹I took my copies of the deed of purchase, both the sealed and the unsealed copies,

¹²and handed them over to Baruch son of Neriah, son of Mahseiah, in the presence of Hanamel my cousin and the witnesses whose names were subscribed on the deed of purchase, and of the Judaeans sitting in the court of the guardhouse.

¹³In their presence I gave my instructions to Baruch:

¹⁴These are the words of the LORD of Hosts the God of Israel: Take these copies of the deed of purchase, both the sealed and the unsealed copies, and deposit them in an earthenware jar so that they may be preserved for a long time to come.

¹⁵For these are the words of the LORD of Hosts the God of Israel: Houses,

fields, and vineyards will again be bought and sold in this land.

¹⁶After I handed over the deed of purchase to Baruch son of Neriah, I offered this prayer to the LORD:

¹⁷Lord GOD, maker of the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm, nothing is impossible for you.

¹⁸You keep faith with thousands but punish the children for the sins of their fathers. Great and mighty God whose name is the LORD of Hosts,

¹⁹great in purpose and mighty in action, your eyes watch all the ways of mortals, rewarding each according to his conduct and as his deeds deserve.

²⁰You worked signs and portents in Egypt and have continued them to this day, both in Israel and among all mankind, and have won for yourself renown that lives on to this day.

²¹You brought your people Israel out of Egypt amid signs and portents, with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, and with great terror.

²²You gave them this land which you promised with an oath to their

forefathers, a land flowing with milk and honey.

²³They came and took possession of it, but they did not obey you or follow your law; they did not perform all you commanded them to do, and so you have brought on them this whole disaster:

²⁴siege-ramps, and men advancing to take the city; and the city, victim of sword, famine, and pestilence, is given over to the attacking Chaldeans. What you threatened has come true, as you see.

²⁵And yet, Lord GOD, you have bidden me buy the field and have the deed witnessed, even though the city is to be given into the power of the Chaldeans!

²⁶These are the words of the LORD to Jeremiah:

²⁷I am the LORD, the God of all mankind; is anything impossible for me?

²⁸Therefore these are the words of the LORD: I am about to give this city into the hands of the Chaldeans and of King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, and he will take it.

²⁹The Chaldeans assailing this city will enter and set it on fire; they will burn

it down, together with the houses on whose roofs sacrifices have been burnt to Baal and drink-offerings poured out to other gods, by which I was provoked to anger.

³⁰From their earliest days Israel and Judah have been doing what is wrong in my eyes, provoking me to anger by their idolatry, says the LORD.

³¹For this city has so roused my anger and my fury, from the time it was built down to this day, that I mean to rid myself of it.

³²Israel and Judah, their kings, officers, priests, prophets, and the people of Judah and the citizens of Jerusalem, have provoked me to anger by their wrongdoing.

³³They have turned their backs on me and averted their faces; though I taught them again and again, they would not hear or learn their lesson.

³⁴They set up their loathsome idols in the house which bears my name and so defiled it.

³⁵They built shrines to Baal in the valley of Ben-hinnom, at which to offer up their sons and daughters to Molech. That was

no command of mine to them, nor did it ever enter my mind that they should do this abominable thing, so causing Judah to sin.

³⁶Now, therefore, these are the words of the LORD the God of Israel to this city of which you say, It is being given over to the king of Babylon, by sword, famine, and pestilence:

³⁷I shall gather them from all the lands to which I banished them in my furious anger and great wrath; I shall bring them back to this place and let them dwell there undisturbed.

³⁸They will be my people and I shall be their God.

³⁹I shall give them singleness of heart and one way of life so that they will fear me at all times, for their own good and the good of their children after them.

⁴⁰I shall enter into an everlasting covenant with them, to follow them unfailingly with my bounty; I shall put fear of me into their hearts, and so they will not turn away from me.

⁴¹It will be a joy to me to do them good, and faithfully with all my heart and soul I shall plant them in this land.

⁴²For these are the words of the LORD: As I brought upon this people all this great disaster, so shall I bring them all the prosperity which I now promise them.

⁴³Fields will again be bought and sold in this land of which you now say, It is a desolation abandoned by man and beast; it is given over to the Chaldaeans.

⁴⁴Fields will be bought and sold, deeds signed, sealed, and witnessed, in Benjamin, in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, in the towns of Judah, of the hill-country, of the Shephelah, and of the Negeb; for I shall restore their fortunes. This is the word of the LORD.

33¹The word of the LORD came to Jeremiah a second time while he was still imprisoned in the court of the guardhouse:

²These are the words of the LORD who made the earth, who formed and established it; the LORD is his name:

³If you call to me I shall answer, and tell you great and mysterious things of which you are still unaware.

⁴These are the words of the LORD the God of Israel about the houses in

this city and the royal palaces of Judah which are razed to the ground, about siege-ramp and sword,

⁵and the Chaldaean attackers who leave the houses full of corpses: I struck them down in anger and rage, and hid my face from this city because of all their wicked ways.

⁶Now I shall bring healing and care for her; I shall cure Judah and Israel, and let them see lasting peace and security.

⁷I shall restore their fortunes and rebuild them as once they were.

⁸I shall cleanse them of all the wickedness and sin that they have committed, and forgive all the evil deeds they have done in rebellion against me.

⁹This city will win me renown and praise and glory before all the nations of the world, as they hear of all the blessings I bestow on her; and they will be filled with awe and deeply moved because of all the blessings and the prosperity which I bring on her.

¹⁰These are the words of the LORD: You say of this place, It lies in ruins, without people or animals throughout the towns of Judah and the streets of

Jerusalem. It is all a waste, inhabited by neither man nor beast.

¹¹ Yet in this place will be heard once more the sounds of joy and gladness, the voices of bridegroom and bride; here too will be heard voices shouting, Praise the LORD of Hosts, for the LORD is good; his love endures for ever, as they offer praise and thanksgiving in the house of the LORD. For I shall restore the fortunes of the land as once they were. This is the word of the LORD.

¹² These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: In this place and in all its towns, now ruined and devoid of both people and animals, there will once more be sheepfolds where shepherds may keep their flocks.

¹³ In the towns of the hill-country, of the Shephelah, of the Negeb, in Benjamin, in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem and the towns of Judah, flocks will once more pass under the shepherd's hand as he counts them. This is the word of the LORD.

¹⁴ The days are coming, says the LORD, when I shall bestow on Israel and Judah all the blessings I have promised them.

¹⁵In those days, at that time, I shall make a righteous Branch spring from David's line; he will maintain law and justice in the land.

¹⁶In those days Judah will be kept safe and Jerusalem will live undisturbed. This will be the name given to him: The LORD our Righteousness.

¹⁷For these are the words of the LORD: David will never lack a successor on the throne of Israel,

¹⁸nor will there ever be lacking a levitical priest to present whole-offerings, to burn grain-offerings, and to make other offerings every day.

¹⁹This word came from the LORD to Jeremiah:

²⁰These are the words of the LORD: It would be as unthinkable to annul the covenant that I made for the day and the night, so that they should fall out of their proper order,

²¹as to annul my covenant with my servant David, so that he would have none of his line to sit on his throne; likewise it would be unthinkable to annul my covenant with the levitical priests who minister to me.

²² Like the innumerable host of heaven or the countless sands of the sea, I shall increase the descendants of my servant David and the Levites who minister to me.

²³ The word of the LORD came to Jeremiah:

²⁴ Have you not observed how this people have said, It is the two families whom he chose that the LORD has rejected? So others will despise my people and no longer regard them as a nation.

²⁵ These are the words of the LORD: If there were no covenant for day and night, and if I had not established a fixed order in heaven and earth,

²⁶ then I could spurn the descendants of Jacob and of my servant David, and not take any of David's line to be rulers over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. But in my compassion I shall restore their fortunes.

34 ¹ THE word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD when King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon and his whole army, along with all his vassal

kingdoms and nations, were attacking Jerusalem and all her towns.

²These are the words of the LORD the God of Israel: Go and say to King Zedekiah of Judah: These are the words of the LORD: I shall hand over this city to the king of Babylon and he will burn it to the ground.

³You yourself will not escape; your capture is certain, and you will be delivered into his hands. You will see him with your own eyes, and he will speak to you face to face, and you will go to Babylon.

⁴But listen to the LORD's word to you, King Zedekiah of Judah. This is his word: You will not die by the sword;

⁵you will die a peaceful death, and they will kindle funeral fires in your honour like the fires kindled in former times for the kings your ancestors who preceded you. Alas, my lord! they will say as they beat their breasts in mourning for you. It is a promise I have made. This is the word of the LORD.

⁶The prophet Jeremiah repeated all this to King Zedekiah of Judah in Jerusalem

⁷ while the army of the king of Babylon was attacking Jerusalem and the remaining towns in Judah, namely Lachish and Azekah, the only fortified towns left there.

⁸ The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD after King Zedekiah had entered into an agreement with all the people in Jerusalem to proclaim freedom for their slaves:

⁹ everyone who had Hebrew slaves, male or female, was to set them free; no one was to keep a fellow-Jew in servitude.

¹⁰ All the officers and people, having entered this agreement to set free their slaves, both male and female, and not to keep them in servitude any longer, fulfilled its terms and let them go.

¹¹ Afterwards, however, they changed their minds and forced back again into slavery the men and women whom they had freed.

¹² Then this word came from the LORD to Jeremiah:

¹³ These are the words of the LORD the God of Israel: I made a covenant with your forefathers when I brought them

out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.
These were its terms:

¹⁴Within seven years each of you must liberate any Hebrew who has sold himself to you as a slave and has served you for six years. Your forefathers did not listen to me or obey me,

¹⁵but recently you proclaimed freedom for the slaves and made an agreement in my presence, in the house that bears my name, and so did what is right in my eyes.

¹⁶Now, however, you have renounced this agreement and profaned my name by taking back the slaves you had set free and forcing them all, both male and female, to become your slaves again.

¹⁷Therefore these are the words of the LORD: After you had proclaimed freedom, a deliverance for your kinsmen and your neighbours, you did not obey me; so I shall proclaim a deliverance for you, says the LORD, a deliverance to sword, pestilence, and famine, and I shall make you abhorrent to all the kingdoms of the earth.

¹⁸You have violated my covenant and have not fulfilled the terms to which you

yourselves had agreed before me; so I shall treat you like the calf which was cut in two for all to pass between the pieces,
¹⁹ the officers of Judah and Jerusalem, the eunuchs and priests, and all the people of the land.

²⁰ I shall give them up to their enemies who seek their lives; their dead bodies will be food for birds of prey and wild beasts.

²¹ I shall deliver King Zedekiah of Judah and his officers to their enemies who seek their lives and to the army of the king of Babylon, which is now raising the siege.

²² I shall give the command, says the LORD, and bring them back to this city. They will attack it, capture it, and burn it to the ground. I shall make the towns and cities of Judah desolate and unpeopled.

35 ¹ This is the word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD in the days of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah:

² Go and speak to the Rechabites; bring them to one of the rooms in the house of the LORD and offer them wine to drink.

³So I fetched Jaazaniah son of Jeremiah, son of Habazziniah, with his brothers and all his sons, the whole Rechabite family.

⁴I brought them into the house of the LORD to the room of the sons of Hanan son of Igdaliah, the man of God; this adjoins the officers' room above that of Maaseiah son of Shallum, the keeper of the threshold.

⁵I set bowls full of wine and drinking-cups before the Rechabites and invited them to drink;

⁶but they said, We never drink wine, for our forefather Jonadab son of Rechab laid this charge on us: You must never drink wine, neither you nor your children.

⁷Do not build houses or sow seed or plant vineyards; you are to have none of these things. Instead, you are to remain tent-dwellers all your days, so that you may live long on the soil where you are sojourners.

⁸We have honoured all the commands of our forefather Jonadab son of Rechab and have drunk no wine all our lives, neither we, nor our wives, nor our sons, nor our daughters.

⁹We have not built houses to live in, nor have we possessed vineyards or sown fields;

¹⁰we have lived in tents, obeying and observing fully the charge which our forefather Jonadab laid on us.

¹¹But when King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon invaded the land we said, Let us go to Jerusalem to escape the advancing Chaldaean and Aramaean armies. And we have stayed in Jerusalem.

¹²Then the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah:

¹³These are the words of the LORD of Hosts the God of Israel: Go and say to the Judaeans and the citizens of Jerusalem: Will you never accept correction and obey my words? says the LORD.

¹⁴The command of Jonadab son of Rechab to his descendants not to drink wine has been honoured; to this day they do not drink wine, for they obey their ancestor's command. But though I have warned you time and again, you have not obeyed me.

¹⁵Time and again I sent all my servants the prophets to say, Turn back every

one of you from evil conduct, mend your ways, and cease to follow other gods and serve them; then you will remain in the land that I have given to you and to your forefathers. Yet you did not obey or listen to me.

¹⁶The descendants of Jonadab son of Rechab have honoured the command their forefather laid on them, but this people have not listened to me.

¹⁷Therefore, these are the words of the LORD the God of Hosts, the God of Israel: Because they did not listen when I spoke to them or respond when I called them, I shall bring on Judah and on all the citizens of Jerusalem the full disaster with which I threatened them.

¹⁸To the Rechabites Jeremiah said: These are the words of the LORD of Hosts the God of Israel: Because you have kept the command of Jonadab your forefather, obeying all his instructions and carrying out all that he told you to do,

¹⁹therefore these are the words of the LORD of Hosts the God of Israel: There will never be lacking in my service a man of the line of Jonadab son of Rechab.

36 ¹ IN the fourth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from the LORD:

² Take a scroll and write on it all the words I have spoken to you about Jerusalem, Judah, and all the nations, from the day that I first spoke to you during the reign of Josiah down to the present day.

³ Perhaps the house of Judah will be warned of all the disaster I am planning to inflict on them, and everyone will abandon his evil conduct; then I shall forgive their wrongdoing and their sin.

⁴ Jeremiah summoned Baruch son of Neriah, and Baruch wrote on the scroll at Jeremiah's dictation everything the LORD had said to him.

⁵ He gave Baruch this instruction: As I am debarred from going to the LORD's house,

⁶ you must go there and on a fast-day read aloud to the people the words of the LORD from the scroll you wrote at my dictation. You are to read them in the hearing of all those who come in from the towns of Judah.

⁷Then perhaps they will petition the LORD, and everyone will abandon his evil conduct; for in great anger and wrath the LORD has threatened this people.

⁸Baruch son of Neriah did all that the prophet Jeremiah had told him, about reading from the scroll the words of the LORD in the LORD's house.

⁹In the ninth month of the fifth year of the reign of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah, all the people in Jerusalem and all who came there from the towns of Judah proclaimed a fast before the LORD.

¹⁰Then in the LORD's house Baruch read aloud Jeremiah's words from the scroll to all the people; he read them from the room of Gemariah son of the adjutant-general Shaphan, which was in the upper court at the entrance to the New Gate of the LORD's house.

¹¹When Micaiah son of Gemariah, son of Shaphan, heard all the LORD's words from the scroll

¹²he went down to the palace, to the chief adviser's room, where he found the officers all in session: Elishama the chief adviser, Delaiah son of Shemaiah,

Elnathan son of Akbor, Gemariah son of Shaphan, Zedekiah son of Hananiah, and all the other officers.

¹³ Micaiah reported to them everything he had heard Baruch read from the scroll in the hearing of the people.

¹⁴ Then the officers sent Jehudi son of Nethaniah, son of Shelemiah, son of Cushi, to Baruch with this order: Come here and bring the scroll from which you read to the people. When Baruch son of Neriah appeared before them with the scroll,

¹⁵ they said to him, Sit down and read it to us, and he did so.

¹⁶ When they had listened to it, they turned to each other in alarm and said, We must certainly report this to the king.

¹⁷ They asked Baruch to explain to them how he had come to write all this.

¹⁸ He answered, Jeremiah dictated every word of it to me, and I wrote it down with ink on the scroll.

¹⁹ The officers said to him, You and Jeremiah must go into hiding so that no one may know where you are.

²⁰ When they had deposited the scroll in the room of Elishama the chief adviser,

they went to the court and reported the whole affair to the king.

²¹ The king sent Jehudi for the scroll and, when he had fetched it from the room of Elishama the chief adviser, Jehudi read it out to the king and to all the officers in attendance on him.

²² Since it was the ninth month of the year, the king was sitting in his winter apartments with a fire burning in a brazier in front of him.

²³ Every time Jehudi read three or four columns of the scroll, the king cut them off with a penknife and threw them into the fire in the brazier. He went on doing so until the entire scroll had been destroyed on the fire.

²⁴ Neither the king nor any of his courtiers showed any alarm or tore their clothes as they listened to these words;

²⁵ and though Elnathan, Delaiah, and Gemariah begged the king not to burn the scroll, he refused to listen,

²⁶ but ordered Jerahmeel, a royal prince, Seraiah son of Azriel, and Shelemiah son of Abdeel to arrest Baruch the scribe and the prophet Jeremiah. But the LORD had hidden them.

²⁷ After the king had burnt the scroll with all that Baruch had written on it at Jeremiah's dictation, the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah:

²⁸ Take another scroll and write on it everything that was on the first scroll which King Jehoiakim of Judah burnt.

²⁹ You are to say to the king: These are the words of the LORD: You burnt that scroll and said, Why have you written here that the king of Babylon will come and destroy this land and exterminate both man and beast?

³⁰ Therefore these are the words of the LORD about King Jehoiakim of Judah: He will have no descendant to succeed him on the throne of David, and his dead body will be exposed to scorching heat by day and frost by night.

³¹ I shall punish him, his offspring, and his courtiers for their wickedness, and I shall bring down on them and on the citizens of Jerusalem and on the people of Judah all the disasters with which I threatened them, for they turned a deaf ear to me.

³² Then Jeremiah took another scroll and gave it to the scribe Baruch son of

Neriah, who wrote on it at Jeremiah's dictation all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burnt in the fire; and much else was added to the same effect.

37 ¹ Zedekiah son of Josiah was set on the throne of Judah by King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, in place of Coniah son of Jehoiakim,

² but neither he nor his courtiers nor the people of the land heeded the words which the LORD spoke through the prophet Jeremiah.

³ King Zedekiah, however, sent Jehucal son of Shelemiah and the priest Zephaniah son of Maaseiah to Jeremiah to say to him, Intercede on our behalf with the LORD our God.

⁴ At the time Jeremiah was free to come and go among the people; he had not yet been committed to prison.

⁵ Meanwhile Pharaoh's army had marched out of Egypt, and when the Chaldeans who were besieging Jerusalem were apprised of this they raised the siege.

⁶ Then the word of the LORD came to the prophet Jeremiah:

⁷ These are the words of the LORD the God of Israel: Take this message to the king of Judah who sent you to consult me: Pharaoh's army which marched out to your aid is on its way back to Egypt, its own land,

⁸ and the Chaldaeans will return to the attack. They will capture this city and burn it to the ground.

⁹ These are the words of the LORD: Do not delude yourselves by imagining that the Chaldaeans will go away and leave you alone. They will not;

¹⁰ supposing that you were to defeat the whole Chaldaean force now fighting against you, and only the wounded were left lying in their tents, even they would rise and burn down this city.

¹¹ After the Chaldaean army raised the siege of Jerusalem in the face of the advance of Pharaoh's army,

¹² Jeremiah was on the way out from Jerusalem to go into Benjamite territory to take possession of his holding among the people there.

¹³ Irijah son of Shelemiah, son of Hananiah, the officer of the guard, was at the Benjamin Gate when Jeremiah

reached it, and he arrested the prophet, accusing him of defecting to the Chaldeans.

¹⁴That is not true! said Jeremiah. I am not going over to the Chaldeans. Irijah refused to listen but brought him under arrest before the officers.

¹⁵The officers, furious with Jeremiah, had him flogged and imprisoned in the house of Jonathan the scribe, which had been converted into a jail.

¹⁶Jeremiah was put into a vaulted pit beneath the house, and he remained there many days.

¹⁷King Zedekiah had Jeremiah brought to him and questioned him privately in the palace, asking if there was a word from the LORD. There is, said Jeremiah; you will fall into the hands of the king of Babylon.

¹⁸Jeremiah went on, What wrong have I done to you or your courtiers or this people, that you have thrown me into prison?

¹⁹Where are your prophets who prophesied that the king of Babylon would not attack you or this country?

²⁰I pray you now, my lord king, give me a hearing and let my petition be accepted: do not send me back to the house of Jonathan the scribe, or I shall die there.

²¹Then King Zedekiah gave the order for Jeremiah to be committed to the court of the guardhouse, and as long as there was bread in the city he was granted a daily ration of one loaf from the Street of the Bakers. So Jeremiah remained in the court of the guardhouse.

38¹Shephatiah son of Mattan, Gedaliah son of Pashhur, Jucal son of Shelemiah, and Pashhur son of Malchiah heard how Jeremiah was addressing all the people; he was saying:

²These are the words of the LORD: Whoever remains in this city will die by sword, famine, or pestilence, but whoever surrenders to the Chaldeans will survive; he will escape with his life.

³These are the words of the LORD: This city will assuredly be delivered into the power of the king of Babylon's army, and be captured.

⁴The officers said to the king, This man ought to be put to death. By talking in

this way he is demoralizing the soldiers left in the city and indeed the rest of the people. It is not the people's welfare he seeks but their ruin.

⁵King Zedekiah said, He is in your hands; the king is powerless against you.

⁶So they took Jeremiah and put him into the cistern in the court of the guardhouse, letting him down with ropes. There was no water in the cistern, only mud, and Jeremiah sank in the mud.

⁷Ebed-melech the Cushite, a eunuch, who was in the palace, heard that they had put Jeremiah into a cistern and he went to tell the king, who was seated at the Benjamin Gate.

⁸(38: 7)

⁹Your majesty, he said, these men have acted viciously in their treatment of the prophet Jeremiah. They have thrown him into a cistern, and he will die of hunger where he is, for there is no more bread in the city.

¹⁰The king instructed Ebed-melech the Cushite to take three men with him and

hoist Jeremiah out of the cistern before he perished.

¹¹ Ebed-melech went to the palace with the men and took some tattered, cast-off clothes from a storeroom and lowered them with ropes to Jeremiah in the cistern.

¹² He called to Jeremiah, Put these old clothes under your armpits to pad the ropes. Jeremiah did so,

¹³ and they pulled him up out of the cistern with the ropes. Jeremiah remained in the court of the guardhouse.

¹⁴ King Zedekiah sent for the prophet Jeremiah and had him brought to the third entrance of the LORD's house. I want to ask you something, he said to him; hide nothing from me.

¹⁵ Jeremiah answered, If I speak out, you will certainly put me to death; if I offer advice, you will disregard it.

¹⁶ King Zedekiah secretly made this promise on oath to Jeremiah: By the life of the LORD who gave us our lives, I shall not put you to death, nor shall I hand you over to these men who are seeking your life.

¹⁷ Jeremiah said to Zedekiah, These are the words of the LORD the God of Hosts, the God of Israel: If you go out and surrender to the officers of the king of Babylon, you will live and this city will not be burnt down; you and your family will survive.

¹⁸ If, however, you do not surrender to the officers of the king of Babylon, this city will fall into the hands of the Chaldeans, who will burn it down; you yourself will not escape them.

¹⁹ The king said to Jeremiah, I am afraid of the Judaeans who have gone over to the enemy. The Chaldeans may give me up to them, and their treatment of me will be ruthless.

²⁰ Jeremiah answered, You will not be given up. If you obey the LORD in everything I tell you, all will be well with you and your life will be spared.

²¹ But if you refuse to surrender, this is what the LORD has shown me:

²² all the women left in the king of Judah's palace will be led out to the officers of the king of Babylon. Those women will say to you: Your own friends have misled you and proved too strong

for you; when your feet sank in the mud they turned and left you.

²³All your women and children will be led out to the Chaldeans and you yourself will not escape; you will be seized by the king of Babylon, and this city will be burnt down.

²⁴Zedekiah said to Jeremiah, On pain of death let no one know about this conversation.

²⁵If the officers hear that I have been speaking with you and they come and say to you, Tell us what you said to the king and what he said to you; hide nothing from us, and we shall not put you to death,

²⁶you must reply, I was petitioning the king not to send me back to the house of Jonathan to die there.

²⁷The officers did all come and question Jeremiah, and he said to them just what the king had told him to say; so they left off questioning him and were none the wiser.

²⁸Jeremiah remained in the court of the guardhouse till the day Jerusalem fell.

39¹ IN the tenth month of the ninth year of the reign of King

Zedekiah of Judah, King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon advanced with his whole army against Jerusalem, and they laid siege to it.

²In the fourth month of the eleventh year of Zedekiah, on the ninth day of the month, the city capitulated.

³All the officers of the king of Babylon came in and took their seats by the middle gate: Nergalsarezer of Simmagir, Nebusarsekim the chief eunuch, Nergalsarezer the commander of the frontier troops, and all the other officers of the king of Babylon.

⁴When King Zedekiah of Judah saw them, he and all his armed escort left the city by night and, fleeing by way of the king's garden through the gate called Between the Two Walls, they made their escape towards the Arabah.

⁵The Chaldaean soldiers set off in pursuit and overtook Zedekiah in the lowlands of Jericho. He was seized and brought before King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon at Riblah in the territory of Hamath, where sentence was passed on him.

⁶The king of Babylon had Zedekiah's sons slain before his eyes at Riblah; he also had all the nobles of Judah put to death.

⁷Then Zedekiah's eyes were blinded, and he was bound in bronze fetters to be brought to Babylon.

⁸The Chaldeans burnt the royal palace and the house of the LORD and the houses of the people, and demolished Jerusalem's walls.

⁹Nebuzaradan captain of the bodyguard deported to Babylon the rest of the people left in the city, those who had defected to him, and any remaining artisans.

¹⁰He left behind only the poorest class of people, those who owned nothing at all; to them he gave vineyards and fields.

¹¹King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon sent orders about Jeremiah to Nebuzaradan captain of the guard.

¹²Hold him, he said, and take good care of him; let him come to no harm, but do for him whatever he asks.

¹³So Nebuzaradan captain of the guard sent Nebushazban the chief eunuch,

Nergalsarezer the commander of the frontier troops, and all the chief officers of the king of Babylon,

¹⁴and they fetched Jeremiah from the court of the guardhouse and handed him over to Gedaliah son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan, to take him out to his residence. So he stayed with his own people.

¹⁵While Jeremiah was imprisoned the word of the LORD had come to him in the court of the guardhouse:

¹⁶Go and say to Ebed-melech the Cushite: These are the words of the LORD of Hosts the God of Israel: I shall make good the words I have spoken against this city, foretelling ruin and not wellbeing, and when that day comes you will recall them.

¹⁷But I shall preserve you on that day, says the LORD, and you will not be handed over to the men you fear.

¹⁸I shall keep you safe, and you will not fall a victim to the sword; because you trusted in me you will escape with your life. This is the word of the LORD.

40¹THE word which came from the LORD about Jeremiah:

Nebuzaradan captain of the guard had taken him in chains to Ramah along with the other captives from Jerusalem and Judah who were being deported to Babylon. After he set Jeremiah free,

² he said to him, The LORD your God threatened this place with disaster,

³ and has duly carried out his threat that this should happen to the people because they have sinned against the LORD and not obeyed him.

⁴ But as for you, Jeremiah, I am now removing the fetters from your wrists. If you so wish, come with me to Babylon, and I shall take good care of you; but if you prefer not to come, very well. The whole country lies before you; go wherever you think best.

⁵ Before Jeremiah could answer, Nebuzaradan went on, Go back to Gedaliah son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon has appointed governor of the cities and towns of Judah, and stay with him among your people; or go anywhere else you choose. Then the captain of the guard gave him provisions and a gift, and dismissed him.

⁶Jeremiah went to Mizpah to Gedaliah son of Ahikam and stayed with him among the people left in the land.

⁷When all the captains of the armed bands in the countryside and their men heard that the king of Babylon had appointed Gedaliah son of Ahikam to be governor of the land, and had put him in charge of the poorer class of the population, the men, women, and children who had not been deported to Babylon,

⁸they, together with their men, came to him at Mizpah; they were Ishmael son of Nethaniah, and Johanan and Jonathan sons of Kareah, Seraiah son of Tanhumeth, the sons of Ephai from Netophah, and Jezaniah of Beth-maacah.

⁹Gedaliah son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan, gave them this assurance: Do not be afraid to serve the Chaldaeans. Settle down in the land, serve the king of Babylon, and all will be well with you.

¹⁰I for my part am to stay in Mizpah and attend on the Chaldaeans whenever they come to us; you can harvest the wine, summer fruits, and oil, store them

in jars, and settle in the towns you have taken over.

¹¹ Likewise when all the Judaeans who were in Moab, Ammon, Edom, and other countries, heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant in Judah and had set over them Gedaliah son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan,

¹² they came back to Judah from all the places where they had scattered and presented themselves before Gedaliah at Mizpah; and they gathered in a good harvest of wine and summer fruit.

¹³ Johanan son of Kareah and all the captains of the armed bands from the countryside came to Gedaliah at Mizpah

¹⁴ and said to him, Are you aware that Baalis king of the Ammonites has sent Ishmael son of Nethaniah to assassinate you? But Gedaliah son of Ahikam would not believe them.

¹⁵ Then Johanan son of Kareah spoke privately to Gedaliah: Let me go, unknown to anyone else, and kill Ishmael son of Nethaniah. Why let him assassinate you, and so allow all the Judaeans who have rallied round you to

be scattered and the remnant of Judah to be lost?

¹⁶Gedaliah son of Ahikam answered him, Do no such thing. What you are saying about Ishmael is not true.

41 ¹In the seventh month Ishmael son of Nethaniah, son of Elishama, who was a member of the royal house, came with ten men to Gedaliah son of Ahikam at Mizpah. While they were eating together there,

²Ishmael son of Nethaniah and his ten men rose and assassinated Gedaliah son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon had appointed governor of the land.

³Ishmael also murdered all the Judaeans who were with Gedaliah in Mizpah as well as the Chaldaean soldiers stationed there.

⁴Next day, while the murder of Gedaliah was not yet common knowledge,

⁵eighty men arrived from Shechem, Shiloh, and Samaria. They had shaved off their beards, torn their clothes, and gashed their bodies; they were carrying grain-offerings and frankincense to present to the house of the LORD.

⁶Ishmael son of Nethaniah went out from Mizpah to meet them, weeping as he went, and when he met them he said, Come to Gedaliah son of Ahikam.

⁷But as soon as they were well inside the town, Ishmael son of Nethaniah and his men murdered them and threw their bodies into a cistern,

⁸all except ten of them who said to Ishmael, Do not kill us, for we have a secret hoard in the country, wheat and barley, oil and honey. So he held his hand and did not kill them with the others.

⁹The cistern into which he threw all the bodies of those whom he had killed was the large one which King Asa had made when threatened by King Baasha of Israel, and this Ishmael son of Nethaniah filled with the slain.

¹⁰He rounded up the rest of the people in Mizpah, that is the king's daughters and all who had remained in Mizpah when Nebuzaradan captain of the guard appointed Gedaliah son of Ahikam governor; and with these he set out to cross over to the Ammonites.

¹¹ When Johanan son of Kareah and the captains of the armed bands heard of all the crimes committed by Ishmael son of Nethaniah,

¹² they mustered their men and set out to attack him. They came up with him by the great pool in Gibeon.

¹³ The people with Ishmael were glad when they saw Johanan son of Kareah and all the captains of the armed bands with him,

¹⁴ while those whom Ishmael had taken prisoner at Mizpah turned and joined Johanan son of Kareah.

¹⁵ But Ishmael son of Nethaniah escaped from Johanan with eight men to make his way to the Ammonites.

¹⁶ Johanan son of Kareah and the captains of the armed bands took from Mizpah all the survivors whom he had rescued from Ishmael son of Nethaniah after the murder of Gedaliah son of Ahikam -- men, both armed and unarmed, women, children, and eunuchs, whom he had brought back from Gibeon.

¹⁷ They started out and broke their journey at Kimham's holding near Bethlehem, on their way into Egypt

¹⁸ to escape the Chaldeans. They were afraid of them because Ishmael son of Nethaniah had assassinated Gedaliah son of Ahikam, whom the king of Babylon had appointed governor of the country.

42¹ All the captains of the armed bands, including Johanan son of Kareah and Azariah son of Hoshaiah, together with the entire people, high and low, approached

² the prophet Jeremiah and said, May our petition be acceptable to you: Intercede with the LORD your God on our behalf and on behalf of this remnant; as you see for yourself, only a few of us remain out of many.

³ Pray that the LORD your God may tell us which way we are to take and what we ought to do.

⁴ Jeremiah answered, I have heard your request. I shall pray to the LORD your God as you ask, and whatever answer the LORD gives I shall tell you, keeping nothing back.

⁵They said to Jeremiah, May the LORD be a true and faithful witness against us if we do not act exactly as the LORD your God sends you to tell us.

⁶Whether it is favourable to us or not, we shall obey the LORD our God to whom we are sending you, in order that it may be well with us through our obedience to him.

⁷When after an interval of ten days the word of the LORD came to Jeremiah,

⁸he summoned Johanan son of Kareah, all the captains of the armed bands who were with him, and all the people, both high and low,

⁹and addressed them: These are the words of the LORD the God of Israel, to whom you sent me with your petition.

¹⁰If you remain in this land, then I shall build you up and not pull you down, I shall plant you and not uproot you; I grieve for the disaster which I have inflicted on you.

¹¹Do not be afraid of the king of Babylon whom you now fear. Do not be afraid of him, says the LORD, for I am with you, to save you and deliver you from his power.

¹²I shall show you compassion, so that he too has compassion on you, and will let you stay on your own soil.

¹³But it may be that you will disobey the LORD your God and insist, We are not going to stay in this land.

¹⁴No, we shall go to Egypt, where we shall see no sign of war, never hear the sound of the trumpet, and suffer no lack of food; it is there we shall live.

¹⁵In that case hear the word of the LORD, you remnant of Judah. These are the words of the LORD of Hosts the God of Israel: If you are determined to go to Egypt, if you do go and settle there,

¹⁶then the sword you fear will overtake you there in Egypt, and the famine you dread will dog you, even in Egypt, and there you will die.

¹⁷All who insist on going to settle in Egypt will die by sword, famine, or pestilence; not one will escape or survive the disaster I shall bring on them.

¹⁸These are the words of the LORD of Hosts the God of Israel: As my anger and my wrath were poured out on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, so will my wrath be poured out on you when you

go to Egypt; you will become an object of execration and horror, of cursing and reproach, and you will never see this place again.

¹⁹To you, then, remnant of Judah, the LORD says: Do not go to Egypt. Make no mistake; I give you solemn warning this day.

²⁰You deceived yourselves when you sent me to the LORD your God and said, Intercede for us with the LORD our God; tell us exactly what the LORD our God says and we shall do it.

²¹I have told it all to you today; but you have not obeyed the LORD your God in what he sent me to tell you.

²²So now be sure of this: you will die by sword, famine, and pestilence in the place where you want to go and live.

43¹When Jeremiah had finished reporting to the people all that the LORD their God had sent him to say,

²Azariah son of Hoshai and Johanan son of Kareah and their party had the effrontery to say to Jeremiah, You are lying! The LORD our God has not sent you to forbid us to go and make our home in Egypt;

³it is Baruch son of Neriah who is inciting you against us in order to put us in the power of the Chaldeans, to be killed or deported to Babylon.

⁴Johanan son of Kareah and the captains of the armed bands and all the people refused to obey the LORD's command to stay in Judah.

⁵Johanan and the captains collected the remnant of Judah, all who had returned from the countries among which they had been scattered to make their home in Judah --

⁶men, women, and children, including the king's daughters, everyone whom Nebuzaradan captain of the guard had left with Gedaliah son of Ahikam, son of Shaphan, as well as the prophet Jeremiah and Baruch son of Neriah;

⁷and in defiance of the LORD's command they all went to Egypt and arrived at Tahpanhes.

⁸The word of the LORD came to Jeremiah in Tahpanhes:

⁹Take some large stones and set them in cement in the pavement at the entrance to Pharaoh's palace in

Tahpanhes. Let the Judaeans see you do it,

¹⁰and say to them: These are the words of the LORD of Hosts the God of Israel: I shall send for my servant King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, and he will place his throne on these stones that I have set here, and spread his canopy over them.

¹¹He will come and vanquish Egypt: Those who are for the plague shall go to the plague, those for captivity to captivity, and those for the sword to the sword.

¹²He will set fire to the temples of the Egyptian gods, burning the buildings and carrying the gods into captivity. He will scour the land of Egypt as a shepherd scours his clothes to rid them of lice. He will come out of Egypt unscathed.

¹³He will smash the sacred pillars of Beth-shemesh in Egypt and burn down the temples of the Egyptian gods.

44¹The word that came to Jeremiah for all the Judaeans living in Egypt, at Migdol, Tahpanhes, Noph, and in the district of Pathros:

²These are the words of the LORD of Hosts the God of Israel: You have seen all the disaster I brought on Jerusalem and on all the towns of Judah: today they lie in ruins and are left uninhabited,
³all because of the wickedness of those who provoked me to anger by going after other gods, gods unknown to them, by burning sacrifices in their service. It was you and your forefathers who did this.

⁴Constantly I sent all my servants the prophets to you with this warning: Do not do this abominable thing, which I detest.

⁵But your forefathers would not listen or pay any heed. They did not give up their wickedness or cease to burn sacrifices to other gods;

⁶so my anger and wrath were poured out, and swept like fire through the towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem, until they became the desolate ruin they are today.

⁷Now these are the words of the LORD the God of Hosts, the God of Israel: Why bring so great a disaster on yourselves? Why bring destruction on Judaeans, men

and women, children and babes, and leave yourselves without a survivor?

⁸This is what comes of provoking me by your idol-worship in burning sacrifices to other gods in Egypt where you have made your home. You will destroy yourselves and become an object of cursing and reproach among all the nations on earth.

⁹Have you forgotten the wickedness committed by your forefathers, by the kings of Judah and their wives, by yourselves and your wives in the land of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem?

¹⁰To this day no remorse has been shown, no reverence, no obedience to the law and the statutes which I set before you and your forefathers.

¹¹These, therefore, are the words of the LORD of Hosts the God of Israel: I have resolved to bring disaster on you and to exterminate all the people of Judah.

¹²I shall deal with the remnant of Judah who decided to go to Egypt and make their home there; in Egypt they will all meet their end. Some will fall by the sword, others will meet their end by

famine. High and low alike will die by sword or by famine and will be an object of execration and horror, of cursing and reproach.

¹³I shall punish those who live in Egypt as I punished those in Jerusalem, by sword, famine, and pestilence.

¹⁴Those who had remained in Judah came to make their home in Egypt, confident that they would return and live once more in Judah. But they will not return; not one of them will survive, not one escape.

¹⁵Then all the men who knew that their wives were burning sacrifices to other gods, and the large crowd of women standing by, indeed all of the people who lived in Pathros in Egypt, answered Jeremiah:

¹⁶We are not going to listen to what you tell us in the name of the LORD.

¹⁷We intend to fulfil all the vows by which we have bound ourselves: we shall burn sacrifices to the queen of heaven and pour drink-offerings to her as we used to do, we and our forefathers, our kings and leaders, in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem. Then we

had food in plenty and were content; no disaster touched us.

¹⁸But from the time we left off burning sacrifices to the queen of heaven and pouring drink-offerings to her, we have been in great want, and we have fallen victims to sword and famine.

¹⁹The women said, All the time we burnt sacrifices to the queen of heaven and poured drink-offerings to her, our husbands were fully aware that we were making crescent-cakes marked with her image and pouring drink-offerings to her.

²⁰When Jeremiah received this answer from all the people, men and women, he said,

²¹The LORD did not forget those sacrifices which you and your forefathers, your kings and princes, and the people of the land burnt in the towns of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem, and they mounted up in his mind

²²until he could no longer endure them, so wicked were your deeds, so abominable the things you did. Your land became a desolate waste, an object of horror and cursing, with no inhabitants, as it still is.

²³The disaster you now suffer has come on you because you burnt these sacrifices and sinned against the LORD, refusing to obey the LORD and conform to his law, statutes, and teachings.

²⁴Further, Jeremiah said to all the people, particularly the women: Listen to the word of the LORD, all you from Judah who live in Egypt.

²⁵These are the words of the LORD of Hosts the God of Israel: You women have made your actions match your words. You said, We shall carry out our vows to burn sacrifices to the queen of heaven and to pour drink-offerings to her. Fulfil your vows by all means; carry them out!

²⁶But listen to the word of the LORD, all you from Judah who are settled in Egypt. I have sworn by my great name, says the LORD, that my name will never again be invoked by any of the Judaeans; in Egypt they will no longer swear by the life of the Lord GOD.

²⁷I am on the watch to bring you evil and not good, and all Judaeans who are in Egypt will meet their end by sword and famine until not one is left.

²⁸It is then that any survivors of Judah who made their home in Egypt will know whose word prevails, mine or theirs.

²⁹This is the sign I give you, says the LORD, that I intend to punish you in this place, so that you may learn that my threat of disaster against you will prevail.

³⁰These are the words of the LORD: I shall hand over Pharaoh Hophra king of Egypt to his enemies and to those who seek his life, just as I handed over King Zedekiah of Judah to King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, his enemy who sought his life.

45¹THE word which the prophet Jeremiah addressed to Baruch son of Neriah when Baruch wrote these words in a scroll at Jeremiah's dictation in the fourth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah:

²These are the words of the LORD the God of Israel concerning you, Baruch:

³You said, Woe is me, for the LORD has added grief to my trials. I have worn myself out with my labours and have had no respite.

⁴This is what you shall say to Baruch: These are the words of the LORD: What I have built, I demolish; what I have planted, I uproot. So it will be with the whole earth.

⁵You seek great things for yourself; leave off seeking them. I am about to bring disaster on all mankind, says the LORD, but wherever you go I shall let you escape with your life.

46 ¹THIS came to the prophet Jeremiah as the word of the LORD about the nations.

²OF Egypt: about the army of Pharaoh Necho king of Egypt at Carchemish on the river Euphrates, which King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon defeated in the fourth year of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah.

³Hold shield and buckler ready and advance to battle;

⁴harness the horses, let the riders mount; form up with your helmets on, your lances burnished; on with your coats of mail!

⁵But now, what sight is this? They are broken and routed, their warriors defeated; they are in headlong flight

without a backward look. Terror let loose! This is the word of the LORD.

⁶Can the swiftest escape, the bravest save himself? In the north, by the river Euphrates, they stumble and fall.

⁷Who is this rising like the Nile, like rivers turbulent in flood?

⁸It is Egypt rising like the Nile, like rivers turbulent in flood. I shall arise and cover the earth, says Egypt; I shall destroy every city and its people.

⁹Let the cavalry charge and the chariots drive furiously! Let the warriors attack, Cushites and men of Put bearing shields, Lydians with their bows ready strung!

¹⁰That day belongs to the Lord, the GOD of Hosts, a day of vengeance, vengeance on his enemies; the sword will devour until sated, drunk with their blood. For the GOD of Hosts, the Lord, holds sacrifice in a northern land, by the river Euphrates.

¹¹Virgin daughter of Egypt, go up into Gilead and fetch balm. You have tried many remedies, all in vain; no skin will grow over your wounds.

¹²The nations have heard your cry, and the earth echoes with your screams;

warrior stumbles against warrior and both fall down together.

¹³The word which the LORD spoke to the prophet Jeremiah about the advance of King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon to harry the land of Egypt:

¹⁴Announce it in Egypt, proclaim it in Migdol, proclaim it in Noph and Tahpanhes. Say: Stand to! Be ready! For a sword devours all around you.

¹⁵Why does Apis flee? Why does your bull-god not stand fast? Because the LORD has thrust him out.

¹⁶The rabble of Egypt stumbles and falls, man against man; each says, Quick, back to our own people, to our native land, far from the oppressor's sword!

¹⁷Give Pharaoh of Egypt the title King Bombast, the man who missed his opportunity.

¹⁸By my life, one will come, says the King whose name is the LORD of Hosts, one mighty as Tabor among the hills, as Carmel by the sea.

¹⁹Get ready your baggage for exile, you native people of Egypt; Noph will become a waste, ruined and unpeopled.

²⁰ Egypt was a lovely heifer, but a gadfly from the north attacked her.

²¹ The mercenaries in her land were like stall-fed calves; but they too turned tail and fled, not one of them standing his ground. The day of retribution has come upon them, their time of reckoning.

²² Egypt is hissing like a fleeing snake, for the enemy has come in force. They attack her with axes like fellers of trees.

²³ They cut down her forest, says the LORD, for they cannot be numbered; more numerous than locusts, they are past counting.

²⁴ The Egyptians are put to shame, enslaved to a northern race.

²⁵ The LORD of Hosts the God of Israel has spoken: I am about to punish Amon god of Thebes, Egypt with her gods and her princes, Pharaoh and all who trust in him.

²⁶ I shall deliver them to those bent on their destruction, to King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon and his troops; yet after this the land will be peopled as of old. This is the word of the LORD.

²⁷ But, Jacob my servant, do not be afraid; Israel, do not be dismayed; from afar I shall bring you back safe, and your children from the land where they are captives. Jacob will be at rest once more, secure and untroubled.

²⁸ Do not be afraid, Jacob my servant, says the LORD, for I am with you. I shall make an end of all the nations amongst whom I have dispersed you; but of you I shall not make an end. I shall discipline you only as you deserve, I shall not leave you wholly unpunished.

47 ¹ This came to the prophet Jeremiah as the word of the LORD concerning the Philistines before Pharaoh's attack on Gaza:

² These are the words of the LORD: See how waters are rising from the north and swelling to a torrent in spate, flooding the land and all that is in it, towns and those who live in them. People cry out in alarm; wailing arises from all the inhabitants of the land.

³ At the noise of the pounding of his chargers' hoofs, the rattle of his chariots and their rumbling wheels, fathers have

no thought for their children; their hands hang powerless,

⁴because the day has come for all Philistia to be despoiled, and Tyre and Sidon destroyed to the last defender; for the LORD is despoiling the Philistines, that remnant of the isle of Caphtor.

⁵Gaza is shorn bare, Ashkelon ruined, the remnant of the Philistine power. How long will you gash yourselves and cry:

⁶Ah, sword in the hand of the LORD, how long will it be before you rest? Sheathe yourself, cease and be quiet.

⁷How can it rest when the LORD has given it work to do against Ashkelon and the sea coast? There he has assigned the sword its task.

48¹ Of Moab. This is what the LORD of Hosts the God of Israel says:

Woe betide Nebo! It is laid waste; Kiriathaim captured and put to shame, Misgab reduced to shame and dismay;

²Moab's glory is no more. In Heshbon they plot her downfall: Come, put an end to that nation. And you, the inhabitants of Madhmen, will also perish, pursued by the sword.

³ Cries of anguish arise from Horonaim:
Havoc and utter destruction!

⁴ Moab is broken; their cries are heard
as far as Zoar.

⁵ On the ascent to Luhith they go
up weeping bitterly; on the descent
to Horonaim an anguished cry of
destruction is heard.

⁶ Flee, escape with your lives and
become like one destitute in the
wilderness.

⁷ Because you trust in your defences
and arsenals, you too will be captured,
and Kemosh will go into exile, his priests
and those in attendance with him.

⁸ A despoiler will come against every
town; no town will escape, valley
and tableland will be laid waste and
plundered; the LORD has spoken.

⁹ Give a warning signal to Moab, for she
will be laid in ruins; and her towns will
become waste places with no inhabitant
in them.

¹⁰ A curse on all who are slack in doing
the LORD's work! A curse on all who
withhold their swords from bloodshed!

¹¹ From its earliest days Moab has been
undisturbed and never gone into exile.

It has been like wine settled on its lees, not decanted from vessel to vessel; its flavour remains unaltered and its aroma stays unchanged.

¹²Therefore the days are coming, says the LORD, when I shall send men to tilt the jars; they will empty the vessels and smash the jars.

¹³Moab will be let down by Kemosh as Israel was let down by Bethel, a god in whom they trusted.

¹⁴How can you say, We are warriors, men valiant in battle?

¹⁵The spoiler of Moab and its towns has launched an attack, and the flower of its youth goes down to be slaughtered. This is the word of the King whose name is the LORD of Hosts.

¹⁶Retribution on Moab is near at hand, disaster rushing swiftly on him.

¹⁷Bewail him, all you his neighbours and all who knew his fame; and say, Alas! The commander's staff is broken, that splendid baton.

¹⁸Come down from your place of honour, sit on the parched ground, you natives of Dibon; for the spoiler of Moab

has come against you and destroyed your citadels.

¹⁹You that live in Aroer, stand by the road and watch, ask the man running away, the woman escaping, ask, What has happened?

²⁰Moab is reduced to shame and dismay: wail and cry, proclaim by the Arnon that Moab is despoiled.

²¹Judgement has come to the tableland, to Holon and Jahaz, Mephaath

²²and Dibon, Nebo and Beth-diblathaim

²³and Kiriathaim, Beth-gamul, Beth-meon,

²⁴Kerioth and Bozrah, and to all the towns of Moab far and near.

²⁵Moab's horn is hacked off and his strong arm is broken, says the LORD.

²⁶Make Moab drunk -- he has defied the LORD. Let Moab overflow with his vomit and become in turn a butt for derision.

²⁷Was not Israel your butt? Yet was he ever in company with thieves, that each time you spoke of him you shook your head?

²⁸Leave your towns, you inhabitants of Moab, and find a home among the crags;

become like a dove which nests in the rock-face at the mouth of a cavern.

²⁹We have heard of Moab's pride, and proud indeed he is, proud, presumptuous, overbearing, insolent.

³⁰I know his arrogance, says the LORD; his boasting is false, false are his deeds.

³¹Therefore I shall wail over Moab, cry in anguish for the whole of Moab; I shall moan over the men of Kir-heres.

³²More than I wept for Jazer I shall weep for you, vine of Sibmah, whose branches spread out to the sea and reach as far as Jazer. The despoiler has fallen on your harvest and vintage;

³³gladness and joy are taken away from the garden land of Moab; I have dried up the flow of wine from the vats, and the shouts of those treading the grapes will echo no more.

³⁴Heshbon and Elealeh utter cries of anguish which are heard in Jahaz; the sound carries from Zoar to Horonaim and Eglath-shelishiyah; for the waters of Nimrim have become a desolate waste.

³⁵In Moab I shall put an end to their sacrificing at shrines and burning of offerings to their gods, says the LORD.

³⁶Therefore I wail for Moab like a reed-pipe, wail like a reed-pipe for the men of Kir-heres. Their accumulated wealth has vanished.

³⁷Every man's head is shorn in mourning, every beard clipped, every hand gashed, and every waist girded with sackcloth.

³⁸On all Moab's roofs and in all her broad streets nothing is heard but lamentation, for I have broken Moab like an unwanted pot, says the LORD.

³⁹Moab is dismayed and has turned away in shame. It has become a butt of derision and a cause of dismay to all round about.

⁴⁰For the LORD has spoken: Like an eagle with outspread wings he swoops down on Moab.

⁴¹Towns are captured, the strongholds taken; on that day the spirit of Moab's warriors will fail like the spirit of a woman in labour.

⁴²The Moabite nation will be destroyed, for it vaunted itself against the LORD.

⁴³The hunter's scare, the pit, and the trap threaten you dwellers in Moab, says the LORD.

⁴⁴ If anyone runs from the scare he will fall into the pit; if someone climbs out of the pit he will be caught in the trap. All this I shall bring on Moab in the year of their reckoning. This is the word of the LORD.

⁴⁵ In the shadow of Heshbon the fugitives stand helpless; for fire has blazed out from Heshbon, flames from within Sihon devouring the braggarts of Moab, both forehead and crown.

⁴⁶ Woe betide you, Moab! The people of Kemosh have vanished, for your sons are taken into captivity, your daughters led away captive.

⁴⁷ Yet in days to come I shall restore Moab's fortunes. This is the word of the LORD. Here ends the judgement on Moab.

49¹ Of the Ammonites. Thus says the LORD: Has Israel no sons? Has he no heir? Why then has Milcom inherited the land of Gad, and why do Milcom's people live in its towns?

² Therefore a time is coming, says the LORD, when I shall make Rabbah of the Ammonites hear the battle cry, when it will become a desolate mound and

its villages will be burnt to ashes; then Israel will disinherit all who disinherited them, says the LORD.

³Wail, Heshbon, for Ai is despoiled; cry aloud, you villages round Rabbah! Put on sackcloth and beat your breast, and score your bodies with gashes, for Milcom will go into exile, and with him his priests and attendants.

⁴Why do you glory in your strength, you wayward people who trust in your arsenals and say, Who will dare attack me?

⁵Beware, I am bringing terror on you from every side, says the Lord GOD of Hosts; every one of you will be driven headlong with no one to rally the fugitives.

⁶Yet after this I shall restore the fortunes of Ammon. This is the word of the LORD.

⁷Of Edom. The LORD of Hosts has said: Is wisdom no longer to be found in Teman? Have her wise men lost all skill in counsel? Has their wisdom been dispersed abroad?

⁸Turn and flee, people of Dedan, take refuge in remote places; for I shall bring retribution on Esau, his day of reckoning.

⁹If vintagers were to come to you they would surely leave gleanings; and if thieves were to raid your crops by night, they would take only enough for their needs.

¹⁰But I have ransacked Esau's treasure, I have uncovered his hiding-places, and he has nowhere to conceal himself. His children, his kinsfolk, and his neighbours are despoiled; there is no one to deliver him.

¹¹Am I to keep alive your fatherless children? Are your widows to depend on me?

¹²For these are the words of the LORD: Those who were not doomed to drink the cup must drink it none the less; are you alone to go unpunished? You will not escape; you will have to drink it.

¹³For by my life, says the LORD, Bozrah will become an object of horror and reproach, a desolation and a thing of cursing; and all her towns will be desolate for ever.

¹⁴When a herald was sent among the nations crying, Gather and march against her, prepare for battle, I heard this message from the LORD:

¹⁵Look, I make you the least of all nations, most despised of people.

¹⁶Your overbearing arrogance and your insolent heart have led you astray. You, whose haunts are in the crannies of the rock, you keep your hold on the hilltop. Though you nest as high as an eagle, even from there I shall bring you down. This is the word of the LORD.

¹⁷Edom will become an object of horror, all who pass that way will be horror-struck, astounded at the sight of all her wounds,

¹⁸overthrown as she is like Sodom and Gomorrah and their neighbours, says the LORD. No one will live there, no human being will make a home in her.

¹⁹Like a lion coming up from Jordan's dense thickets to the perennial pastures, in a moment I shall chase the shepherd away and round up the choicest of the rams. For who is like me? Who can arraign me? What shepherd can stand his ground before me?

²⁰Therefore listen to the LORD's purpose against Edom and his plans against the people of Teman: The young of the flock will be dragged off, and their pasture will be aghast at their fate.

²¹At the sound of their downfall the land quakes; it cries out, and the sound is heard at the Red Sea.

²²Like an eagle with outspread wings he will soar and swoop down against Bozrah, and on that day the spirit of Edom's warriors will be like the spirit of a woman in labour.

²³Of Damascus. Hamath and Arpad are covered with confusion, for they have heard news of disaster; they are tossed up and down in anxiety like the unresting sea.

²⁴Damascus has lost heart and turns to flight; trembling has seized her, pangs like childbirth have gripped her.

²⁵How forlorn is the town of joyful song, the place of gladness!

²⁶Therefore her young men will fall in her streets and all her warriors lie still in death that day. This is the word of the LORD of Hosts.

²⁷ Then I shall kindle a fire within the wall of Damascus and it will devour Ben-hadad's palaces.

²⁸ Of Kedar and the kingdoms of Hazor which King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon subdued. The LORD has said: Come, attack Kedar, despoil the eastern desert-dwellers.

²⁹ Carry away their tents and their flocks, the curtains of their tents and all their goods, and drive off their camels. A cry will go up: Terror let loose!

³⁰ Flee and make your escape, take refuge in remote places, you people of Hazor, says the LORD; for King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon has laid his plans, he has formed a design against you:

³¹ Come, let us attack a nation at peace, living in fancied security with no barred gates, dwelling in isolation.

³² Their camels will be carried off as booty, their vast herds of cattle as plunder; I shall scatter them to all the winds to roam the fringes of the desert, and from every side I shall bring retribution on them, says the LORD.

³³ Hazor will become a haunt of wolves, for ever desolate, where no one will live, no mortal make a home. This is the word of the LORD.

³⁴ This came to the prophet Jeremiah as the word of the LORD concerning Elam, at the beginning of the reign of King Zedekiah of Judah:

³⁵ Thus says the LORD of Hosts: I shall break the bow of Elam, the chief weapon of their might;

³⁶ I shall bring four winds against Elam from the four quarters of heaven; I shall scatter them to all these winds, and there will be no nation to which the exiles from Elam do not go.

³⁷ I shall break Elam before their foes, before those who are bent on their destruction; I shall vent my fierce anger upon them in disaster; I shall pursue them with the sword until I make an end of them, says the LORD.

³⁸ Then I shall set my throne in Elam, and destroy the king and his officers there. This is the word of the LORD.

³⁹ Yet in days to come I shall restore the fortunes of Elam. This is the word of the LORD.

50¹The word which the LORD spoke about Babylon, the land of the Chaldeans, through the prophet Jeremiah:

²Declare among the nations, make proclamation; keep nothing back, spread the news: Babylon is taken, Bel put to shame, Marduk dismayed; the idols of Babylon are put to shame, her false gods are dismayed.

³A nation has come out of the north against her; it will make her land a desolate waste with no one living there; man and beast have fled and are gone.

⁴In those days and at that time, says the LORD, the people of Israel and the people of Judah will come together, and in tears go in search of the LORD their God;

⁵they will ask the way to Zion, turning their faces towards her, and saying, Come, let us join ourselves to the LORD in an everlasting covenant which will never be forgotten.

⁶My people were lost sheep, whose shepherds let them stray and run wild on the mountains; they wandered from mountain to hill, forgetful of their fold.

⁷ All who came on them devoured them; their enemies said, We incur no guilt, because they have sinned against the LORD, the LORD who is the true goal and the hope of their forefathers.

⁸ Flee from Babylon, from the land of the Chaldaeans; go out like he-goats leading the flock.

⁹ I shall stir up a host of mighty nations and bring them against Babylon, marshalled against her from a northern land; and from the north she will be captured. Their arrows are like those of a skilled warrior who never returns empty-handed;

¹⁰ the Chaldaeans will be plundered, and all who plunder them will take their fill. This is the word of the LORD.

¹¹ You plundered my possession; but though you rejoice and exult, though you run free like a heifer during the threshing, though you neigh like a stallion,

¹² your mother will be cruelly disgraced, she who bore you will be put to shame. Look at her, bringing up the rear of the nations, a wilderness, parched and barren,

¹³ uninhabited through the wrath of the LORD, an object of horror; all who pass by Babylon will be horror-struck and astounded at the sight of her many wounds.

¹⁴ Marshal your forces and encircle Babylon, you whose bows are ready strung; shoot at her, spare not your arrows, for she has sinned against the LORD.

¹⁵ On every side shout in triumph over her; she has surrendered, her bastions are thrown down, her walls demolished. This is the vengeance of the LORD; be avenged on her; as she has done, so do to her.

¹⁶ Destroy every sower in Babylon, every reaper with his sickle at harvest time. To escape the cruel sword everyone will turn back to his people, everyone flee to his own land.

¹⁷ Israel is a scattered flock harried and chased by lions: the Assyrian king was the first to devour him, and now at the last his bones have been gnawed by King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon.

¹⁸ Therefore the LORD of Hosts the God of Israel says this: I shall punish the

king of Babylon and his country as once I punished the king of Assyria.

¹⁹But I shall bring Israel back to his own pasture, to graze on Carmel and Bashan; on Ephraim's hills and in Gilead he will eat his fill.

²⁰In those days, says the LORD, when that time comes, search will be made for the iniquity of Israel, but there will be none, and for the sin of Judah, but it will not be found; for those whom I leave as a remnant I shall pardon.

²¹Attack the land of Merathaim; attack it and the inhabitants of Pekod; put them to the sword and utterly destroy them, and do whatever I command you. This is the word of the LORD.

²²The sound of war is heard in the land and great destruction!

²³See how the hammer of the whole world is hacked and broken, how Babylon has become a thing of horror among the nations!

²⁴Babylon, you have set a snare for yourself and have been trapped unawares. There you are, you are caught, because you have challenged the LORD.

²⁵The LORD has opened his armoury and brought out the weapons of his wrath; for this is work for the Lord the GOD of Hosts to do in the land of the Chaldaeans.

²⁶Come against her from every quarter; throw open her granaries, pile her like heaps of grain; destroy her completely, let no survivor be left.

²⁷Put all her warriors to the sword; let them be led to the slaughter. Woe betide them, for their time has come, their day of reckoning!

²⁸I hear the fugitives escaping from the land of Babylon to proclaim in Zion the vengeance of the LORD our God, the vengeance he takes for his temple.

²⁹Let your arrows whistle against Babylon, all you whose bows are ready strung. Besiege her on all sides; let no one escape. Repay her in full for her misdeeds; as she has done, so do to her, for she has insulted the LORD the Holy One of Israel.

³⁰Therefore her young men will fall in her streets, and all her warriors lie still in death that day. This is the word of the LORD.

³¹ I am against you, insolent city; for your time has come, your day of reckoning. This is the word of the Lord GOD of Hosts.

³² The insolent one will stumble and fall and no one will lift her up; I shall kindle fire in her towns and it will devour everything round about.

³³ The LORD of Hosts has said this: The peoples of Israel and Judah are both oppressed; their captors all hold them fast and will not let go.

³⁴ But they have a powerful advocate, whose name is the LORD of Hosts; he himself will take up their cause, that he may give distress to the land and turmoil to the inhabitants of Babylon.

³⁵ A sword hangs over the Chaldaeans, over the people of Babylon, her officers and wise men, says the LORD.

³⁶ A sword hangs over the false prophets, and they are made fools, a sword over her warriors, and they despair,

³⁷ a sword over her horses and her chariots and over all the mixed rabble within her, and they will become like

women; a sword over her treasures, and they will be plundered,

³⁸a sword over her waters, and they will dry up; for it is a land of idols that glories in its dreaded gods.

³⁹Therefore marmots and jackals will skulk in it, desert-owls will haunt it; never more will it be inhabited and age after age no one will dwell in it.

⁴⁰It will be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah along with their neighbours, says the LORD; no one will live in it, no human being will make a home there.

⁴¹See, an army is coming from the north; a great nation and mighty kings rouse themselves from earth's farthest corners.

⁴²Armed with bow and scimitar, they are cruel and pitiless; bestriding their horses, they sound like the thunder of the sea; they are like men arrayed for battle against you, Babylon.

⁴³News of them has reached the king of Babylon, and his hands hang limp; agony grips him, pangs as of a woman in labour.

⁴⁴ Like a lion coming up from Jordan's dense thickets to the perennial pastures, in a moment I shall chase the shepherd away and round up the choicest of the rams. For who is like me? Who can challenge me? What shepherd can stand his ground before me?

⁴⁵ Therefore listen to the LORD's purpose against Babylon and his plans against the land of the Chaldeans: The young of the flock will be dragged off, and their pasture will be aghast at their fate.

⁴⁶ At the sound of Babylon's capture the land quakes; it cries out, and the sound is heard throughout the nations.

51 ¹ For thus says the LORD: I shall raise a destructive wind against Babylon and the inhabitants of Leb-kamai.

² I shall send winnowers to Babylon who will winnow her land empty; for they will assail her from all sides on the day of disaster.

³ How will the archer then string his bow or put on his coat of mail? Spare none of her young men, but utterly destroy her whole army

⁴ and let them fall dead in the land of the Chaldeans, slain in her streets.

⁵ Israel and Judah are not left widowed by their God, by the LORD of Hosts; but their land is full of guilt, condemned by the Holy One of Israel.

⁶ Flee out of Babylon, each one for himself, or you will perish for her sin; for this is the LORD's day of vengeance, and he is paying her full recompense.

⁷ Babylon has been a golden cup in the LORD's hand to make all the earth drunk; the nations have drunk of her wine, and that has made them mad.

⁸ Suddenly Babylon falls and is broken. Wail for her! Fetch balm for her wound; perhaps she may be healed.

⁹ We tried to heal Babylon, but she is past healing. Leave her and let us be off, each to his own country; for her doom reaches to heaven and mounts up to the skies.

¹⁰ The LORD has made our victory plain to see; come, let us proclaim in Zion what the LORD our God has done.

¹¹ Sharpen the arrows, fill the quivers. The LORD has roused the spirit of the king of the Medes; for the LORD's

purpose against Babylon is to destroy it, and his vengeance is vengeance for his temple.

¹²Raise the standard against Babylon's walls, mount a strong blockade, post sentries, set an ambush; for the LORD has both planned and carried out his threat against the inhabitants of Babylon.

¹³You opulent city, standing beside great waters, your end has come, your destiny is certain.

¹⁴The LORD of Hosts has sworn by himself: Surely I shall fill you with enemies who will swarm like locusts, and they will raise a shout of triumph over you.

¹⁵God made the earth by his power, fixed the world in place by his wisdom, and by his knowledge unfurled the skies.

¹⁶When he speaks in the thunder the waters in the heavens are in tumult; he brings up the mist from the ends of the earth, he opens rifts for the rain, and brings the wind out of his storehouses.

¹⁷Everyone is brutish and ignorant, every goldsmith is discredited through

his idols; for the figures he casts are a sham, there is no breath in them.

¹⁸They are worthless, mere objects of mockery, which perish when their day of reckoning comes.

¹⁹Jacob's chosen God is not like these, for he is the creator of the universe. Israel is the people he claims as his own; the LORD of Hosts is his name.

²⁰You are my battleaxe, my weapon of war; with you I shall break nations in pieces, and with you I shall destroy kingdoms.

²¹With you I shall break horse and rider, with you I shall break chariot and charioteer,

²²with you I shall break man and wife, with you I shall break old and young, with you I shall break youth and maiden,

²³with you I shall break shepherd and his flock, with you I shall break ploughman and his team, with you I shall break viceroys and governors.

²⁴So shall I repay Babylon and the people of Chaldaea for all the wrong which they did in Zion in your sight. This is the word of the LORD.

²⁵I am against you, a destructive mountain destroying the whole earth, says the LORD. I shall stretch out my hand against you and send you tumbling headlong from the rocks and make you a burnt-out mountain.

²⁶No stone taken from you will be used as a corner-stone, no stone for a foundation; but you will be for ever desolate. This is the word of the LORD.

²⁷Raise a standard on the earth, blow a trumpet among the nations, consecrate the nations for war against her, summon the kingdoms of Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz, appoint a commander against her, bring up horses like a dark swarm of locusts.

²⁸For war against her consecrate the nations, the king of the Medes, his viceroys and governors, and all the lands under his sway.

²⁹The earth quakes and writhes; for the LORD's designs against Babylon are fulfilled: to make the land of Babylon an unpeopled waste.

³⁰Babylon's warriors have given up the fight; they skulk in the forts, their courage has failed, they have become

like women. The buildings are set on fire, the bars of the gates broken.

³¹ Runner speeds to meet runner, messenger to meet messenger, reporting to the king of Babylon that every quarter of his city is taken,

³² the river-crossings are seized, the guard-towers set on fire, and the garrison stricken with panic.

³³ For these are the words of the LORD of Hosts the God of Israel: Babylon is like a threshing-floor when it is trodden; very soon harvest time will come for her.

³⁴ King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon has devoured me and sucked me dry; he has set me aside like an empty jar. Like a dragon he has gulped me down; he filled his maw with my delicate flesh and spewed me up.

³⁵ Every citizen of Zion will say, On Babylon be the violence done to me, the vengeance taken on me! Jerusalem will say, My blood be on the Chaldeans!

³⁶ Therefore the LORD says: I shall plead your cause, I shall avenge you; I shall dry up her river and make her waters fail.

³⁷ Babylon will become a heap of ruins, a haunt of wolves, an object of horror and astonishment, with no inhabitant.

³⁸ Together they roar like young lions, they growl like the whelps of a lioness.

³⁹ I shall cause their drinking bouts to end in fever and make them so drunk that they will writhe and toss, then sink into unending sleep, never to wake again. This is the word of the LORD.

⁴⁰ I shall bring them down like lambs to the slaughter, like rams and he-goats together.

⁴¹ Sheshak is captured, the pride of the whole world taken. How Babylon has become a thing of horror among the nations!

⁴² The sea has surged over Babylon, she is covered by its roaring waves.

⁴³ Her towns have become waste places, a land parched and barren, a land where no one lives, through which no human being travels.

⁴⁴ I shall punish Bel in Babylon and make him disgorge what he has swallowed; nations will never again come streaming to him. Babylon's wall has fallen.

⁴⁵ My people, come out from her, and let every one save himself from the fierce anger of the LORD.

⁴⁶ Then beware of losing heart; fear no rumours spread abroad in the land, as rumour follows rumour, a new one every year: of violence on earth, of ruler against ruler.

⁴⁷ Therefore a time is coming when I shall punish Babylon's idols; her whole land will be put to shame, and all her slain will lie fallen in her midst.

⁴⁸ The heavens and the earth and all that is in them will sing in triumph over Babylon; for marauders from the north will overrun her. This is the word of the LORD.

⁴⁹ Babylon in her turn must fall because of Israel's slain, as the slain of all the world have fallen because of Babylon.

⁵⁰ You that have escaped the sword, go, do not linger. Remember the LORD from afar and let Jerusalem come to your minds.

⁵¹ By the reproaches we have heard we are put to shame and our faces are covered with confusion, because

foreigners have entered the sacred courts of the LORD's house.

⁵²A time is coming therefore, says the LORD, when I shall punish her idols, and throughout her land the wounded will groan.

⁵³Were Babylon to reach the skies and make strong her towers in the heights, I should still send marauders against her. This is the word of the LORD.

⁵⁴Cries of agony are heard from Babylon, sounds of great destruction from Chaldea.

⁵⁵The advancing wave booms and roars like mighty waters, for the LORD is despoiling Babylon and will silence the noise of the city.

⁵⁶Marauders march on Babylon herself, her warriors are captured and their bows broken; for the LORD, a God of retribution, will repay in full.

⁵⁷I shall make her princes and her wise men drunk, her viceroys and governors and warriors, and they will sink into unending sleep, never to wake again. This is the word of the King, whose name is the LORD of Hosts.

⁵⁸The LORD of Hosts says: The walls of broad Babylon will be razed to the ground, her lofty gates set on fire. Worthless now is the thing for which peoples toiled; nations wore themselves out for a mere nothing.

⁵⁹The instructions given by the prophet Jeremiah to the quartermaster Seraiah son of Neriah and grandson of Mahseiah, when he went to Babylon with King Zedekiah of Judah in the fourth year of his reign.

⁶⁰Jeremiah, having written on a scroll a full description of the disaster which would befall Babylon,

⁶¹said to Seraiah, When you come to Babylon, see that you read all these words aloud;

⁶²then say, LORD, you have declared your purpose to destroy this place and leave it with nothing living in it, man or beast; it will be desolate, for ever waste.

⁶³When you have finished reading the scroll, tie a stone to it and throw it into the middle of the Euphrates

⁶⁴with the words, So will Babylon sink, never to rise again after the disaster

which I am going to bring on her. Thus far are the collected sayings of Jeremiah.

52¹ ZEDEKIAH was twenty-one years old when he came to the throne, and he reigned in Jerusalem for eleven years; his mother was Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah from Libnah.

²Zedekiah did what was wrong in the eyes of the LORD, as Jehoiakim had done.

³Jerusalem and Judah so angered the LORD that in the end he banished them from his sight. Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

⁴In the ninth year of his reign, on the tenth day of the tenth month, King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon advanced with his whole army against Jerusalem, invested it, and erected siege-towers against it on every side;

⁵the siege lasted till the eleventh year of King Zedekiah.

⁶In the fourth month of that year, on the ninth day of the month, while famine raged in the city and there was no food for the people,

⁷the city capitulated. When King Zedekiah of Judah saw this, he and all

his armed escort left the city by night and, fleeing through the gate called Between the Two Walls near the king's garden, they made their way towards the Arabah, although the Chaldeans were surrounding the city.

⁸The Chaldean soldiers set off in pursuit and overtook King Zedekiah in the lowlands of Jericho; his men had all abandoned him and scattered.

⁹Zedekiah, when captured, was brought before the king of Babylon at Riblah in the territory of Hamath, where sentence was passed on him.

¹⁰The king of Babylon had Zedekiah's sons slain before his eyes; he also put to death all the princes of Judah at Riblah.

¹¹Then Zedekiah's eyes were blinded, and the king of Babylon bound him with bronze fetters and brought him to Babylon, where he committed him to prison till the day of his death.

¹²On the tenth day of the fifth month, in the nineteenth year of King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, Nebuzaradan, captain of the king of Babylon's bodyguard, came to Jerusalem,

¹³and set fire to the house of the LORD and the royal palace, indeed all the houses in the city; every notable person's house was burnt down.

¹⁴The whole Chaldaean force under the captain of the guard pulled down all the walls encircling Jerusalem.

¹⁵Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard, deported the rest of the people left in the city, those who had defected to the king of Babylon, and the remaining artisans.

¹⁶He left behind only the poorest class of people, to be vine-dressers and labourers.

¹⁷The Chaldeans broke up the bronze pillars in the house of the LORD, the trolleys, and the bronze Sea, and carried off all the metal to Babylon.

¹⁸They removed also the pots, shovels, snuffers, tossing-bowls, saucers, and all the bronze vessels used in the service of the temple.

¹⁹The captain of the guard took away the precious metal, whether gold or silver, of which the cups, firepans, tossing-bowls, pots, lampstands, saucers, and flagons were made.

²⁰The bronze of the two pillars, of the one Sea, and of the twelve oxen supporting it, which King Solomon had made for the house of the LORD, was beyond weighing.

²¹One pillar was eighteen cubits high and twelve cubits in circumference; it was hollow, but the metal was four fingers thick.

²²It had a capital of bronze, five cubits high, and a decoration of network and pomegranates ran all round it, wholly of bronze. The other pillar, with its pomegranates, was exactly like it.

²³Ninety-six pomegranates were exposed to view and there were a hundred in all on the network all round.

²⁴The captain of the guard took Seraiah the chief priest, Zephaniah the deputy chief priest, and the three on duty at the entrance;

²⁵he took also from the city a eunuch who was in charge of the fighting men, seven of those with right of access to the king who were still in the city, the adjutant-general whose duty was to muster the army for war, and sixty men of the people who were still there.

²⁶These Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard, brought to the king of Babylon at Riblah.

²⁷There, in the land of Hamath, the king had them flogged and put to death. So Judah went into exile from its own land.

²⁸These were the people deported by Nebuchadrezzar in the seventh year of his reign: three thousand and twenty-three Judaeans.

²⁹In the eighteenth year, eight hundred and thirty-two people from Jerusalem;

³⁰in the twenty-third year, seven hundred and forty-five Judaeans were deported by Nebuzaradan the captain of the bodyguard: in all four thousand six hundred people.

³¹In the thirty-seventh year of the exile of King Jehoiachin of Judah, on the twenty-fifth day of the twelfth month, King Evil-merodach of Babylon in the year of his accession showed favour to King Jehoiachin of Judah. He released him from prison,

³²treated him kindly, and gave him a seat at table above the kings with him in Babylon.

³³ Jehoiachin, discarding his prison clothes, lived as a pensioner of the king for the rest of his life.

³⁴ For his maintenance a regular daily allowance was given him by the king of Babylon to the day of his death.

Lamentations

1 ¹ HOW DESERTED lies the city, once thronging with people! Once great among nations, now become a widow; once queen among provinces, now put to forced labour!

² She weeps bitterly in the night; tears run down her cheeks. Among all who loved her she has no one to bring her comfort. Her friends have all betrayed her; they have become her enemies.

³ Judah has wasted away through affliction and endless servitude. Living among the nations, she has found no resting-place; her persecutors all fell on her in her sore distress.

⁴ The approaches to Zion mourn, for no pilgrims attend her sacred feasts; all her gates are desolate. Her priests groan, her maidens are made to suffer. How bitter is her fate!

⁵ Her adversaries have become her masters, her enemies take their ease, for the LORD has made her suffer because

of her countless sins. Her young children are gone, taken captive by an adversary.

⁶All splendour has vanished from the daughter of Zion. Her princes have become like deer that can find no pasture. They run on, their strength spent, pursued by the hunter.

⁷In the days of Jerusalem's misery and restlessness she called to mind all the treasures which were hers from days of old, when her people fell into the power of adversaries and she had no one to help her. The adversaries looked on, laughing at her downfall.

⁸Jerusalem, greatly sinning, was treated like a filthy rag. All who had honoured her held her cheap, now they had seen her nakedness. What could she do but groan and turn away?

⁹Uncleanness afflicted her body, and she gave no thought to her fate. Her fall was beyond belief and there was no one to comfort her. Look, LORD, on my misery, for the enemy has triumphed.

¹⁰The adversary stretched out his hand to seize all her treasures. Indeed she saw Gentiles invade her sanctuary,

Gentiles forbidden by you to enter the assembly, for it was yours.

¹¹All her people groaned, they begged for bread; they bartered their treasures for food to regain their strength.

Look, LORD, and see how cheap I am accounted.

¹²Is it nothing to you, you passers-by? If only you would look and see: is there any agony like mine, like these torments which the LORD made me suffer on the day of his fierce anger?

¹³From heaven he sent down fire, which ran through my bones; he spread out a net to catch my feet, and turned me back; he made me an example of desolation, racked with sickness all day long.

¹⁴My sins were bound like a yoke tied fast by his own hand; set upon my neck, it caused my strength to fail. The LORD abandoned me to my sins, and in their grip I could not stand.

¹⁵The Lord treated with scorn all the mighty men within my walls; he marshalled rank on rank against me to crush my young warriors. The Lord trod

down, like grapes in the winepress, the virgin daughter of Judah.

¹⁶This is why I weep over my plight, why tears stream from my eyes: because any who might comfort me and renew my strength are far away from me; my children have become desolate, for the enemy is victorious.

¹⁷Zion lifted her hands in prayer, but there was no one to comfort her; the LORD ordered Jacob's enemies to beset him on every side. In their midst Jerusalem became an unclean thing to be shunned.

¹⁸The LORD was in the right, for I rebelled against his command. Listen, all you nations, and look on my agony: my maidens and my young men are gone into captivity.

¹⁹I called to my lovers, but they let me down; my priests and my elders perished in the city while seeking food to keep themselves alive.

²⁰LORD, see how sorely distressed I am. My bowels writhe in anguish and my heart within me turns over, because I wantonly rebelled. In the street the

sword brings bereavement, like the plague within the house.

²¹ People have heard when I groan with no one to comfort me. My enemies, hearing of my plight, all rejoiced at what you had done. Hasten the day you have promised when they will suffer as I do!

²² Let all their evil deeds come before you; torment them in their turn, as you have tormented me on account of all my sins; for I groan continually and I am sick at heart.

2¹ WHAT darkness the Lord in his anger has brought on the daughter of Zion! He hurled down from heaven to earth the honour of Israel, with scant regard for Zion his footstool on the day of his anger.

² The Lord overwhelmed without pity all the dwellings of Jacob. In his wrath he overthrew the strongholds of the daughter of Judah; he brought to the ground in dishonour the kingdom and its rulers.

³ In his fierce anger he hacked off the horn of Israel's pride; he withdrew his protecting hand at the approach of the

enemy; he blazed in Jacob like flaming fire that rages far and wide.

⁴In enmity he bent his bow; like an adversary he took his stand, and with his strong arm he slew all those who had been his delight. He poured out his fury like fire on the tent of the daughter of Zion.

⁵The Lord played an enemy's part and overwhelmed Israel, overthrowing all their mansions and laying their strongholds in ruins. To the daughter of Judah he brought unending sorrow.

⁶He stripped his tabernacle as if it were a garden, and made the place of assembly a ruin. In Zion the LORD blotted out all memory of festal assembly and of sabbath; king and priest alike he spurned in the heat of his anger.

⁷The Lord rejected his own altar and abandoned his sanctuary. The walls of Zion's mansions he delivered into the power of the enemy; in the LORD's house they raised shouts as on a festal day.

⁸The LORD was resolved to destroy the wall of the daughter of Zion; he took its measure with his line and did not

scruple to demolish it. He made rampart and wall lament, and both together lay dejected.

⁹He has shattered the bars of her gates, and the gates themselves have sunk into the ground. Her king and rulers are exiled among the Gentiles; there is no direction from priests, and her prophets have received no vision from the LORD.

¹⁰The elders of Zion sit on the ground in silence; they have cast dust on their heads and put on sackcloth. The maidens of Jerusalem bow their heads to the ground.

¹¹My eyes are blinded with tears, my bowels writhe in anguish. My bile is spilt on the earth because of my people's wound, as children and infants lie fainting in the streets of the city.

¹²They cry to their mothers, Where is there bread and wine? -- as they faint like wounded things in the streets of the city, gasping out their lives in their mothers' bosoms.

¹³How can I cheer you? Whose plight is like yours, daughter of Jerusalem? To what can I compare you for your comfort, virgin daughter of Zion? For

your wound gapes as wide as the ocean
-- who can heal you?

¹⁴The visions that your prophets saw for you were a false and painted sham. They did not bring home to you your guilt so as to reverse your fortunes. The visions they saw for you were delusions, false and fraudulent.

¹⁵All those who pass by snap their fingers at you; they hiss and wag their heads at the daughter of Jerusalem, saying, Is this the city once called perfect in beauty, the joy of the whole earth?

¹⁶All your enemies jeer at you with open mouths; they hiss and grind their teeth, saying, Here we are, this is the day we have waited for; we have lived to see it.

¹⁷The LORD has done what he planned to do, he has fulfilled his threat, all that he decreed from days of old. He has demolished without pity and let the enemy rejoice over you, filling your adversaries with pride.

¹⁸Cry to the Lord from the heart at the wall of the daughter of Zion; let your tears run down like a torrent day and

night. Give yourself not a moment's rest, let your tears never cease.

¹⁹Arise, cry aloud in the night; at the beginning of every watch pour out your heart like water before the presence of the Lord. Lift up your hands to him for the lives of your children, who are fainting with hunger at every street corner.

²⁰LORD, look and see: who is it you have thus tormented? Must women eat the fruit of their wombs, the children they have held in their arms? Should priest and prophet be slain in the sanctuary of the Lord?

²¹There in the streets both young and old lie prostrate on the ground. My maidens and my young men have fallen by the sword; you have slain them on the day of your anger, slaughtered them without pity.

²²You summoned my enemies from every side, like men assembled for a festival; on the day of the LORD's anger no one escaped, not one survived. All whom I have held in my arms and reared my enemies have destroyed.

3¹ I am the man who has known affliction under the rod of the wrath of the LORD.

² It was I whom he led away and left to walk in darkness, where no light is.

³ Against me alone he has turned his hand, and so it is all day long.

⁴ He has wasted away my flesh and my skin and broken my bones;

⁵ he has built up as walls around me bitterness and hardship;

⁶ he has cast me into a place of darkness like those long dead.

⁷ He has hemmed me in so that I cannot escape; he has weighed me down with fetters.

⁸ Even when I cry out and plead for help he rejects my prayer.

⁹ He has barred my road with blocks of stone and entangled my way.

¹⁰ He lies in wait for me like a bear or a lion lurking in a covert.

¹¹ He has forced me aside, thrown me down, and left me desolate.

¹² He has bent his bow and made me the target for his arrows;

¹³ he has pierced right to my kidneys with shafts drawn from his quiver.

¹⁴I have become a laughing-stock to all nations, the butt of their mocking songs all day.

¹⁵He has given me my fill of bitter herbs and made me drink deep of wormwood.

¹⁶He has broken my teeth on gravel; racked with pain, I am fed on ashes.

¹⁷Peace has gone from my life and I have forgotten what prosperity is.

¹⁸Then I cry out that my strength has gone and so has my hope in the LORD.

¹⁹The memory of my distress and my wanderings is wormwood and gall.

²⁰I remember them indeed and am filled with despondency.

²¹I shall wait patiently because I take this to heart:

²²The LORD's love is surely not exhausted, nor has his compassion failed;

²³they are new every morning, so great is his constancy.

²⁴The LORD, I say, is all that I have; therefore I shall wait for him patiently.

²⁵The LORD is good to those who look to him, to anyone who seeks him;

²⁶it is good to wait in patience for deliverance by the LORD.

²⁷ It is good for a man to bear the yoke from youth.

²⁸ Let him sit alone in silence if it is heavy on him;

²⁹ let him lie face downwards on the ground, and there may yet be hope;

³⁰ let him offer his cheek to the smiter and endure full measure of abuse.

³¹ For rejection by the Lord does not last for ever.

³² He may punish, yet he will have compassion in the fullness of his unfailing love;

³³ he does not willingly afflict or punish any mortal.

³⁴ To trample underfoot prisoners anywhere on earth,

³⁵ to deprive a man of his rights in defiance of the Most High,

³⁶ to pervert justice in the courts -- such things the Lord has never approved.

³⁷ Who can command and have it done if the Lord has forbidden it?

³⁸ Do not both bad and good proceed from the mouth of the Most High?

³⁹ Why should any man living complain, any mortal who has sinned?

⁴⁰Let us examine our ways and test them and turn back to the LORD;

⁴¹let us lift up our hearts and our hands to God in heaven, saying:

⁴²We have sinned and rebelled, and you have not forgiven.

⁴³You have covered us in anger, pursued us, and slain without pity;

⁴⁴you have covered yourself with cloud beyond reach of our prayers;

⁴⁵you have treated us as scum and refuse among the nations.

⁴⁶Our enemies all jeer at us with open mouths.

⁴⁷Before us lie hunter's scare and pit, devastation and ruin.

⁴⁸My eyes run with streams of water because of my people's wound.

⁴⁹My eyes stream with unceasing tears and refuse all comfort,

⁵⁰while the LORD looks down and sees from heaven.

⁵¹My eyes ache because of the fate of all the women of my city.

⁵²Those who for no reason were my enemies drove me cruelly like a bird;

⁵³ to silence me they thrust me alive into the pit and closed the opening with a boulder;

⁵⁴ waters rose above my head, and I said, My end has come.

⁵⁵ But I called, LORD, on your name from the depths of the pit;

⁵⁶ you heard my plea: Do not turn a deaf ear when I cry out for relief.

⁵⁷ You came near when I called to you; you said, Have no fear.

⁵⁸ Lord, you pleaded my cause; you came to my rescue.

⁵⁹ You saw the injustice done to me, LORD, and gave judgement in my favour;

⁶⁰ you saw all their vindictive behaviour, all their plotting against me.

⁶¹ You heard their bitter scorn, LORD, all their plotting,

⁶² the whispering and murmuring of my adversaries the livelong day.

⁶³ See how, whether they sit or stand, I am the object of their taunts.

⁶⁴ Pay them back for their deeds, LORD, pay them as they deserve.

⁶⁵ Show them how hard your heart can be, how little concern you have for them.

⁶⁶Pursue them in anger and wipe them out from beneath your heavens, LORD.

4¹How dulled is the gold, how tarnished the fine gold! The stones of the sanctuary lie strewn at every street corner.

²See Zion's precious sons, once worth their weight in finest gold, now counted as clay jars, the work of any potter's hand.

³Even whales uncover the teat and suckle their young; but the daughters of my people are heartless as the ostriches of the desert.

⁴With thirst the sucking infant's tongue cleaves to the roof of its mouth; young children beg for bread, but no one offers them a crumb.

⁵Those who once fed delicately are desolate in the streets; those brought up in purple garments now grovel on refuse heaps.

⁶The penalty inflicted on my people is worse than the punishment of Sodom, which suffered overthrow in a moment, and no hands were wrung.

⁷Her crowned princes were once purer than snow, whiter than milk; they were

ruddier than branching coral; their limbs were lapis lazuli.

⁸But their faces turned blacker than soot, and no one knew them in the streets; the skin was shrivelled tight over their bones, dry as touchwood.

⁹Those who died by the sword were more fortunate than those who died of hunger, who wasted away, deprived of the produce of the field.

¹⁰With their own hands tender-hearted women boiled their own children; their children became their food on the day of my people's wounding.

¹¹The LORD glutted his rage and poured forth his fierce anger; he kindled a fire in Zion that burnt to the very foundations.

¹²No one, neither the kings of the earth nor any other inhabitant of the world, believed that any adversary, any foe could penetrate within the gates of Jerusalem.

¹³It happened for the sins of her prophets, for the crimes of her priests, who had shed within her walls the blood of the righteous.

¹⁴They wandered blindly in the streets; they are so stained with blood that no one would touch even their garments.

¹⁵Go away! Unclean! people cried to them. Away! Do not come near! They hastened away, wandering among the nations, unable to find any resting-place.

¹⁶The LORD himself scattered them, he thought of them no more; he showed no favour to priests, no pity for elders.

¹⁷Still we strain our eyes, looking in vain for help. We have watched and watched for a nation that proved powerless to save.

¹⁸When we go out, we take to byways to avoid the public streets; our days are all but finished, our end has come.

¹⁹Our pursuers have shown themselves swifter than eagles in the heavens; they are hot on our trail over the hills, they waylay us in the wilderness.

²⁰The LORD's anointed, the breath of life to us, was caught in their traps; although we had thought to live among the nations, safe under his protection.

²¹Rejoice and be glad, daughters of Edom, dwellers in the land of Uz. Yet the cup will pass to you in your turn,

and when drunk you will expose your nakedness.

²²The punishment for your sin, daughter of Zion, is now complete, and never again will you be carried into exile. But you, daughter of Edom, your sin will be punished, and your guilt revealed.

5¹REMEMBER, LORD, what has befallen us; look, and see how we are scorned.

²The land we possessed is turned over to strangers, our homes to foreigners.

³We are like orphans, without a father; our mothers are like widows.

⁴We have to buy water to drink, water which is ours; our own wood can be had only for payment.

⁵The yoke is on our necks, we are harassed; we are weary, but allowed no rest.

⁶We came to terms, now with Egypt, now with Assyria, to provide us with food.

⁷Our forefathers sinned; now they are no more, and we must bear the burden of their guilt.

⁸Slaves have become our rulers, and there is no one to free us from their power.

⁹We must bring in our food from the wilderness at the risk of our lives in the scorching heat.

¹⁰Our skins are blackened as in a furnace by the ravages of starvation.

¹¹Women were raped in Zion, virgins ravished in the towns of Judah.

¹²Princes were hung up by their hands; elders received no respect.

¹³Young men toil, grinding at the mill; boys stagger under loads of wood.

¹⁴Old men have left off their sessions at the city gate; young men no longer pluck the strings.

¹⁵Joy has vanished from our hearts; our dancing is turned to mourning.

¹⁶The garlands have fallen from our heads. Woe to us, sinners that we are!

¹⁷This is why we are sick at heart; all this is why our eyes grow dim:

¹⁸Mount Zion is desolate and overrun with jackals.

¹⁹LORD, your reign is for ever, your throne endures from age to age.

²⁰Why do you forget us so completely and forsake us these many days?

²¹LORD, turn us back to you, and we shall come back; renew our days as in times long past.

²²But you have utterly rejected us; your anger against us has been great indeed.

Ezekiel

1 ¹ ON the fifth day of the fourth month in the thirtieth year, while I was among the exiles by the river Kebar, the heavens were opened and I saw visions from God.

² On the fifth day of the month in the fifth year of the exile of King Jehoiachin,

³ the word of the LORD came to the priest Ezekiel son of Buzi, in Chaldaea by the river Kebar, and there the LORD's hand was upon him.

⁴ In my vision I saw a storm-wind coming from the north, a vast cloud with flashes of fire and brilliant light about it; and within was a radiance like brass, glowing in the heart of the flames.

⁵ In the fire was the likeness of four living creatures in human form.

⁶ Each had four faces and each four wings;

⁷ their legs were straight, and their hoofs were like the hoofs of a calf, glistening and gleaming like bronze.

⁸Under the wings on each of the four sides were human hands; all four creatures had faces and wings,

⁹and the wings of one touched those of another. They did not turn as they moved; each creature went straight forward.

¹⁰This is what their faces were like: all four had a human face and a lion's face on the right, on the left the face of an ox and the face of an eagle.

¹¹Their wings were spread upwards; each living creature had one pair touching those of its neighbour, while one pair covered its body.

¹²They moved forward in whatever direction the spirit went; they never swerved from their course.

¹³The appearance of the creatures was as if fire from burning coals or torches were darting to and fro among them; the fire was radiant, and out of the fire came lightning.

¹⁴[[EMPTY]]

¹⁵As I looked at the living creatures, I saw wheels on the ground, one beside each of the four.

¹⁶The wheels sparkled like topaz, and they were all alike: in form and working they were like a wheel inside a wheel,

¹⁷and when they moved in any of the four directions they never swerved from their course.

¹⁸I saw that they had rims, and the rims were covered with eyes all around.

¹⁹When the living creatures moved, the wheels moved beside them; when the creatures rose from the ground, the wheels rose;

²⁰they moved in whichever direction the spirit went; and the wheels rose together with them, for the spirit of the creatures was in the wheels.

²¹When one moved, the other moved; when one halted, the other halted; when the creatures rose from the ground, the wheels rose together with them, for the spirit of the creatures was in the wheels.

²²Above the heads of the living creatures was, as it were, a vault glittering like a sheet of ice, awe-inspiring, stretched over their heads above them.

²³Under the vault their wings were spread straight out, touching one

another, while one pair covered the body of each.

²⁴I heard, too, the noise of their wings; when they moved it was like the noise of a mighty torrent or a thunderclap, like the noise of a crowd or an armed camp; when they halted their wings dropped.

²⁵A voice was heard from above the vault over their heads, as they halted with drooping wings.

²⁶Above the vault over their heads there appeared, as it were, a sapphire in the shape of a throne, and exalted on the throne a form in human likeness.

²⁷From his waist upwards I saw what might have been brass glowing like fire in a furnace; and from his waist downwards I saw what looked like fire. Radiance encircled him.

²⁸Like a rainbow in the clouds after the rain was the sight of that encircling radiance; it was like the appearance of the glory of the LORD. When I saw this I prostrated myself, and I heard a voice:

2¹Stand up, O man, he said, and let me talk with you.

²As he spoke, a spirit came into me and stood me on my feet, and I listened to him speaking.

³He said to me, O man, I am sending you to the Israelites, rebels who have rebelled against me. They and their forefathers have been in revolt against me to this very day,

⁴and this generation to which I am sending you is stubborn and obstinate. You are to say to them, These are the words of the Lord GOD,

⁵and they will know that they have a prophet among them, whether they listen or whether in their rebelliousness they refuse to listen.

⁶But you, O man, must not be afraid of them or of what they say, though they resist and reject you and you are sitting on scorpions. There is nothing to fear in their rebellious words, nothing to make you afraid in their rebellious looks.

⁷You must speak my words to them, whether they listen or whether in their rebelliousness they refuse to listen.

⁸But you, O man, must heed what I say and not be rebellious like them. Open

your mouth and eat what I am giving you.

⁹I saw a hand stretched out to me, holding a scroll.

¹⁰He unrolled it before me, and it was written on both sides, back and front, with dirges and laments and words of woe.

3¹ Then he said to me, O man, eat what is in front of you; eat this scroll; then go and speak to the Israelites.

²I opened my mouth and he gave me the scroll to eat,

³saying, O man, swallow this scroll I give you, and eat your fill. I ate it, and it tasted as sweet as honey to me.

⁴O man, he said to me, go to the Israelites and declare my message to them.

⁵It is not to people whose speech is thick and difficult you are sent, but to Israelites.

⁶I am not sending you to great nations whose speech is so thick and so difficult that you cannot make out what they say; had I sent you to them they would have listened to you.

⁷ But the Israelites will refuse to listen to you, for they refuse to listen to me; all of them are brazen-faced and stubborn-hearted.

⁸ But I shall make you a match for them. I shall make you as brazen and as stubborn as they are.

⁹ I shall make your brow like adamant, harder than flint. Do not fear them, do not be terrified by them, rebellious though they are.

¹⁰ He went on: Listen carefully, O man, to all that I have to say to you, and take it to heart.

¹¹ Then go to your fellow-countrymen in exile and say to them, These are the words of the Lord GOD, whether they listen or refuse to listen.

¹² A spirit lifted me up, and I heard behind me a fierce rushing sound as the glory of the LORD rose from his place.

¹³ I heard the sound of the living creatures' wings brushing against one another, and the sound of the wheels beside them, a fierce rushing sound.

¹⁴ A spirit lifted me and carried me along, and I went full of exaltation, the power of the LORD strong upon me.

¹⁵ So I came to the exiles at Tel-abib who were settled by the river Kebar. For seven days I stayed there among them in a state of consternation.

¹⁶ At the end of seven days this word of the LORD came to me:

¹⁷ I have appointed you, O man, a watchman for the Israelites; you will pass to them the warnings you receive from me.

¹⁸ If I pronounce sentence of death on a wicked person and you have not warned him or spoken out to dissuade him from his wicked ways and so save his life, that person will die because of his sin, but I shall hold you answerable for his death.

¹⁹ But if you have warned him and he persists in his wicked ways, he will die because of his sin, but you will have discharged your duty.

²⁰ Again, if someone who is righteous goes astray and does wrong, and I cause his downfall, he will die because you have not warned him. He will die for his sin; the righteous deeds he has done will not be taken into account, and I shall hold you responsible for his death.

²¹ But if you have warned the righteous person not to sin and he does not sin, then he will have saved his life because he heeded the warning, and you will have discharged your duty.

²² THE LORD's hand was upon me there, and he said to me, Rise, go out into the plain, and there I shall speak to you.

²³ I arose, and when I went out into the plain, the glory of the LORD was there, like the glory which I had seen by the river Kebar, and I prostrated myself.

²⁴ Then a spirit came and set me on my feet. The LORD spoke to me: Go, he said, and shut yourself up in your house.

²⁵ You will be tied and bound with ropes, O man, so that you cannot go out among the people.

²⁶ I shall make your tongue cleave to the roof of your mouth and you will be unable to speak and so rebuke them, that rebellious people.

²⁷ But when I have something to say to you, I shall give you back the power of speech. Then you will declare to them, This is what the Lord GOD said. If anyone will listen, he may listen; and if

anyone refuses to listen, he may refuse. Rebels indeed they are!

4¹ O man, take a tile and lay it in front of you. Draw a city on it, the city of Jerusalem:

² portray it under siege, erect towers against it, raise a siege-ramp, put mantelets in position, and bring up battering-rams on every side.

³ Then take a griddle, and put it as if it were an iron wall between you and the city. Keep your eyes fixed on the city; it will be the besieged and you the besieger. This will be a sign to the Israelites.

⁴ Next, lie on your left side, putting the weight of Israel's punishment on it; for as many days as you lie on that side you will be bearing their punishment.

⁵ I ordain that you bear Israel's punishment for three hundred and ninety days, allowing one day for each year of their punishment.

⁶ When you have completed these days, lie down again, this time on your right side, and bear Judah's punishment; I ordain for you forty days, one day for each year.

⁷Then fix your gaze towards the siege of Jerusalem and with bared arm prophesy against it.

⁸See how I tie you with ropes so that you cannot turn over from one side to the other until you complete your days of siege.

⁹Take wheat, barley, beans, lentils, millet, and vetches, and mixing them all in one bowl make your bread from them. You are to eat it during the three hundred and ninety days you spend lying on your side.

¹⁰Twenty shekels weight is your ration for a day, eaten at a set time each day.

¹¹You are to measure out your drinking water; you may drink a sixth of a hin at a set time each day.

¹²The bread you are to eat is to be baked like barley cakes, with human dung as fuel, and you must bake it where people can see you.'

¹³The LORD said, This is the unclean bread that the Israelites will eat among the peoples where I shall banish them.

¹⁴I protested: Lord GOD, I have never been made unclean. Never in my whole life have I eaten what has died a natural

death or been mauled by wild beasts; no tainted meat has ever passed my lips.

¹⁵He answered, Very well; I shall allow you to use cow dung instead of human dung to bake your bread.

¹⁶He then said, O man, I am cutting short their daily bread in Jerusalem; people will weigh out anxiously the bread they eat, and measure with dismay the water they drink.

¹⁷So their food and their water will run short until dismay spreads from one to another and they waste away because of their iniquity.

5¹ O man, take a sharp sword, and use it like a razor to shave your head and your chin. Then take scales and divide the hair into three lots.

²When the siege comes to an end, burn one third of the hair in a fire in the centre of the city; cut up one third with the sword round about the city; scatter the last third to the wind, and I shall follow it with drawn sword.

³Take a few of these hairs and tie them up in a fold of your robe.

⁴Then take others, throw them into the fire and burn them. Say to all Israel:

⁵These are the words of the Lord GOD: This city of Jerusalem I have set among the nations, with lands all around her,

⁶but she has rebelled against my laws and my statutes more wickedly than those nations and lands; for her people have rejected my laws and refused to conform to my statutes.

⁷The Lord GOD says: Since you have been more insubordinate than the nations around you and have not conformed to my statutes and have not kept my laws or even the laws of the nations around you,

⁸therefore, says the Lord GOD, I in turn shall be against you; in the sight of the nations I shall execute judgements in your midst,

⁹such judgements as I have never executed before, nor ever shall again, so abominable have all your offences been.

¹⁰Parents will eat their children and children their parents in your midst, Jerusalem; I shall execute judgements on you, and any who survive in you I shall scatter to the four winds.

¹¹As I live, says the Lord GOD, because you have defiled my holy place with all

your vile and abominable rites, I in turn shall destroy you and show no pity; I shall spare no one.

¹²One third of your people will die by pestilence or perish by famine in your midst; one third will fall by the sword in the country round about; and one third I shall scatter to the four winds and follow with drawn sword.

¹³When my anger is spent and my fury is abated I shall be appeased; when my fury against them is spent they will know that I, the LORD, have spoken in my jealousy.

¹⁴I have reduced you to a ruin, an object of mockery to the nations around you, and all who pass by will see it.

¹⁵You will be an object of mockery and abuse, an appalling lesson to the nations round about, when I pass sentence on you and execute judgement in anger and fury. I, the LORD, have spoken.

¹⁶When I loose the deadly arrows of famine against you, arrows of destruction, I shall shoot them to destroy you. I shall send one famine after another on you and cut off your daily bread;

¹⁷I shall unleash famine and savage beasts on you, and they will leave you childless. Pestilence and bloodshed will sweep through you, and I shall bring the sword against you. I, the LORD, have spoken.

6¹ THIS word of the LORD came to me:

²O man, face towards the mountains of Israel and prophesy against them

³and say: Mountains of Israel, listen to the word of the Lord GOD. He says this to the mountains and hills, the ravines and valleys: I am bringing a sword against you, and I shall destroy your shrines.

⁴Your altars will be devastated, your incense-altars shattered, and I shall throw down your slain in front of your idols.

⁵I shall lay the corpses of the Israelites before their idols and scatter your bones around your altars.

⁶In all your settlements the blood-spattered altars will be laid waste and the shrines devastated. Your altars will be laid waste and devastated, your idols shattered and brought to an end, your

incense-altars hewn down, and the gods you have made will be wiped out.

⁷As the slain fall all about you, you will know that I am the LORD.

⁸But among the nations there will be some of you that have survived the sword, and are scattered in foreign lands.

⁹They will remember me in exile among the nations, when I destroy their wanton and wayward hearts and their eyes which rove wantonly after their idols. Then they will loathe themselves for the evil they have done with all their abominations.

¹⁰Then they will know that I, the LORD, was uttering no vain threat when I said that I would inflict this evil on them.

¹¹The Lord GOD says: Beat your hands together, stamp your feet, bemoan all your vile abominations, people of Israel, who will fall by sword, famine, and pestilence.

¹²Those far away will die by pestilence; those nearer home will fall by the sword; any who survive or are spared will die by famine, and so at last my anger at them will be spent.

¹³You will know that I am the LORD when their slain fall among the idols round their altars, on every high hill or mountaintop, under every spreading tree or leafy terebinth, wherever they have offered sweet-smelling sacrifices to appease all their idols.

¹⁴I shall stretch out my hand over them and reduce the land in all their settlements to a desolate waste, more desolate than the desert of Riblah. Then they will know that I am the LORD.

7 ¹This word of the LORD came to me:
²O man, the Lord GOD says to the land of Israel: The end is coming on the four corners of the earth.

³Now the end is upon you; I shall unleash my anger against you; I shall call you to account for your conduct and bring all your abominations on your own heads.

⁴I shall neither show pity, nor spare you; I shall make you suffer for your conduct and the abominations that are in your midst. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

⁵The Lord GOD says: Disasters are coming, one after another.

⁶The end is coming; it is roused against you.

⁷Doom is coming upon you, dweller in the land; the time is coming, the day is near, a day of panic and not of rejoicing.

⁸Very soon I shall vent my wrath on you and let my anger spend itself. I shall call you to account for your conduct and bring all your abominations on your own heads.

⁹I shall neither show pity nor spare you; I shall make you suffer for your conduct and the abominations that are in your midst. Then you will know that it is I, the LORD, who struck you.

¹⁰The day is coming, doom is here; it has burst upon them. Injustice buds, insolence blossoms.

¹¹Violence leads to flagrant injustice. Is it not their fault, the fault of their turbulence and tumult? There is nothing but turmoil in them.

¹²The time has come, the day has arrived; there is no joy for the buyer, no sorrow for the seller, for their turmoil has called forth my wrath.

¹³The seller will not recover what he has sold in their lifetime, for because of

all the turmoil the agreement will never be revoked, and because of their sin none will have a sure hold on life.

¹⁴The trumpet has sounded and all are ready, but no one goes to war, for their turmoil has called forth my wrath.

¹⁵Outside is the sword, inside are pestilence and famine; those in the country will die by the sword, those in the city will be devoured by famine and pestilence.

¹⁶If any escape like moaning doves and take to the mountains, there I shall slay them, each for his iniquity,

¹⁷while every hand hangs limp and every knee turns to water.

¹⁸They will go in sackcloth, shuddering from head to foot, with faces downcast and heads close shaved.

¹⁹They will fling their silver into the street and treat their gold like so much filth; their silver and gold will not avail to save them on the day of the LORD's fury. Their hunger will not be satisfied, nor their bellies filled; for their iniquity will be the cause of their downfall.

²⁰Their beautiful jewellery, which was their pride and delight, they have made

into vile, abominable images. Therefore I shall treat their jewellery as so much filth,

²¹ I shall hand it over as plunder to foreigners and as booty to earth's most evil nations, who will defile it.

²² I shall turn my face from them, while brigands encroach on my treasured land to defile it

²³ and create confusion, for the land is full of bloodshed and the city full of violence.

²⁴ I shall let in the most ruthless of nations to take possession of the houses; I shall quell the pride of the strong, and their sanctuaries will be profaned.

²⁵ Shuddering will come over my people, and they will look in vain for peace.

²⁶ Tempest will follow upon tempest and rumour upon rumour. People will pester a prophet for a vision; there will be no more guidance from a priest, no counsel from elders.

²⁷ The king will go mourning, the ruler will be clothed with terror, the hands of the people will shake with fright. I shall deal with them as they deserve, and call

them to account for their conduct. Then they will know that I am the LORD.

8¹ ON the fifth day of the sixth month in the sixth year, as I was sitting at home and the elders of Judah were sitting with me, suddenly I felt the power of the Lord GOD come upon me.

²I saw what looked like a man; from the waist down he seemed to be all fire and from the waist up to shine and glitter like brass.

³He stretched out what appeared to be a hand and took me by the forelock. In a vision from God a spirit lifted me up between earth and heaven, carried me to Jerusalem, and put me down at the entrance to the inner gate facing north, where stands the idolatrous image which arouses God's indignation.

⁴The glory of the God of Israel was there, like the vision I had seen in the plain.

⁵The LORD said to me, O man, look northwards. I did so, and there to the north of the Altar Gate, at the entrance, was that idolatrous image.

⁶O man, he said, do you see what they are doing? The monstrous abominations

which the Israelites practise here are making me abandon my sanctuary, and you will see even greater abominations.

⁷Then he brought me to the entrance of the court, where I saw that there was a hole in the wall.

⁸O man, he said to me, dig through the wall. I did so, and made an opening.

⁹Go in, he said, and see the vile abominations they practise here.

¹⁰I went in and saw figures of creeping things, beasts, and vermin, and all the idols of the Israelites, carved round the walls.

¹¹Standing in front of them were seventy elders of Israel, with Jaazaniah son of Shaphan in the middle, and each held a censer from which rose the fragrant smoke of incense.

¹²He said to me, O man, do you see what the elders of Israel are doing in darkness, each at the shrine of his own carved image? They think that the LORD does not see them, that he has forsaken the land.

¹³You will see even greater abominations practised by them, he said.

¹⁴Next he brought me to the gateway of the LORD's house which faces north; and there sat women wailing for Tammuz.

¹⁵O man, do you see that? he asked me. But you will see greater abominations than these.

¹⁶So he brought me to the inner court of the LORD's house, and there, by the entrance to the sanctuary of the LORD, between porch and altar, were some twenty-five men with their backs to the sanctuary and their faces to the east, prostrating themselves to the rising sun.

¹⁷He said to me, O man, do you see that? Do you think it a trifling matter for Judah to practise these abominations here? They have filled the land with violence and have provoked me to anger again and again. Look at them at their worship, holding twigs to their noses.

¹⁸I shall turn on them in my rage and show them no pity, nor spare them. Loudly though they cry to me, I shall not listen.

9¹A loud voice rang in my ears:
Here they come, those appointed to punish the city, each carrying his weapon of destruction.

²I saw six men approaching from the road that leads to the upper gate which faces north, each carrying a battle-club, and among them one was dressed in linen, with a writer's pen and ink at his waist; they advanced until they stood by the bronze altar.

³The glory of the God of Israel had risen from above the cherubim where it rested, and had come to the terrace of the temple. He called to the man dressed in linen, with pen and ink at his waist.

⁴Go through the city of Jerusalem, said the LORD, and mark with a cross the foreheads of those who groan and lament over all the abominations practised there.

⁵To the others I heard him say, Follow him through the city and deal out death; show no pity; spare no one.

⁶Kill and destroy men old and young, girls, little children, and women, but touch no one who bears the mark. Begin at my sanctuary. So they began with the elders in front of the temple.

⁷Defile the temple, he said, and fill the courts with dead bodies; then go out and spread death in the city.

⁸While the killing went on, I was left alone, and I threw myself on the ground, crying out, Lord GOD, are you going to destroy all the Israelites who are left, in this outpouring of your anger on Jerusalem?

⁹He answered, The iniquity of Israel and Judah is very great indeed; the land is full of bloodshed, the city is filled with injustice. They are saying, The LORD has forsaken the land and does not see.

¹⁰But I shall show no pity, nor spare them; I shall make their conduct recoil on their own heads.

¹¹When the man dressed in linen, with pen and ink at his waist, returned he reported: I have carried out your orders.

10¹Then in my vision I saw, above the vault over the heads of the cherubim, as it were a sapphire in the shape of a throne.

²The LORD said to the man dressed in linen, Come in between the circling wheels under the cherubim, and take a handful of the burning embers lying among the cherubim; then throw it over the city. As I watched he went in.

³The cherubim stood on the right side of the temple as the man entered, and a cloud filled the inner court.

⁴The glory of the LORD rose high above the cherubim and moved to the terrace of the temple; and the temple was filled with the cloud, while the radiance of the glory of the LORD filled the court.

⁵The sound of the wings of the cherubim could be heard as far as the outer court; it was as if God Almighty were speaking.

⁶When the man dressed in linen was told by the LORD to take fire from between the circling wheels and from among the cherubim, he went and stood by a wheel,

⁷and one of the cherubim reached out to the fire that was in their midst and, taking some fire, handed it to the man dressed in linen, who received it and went away.

⁸Under the wings of the cherubim there could be seen what looked like a human hand.

⁹I saw four wheels beside the cherubim, one wheel beside each

cherub. In appearance they were like sparkling topaz,

¹⁰and all four were alike, like a wheel inside a wheel.

¹¹When the cherubim moved in any of the four directions, they never swerved from their course; they went straight on in the direction in which their heads were turned, never swerving.

¹²Their whole bodies, the backs, hands, and wings of all four of them, as well as the wheels, were covered all over with eyes,

¹³and I could hear the whirring of the wheels.

¹⁴Each had four faces: the first was a cherub's face, the second a human face, the third a lion's face, and the fourth an eagle's face.

¹⁵The cherubim raised themselves from the ground, those same living creatures I had seen by the river Kebar.

¹⁶When they moved, the wheels moved beside them; when they lifted their wings and rose from the ground, the wheels did not move from their side.

¹⁷When one halted, the other halted; when one rose, the other rose, for the spirit of the creatures was in the wheels.

¹⁸The glory of the LORD left the temple terrace and halted above the cherubim.

¹⁹They spread their wings and raised themselves from the ground; I watched them go with the wheels beside them. They halted at the eastern gateway of the LORD's house, with the glory of the God of Israel over them.

²⁰These were the living creatures I had seen beneath the God of Israel at the river Kebar, and so I knew that they were cherubim.

²¹Each had four faces and four wings and what looked like human hands under their wings.

²²Their faces were like those I had seen in my vision by the river Kebar. They all moved straight forward.

11 ¹A spirit lifted me up and brought me to the eastward-facing gate of the LORD's house. There by the gateway I saw twenty-five men, among them two of high office, Jaazaniah son of Azzur and Pelatiah son of Benaiah.

²The LORD said to me, O man, these are the men who are planning mischief and offering bad advice in this city,

³saying, The time has not yet come to build; the city is a cooking pot and we are the meat in it.

⁴Therefore, he said, prophesy against them, O man, prophesy.

⁵The spirit of the LORD came upon me, and he told me to say, These are the words of the LORD: This is what you are saying to yourselves, you men of Israel; well do I know the thoughts that rise in your mind.

⁶You have caused the death of many in this city, heaping the streets with the dead.

⁷Therefore, this is what the Lord GOD says: The bodies of your victims, they are the meat, and the city is the cooking pot. But I shall drive you out of the city.

⁸You fear the sword, and it is a sword I shall bring on you, says the Lord GOD.

⁹I shall drive you out of the city and hand you over to a foreign power; I shall bring you to justice.

¹⁰You will fall by the sword when I bring you to judgement on the frontier

of Israel; thus you will know that I am the LORD.

¹¹ So the city will no longer be your cooking pot, nor you the meat in it; on the frontier of Israel I shall bring you to judgement.

¹² Then you will know that I am the LORD. You have not conformed to my statutes, nor kept my laws, but have followed the laws of the nations round about you.

¹³ While I was prophesying, Pelatiah son of Benaiah fell dead; and I threw myself on the ground, crying aloud, Lord GOD, are you going to make an end of all the Israelites who are left?

¹⁴ This word of the LORD came to me:

¹⁵ O man, they are your brothers and your kinsmen, this whole people of Israel, to whom the inhabitants now in Jerusalem have said, They are separated far from the LORD; the land has been made over to us to possess.

¹⁶ Say therefore: These are the words of the Lord GOD: When I sent them far away among the nations and dispersed them over the earth, for a little time I

became their sanctuary in the countries to which they had gone.

¹⁷Say therefore: These are the words of the Lord GOD: I shall gather you from among the nations and bring you together from the countries where you have been dispersed, and I shall give the land of Israel to you.

¹⁸When they come there, they will abolish all the vile and abominable practices.

¹⁹I shall give them singleness of heart and put a new spirit in them; I shall remove the heart of stone from their bodies and give them a heart of flesh,

²⁰so that they will conform to my statutes and keep my laws. They will be my people, and I shall be their God.

²¹But those whose hearts are set on vile and abominable practices will be made to answer for all they have done. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

²²Then the cherubim lifted their wings, with the wheels beside them and the glory of the God of Israel above them.

²³The glory of the LORD rose up and left the city, and halted on the mountain to the east of it.

²⁴In a vision sent by the spirit of God, a spirit lifted me up and brought me back to the exiles in Chaldaea. After the vision left me,

²⁵I told the exiles all that the LORD had revealed to me.

12¹ THIS word of the LORD came to me:

²O man, you are living among a rebellious people. They have eyes and see nothing; they have ears and hear nothing, because they are rebellious.

³You must pack what you need, O man, for going into exile, and set off by day while they look on. When they see you leave for exile, it may be they will realize that they are rebellious.

⁴Bring out your belongings, packed as if for exile; do it in the daytime in their presence, and then again at evening, still before them, leave home as if for exile;

⁵break a hole through the wall, and carry your belongings out through it.

⁶Shoulder your pack in their presence, and set off when dusk falls, with your face covered so that you cannot see the land, for I am making you a warning sign for the Israelites.

⁷ I did exactly as I had been told. In the daytime I brought out my belongings, packed for exile; at evening with my own hands I broke through the wall, and when dusk fell I shouldered my pack and carried it out before their eyes.

⁸ Next morning this word of the LORD came to me:

⁹ O man, the Israelites, that rebellious people, have asked you what you are doing.

¹⁰ Tell them that these are the words of the Lord GOD: This oracle concerns the ruler and all the people of Jerusalem.

¹¹ Tell them that you are a sign to warn them; what you have done will be done to them; they will go as captives into exile.

¹² In the dusk their ruler will shoulder his pack and go through a hole made to let him out, with his face covered so that he cannot see the land.

¹³ But I shall throw my net over him, and he will be caught in the meshes. I shall take him to Babylon, to the land of the Chaldeans, where he will die without ever seeing it.

¹⁴I shall scatter his bodyguard and drive all his squadrons to the four winds; I shall pursue them with drawn sword.

¹⁵Then they will know that I am the LORD, when I disperse them among the nations and scatter them over the earth.

¹⁶But I shall leave a few of them, survivors of the sword, famine, and pestilence, to describe all their abominations to the peoples among whom they go. They will know that I am the LORD.

¹⁷THIS word of the LORD came to me:

¹⁸O man, as you eat your bread you are to tremble, and as you drink the water you are to shudder with fear.

¹⁹Say to the people: This is what the Lord GOD says concerning the inhabitants of Jerusalem in the land of Israel: They will eat bread with fear and be filled with horror as they drink water; the land will be waste and empty because of the violence of all who live there.

²⁰Inhabited towns will be deserted, and the land will become a waste. Thus you will know that I am the LORD.

²¹This word of the LORD came to me:

²² O man, what is this proverb current in the land of Israel: Days pass and visions perish?

²³ Very well! Say to them: This is what the Lord GOD says: I have put an end to this proverb; it will never again be quoted in Israel. Rather say to them: The days are near when every vision will be fulfilled.

²⁴ There will be no more false visions, no misleading divination among the Israelites,

²⁵ for I, the LORD, shall say what I will, and it will be done. It will be put off no longer: you rebellious people, in your lifetime I shall do what I have said. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

²⁶ This word of the LORD came to me:

²⁷ O man, the Israelites say, The visions which prophets now see are not to be fulfilled for many years: they are prophesying of a time far off.

²⁸ Very well! Say to them: This is what the Lord GOD said: No word of mine will be delayed; whatever I say will be done. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

13¹ This word of the LORD came to me:

²O man, prophesy against the prophets of Israel who are prophesying; say to those whose prophecies come from their own minds: Hear what the LORD says:

³These are the words of the Lord GOD: Woe betide the prophets bent on wickedness, who follow their own enthusiasms, for they have seen no vision!

⁴Your prophets, Israel, have been like jackals among ruins.

⁵They have not stepped into the breach to repair the broken wall for the Israelites, so that they might stand firm in battle on the day of the LORD.

⁶The vision is false, the divination a lie! They claim, It is the word of the LORD, when it is not the LORD who has sent them, yet they expect him to confirm their prophecies!

⁷Is it not a false vision that you prophets have seen? Is not your divination a lie? You call it the word of the LORD, but it is not I who have spoken.

⁸The Lord GOD says: Because what you say is false and your visions are a

lie, therefore I have set myself against you, says the Lord GOD.

⁹I shall raise my hand against the prophets whose visions are false, whose divinations are a lie. They will have no place in the assembly of my people; their names will not be entered in the roll of Israel, nor will they set foot on her soil. Thus you will know that I am the Lord GOD.

¹⁰This they deserve, for they have misled my people by saying that all is well when nothing is well. It is as if my people were building a wall and the prophets used whitewash for the daubing.

¹¹Tell these daubers that it will fall, for rain will pour down in torrents, and I shall send hailstones streaming down and unleash a storm-wind.

¹²When the wall collapses, it will be said, Where is the plaster you used?

¹³So this is what the Lord GOD says: In my rage I shall unleash a storm-wind; rain will come in torrents in my anger, hailstones in my fury, until all is destroyed.

¹⁴I shall overthrow the wall which you have daubed with whitewash and level it to the ground, laying bare its foundations. It will fall, and you will be destroyed with it: thus you will know that I am the LORD.

¹⁵I shall vent my rage on the wall and on those who daubed it with whitewash; and I shall say, Gone is the wall and gone those who daubed it,

¹⁶those prophets of Israel who prophesied to Jerusalem, who saw visions of well-being for her when there was no well-being. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

¹⁷Now set your face, O man, against the women of your people whose prophecies come from their own minds; prophesy against them

¹⁸and say: This is the word of the Lord GOD: Woe betide you women who hunt men's lives by sewing magic bands on the wrists and putting veils over the heads of persons of every age! Are you to hunt the lives of my people and keep your own lives safe?

¹⁹You have dishonoured me in front of my people for some handfuls of barley

and scraps of bread. By telling my people lies they wish to hear, you bring death to those who should not die, and keep alive those who should not live.

²⁰ So this is what the Lord GOD says: I have set my face against your magic bands with which you hunt men's lives for the excitement of it. I shall tear them from your arms and set free those lives that you hunt just for excitement.

²¹ I shall tear up your veils; I shall rescue my people from your clutches, and you will no longer have it in your power to hunt them. Thus you will know that I am the LORD.

²² With your lying you undermined the righteous, when I meant no hurt; you so strengthened the wicked that they would not abandon their evil ways and save themselves.

²³ So never again will you see your false visions or practise divination. I shall rescue my people from your clutches; and thus you will know that I am the LORD.

14¹ Some of the elders of Israel visited me, and while they were sitting in my presence

² this word of the LORD came to me,

³ O man, these people have set their hearts on their idols and keep their eyes fixed on the sinful things that cause their downfall. Am I to be consulted by such men?

⁴ Speak to them, therefore, and tell them that this is what the Lord GOD says: If any Israelite, with his heart set on his idols and his eyes fixed on the sinful things that cause his downfall, comes to a prophet, I, the LORD, give him his answer, despite his gross idolatry.

⁵ My answer will grip the hearts of the Israelites, who through their idols are all estranged from me.

⁶ So tell the Israelites that this is what the Lord GOD says: Repent, turn from your idols, turn your backs on all your abominations.

⁷ If anyone, Israelite or resident alien, renounces me, setting his heart on idols and fixing his eyes on the sinful things that cause his downfall -- if such a one comes to consult me through a prophet, I, the LORD, shall give him his answer directly.

⁸I shall set my face against him; I shall make him an example and a byword; I shall root him out from among my people. Thus you will know that I am the LORD.

⁹If a prophet is deceived into making a prophecy, it is I, the LORD, who have deceived him; I shall stretch out my hand to destroy him and rid my people Israel of him.

¹⁰Both will be punished; the prophet and the person who consults him alike are guilty.

¹¹Never again will the Israelites stray from their allegiance, never again defile themselves by their sins; they will be my people, and I shall be their God. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

¹²THIS word of the LORD came to me:

¹³O man, when a country sins by breaking faith with me, I stretch out my hand and cut short its daily bread. I send famine on it and destroy all the inhabitants along with their cattle.

¹⁴Even if these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were there, they would by their righteousness save none but

themselves. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

¹⁵If I were to turn wild beasts loose in a country to destroy the population, until it became a waste through which no one would pass for fear of the beasts,

¹⁶and if those three men were there, as I live, says the Lord GOD, they would not be able to save even their own sons and daughters; they would save themselves alone, and the country would become a waste.

¹⁷Or if I were to bring the sword upon that country, commanding it to pass through the land, so that I might destroy people and cattle,

¹⁸and if those three men were there, as I live, says the Lord GOD, they could save neither son nor daughter; they would save themselves alone.

¹⁹Or if I were to send pestilence on that land and pour out my fury on it in bloodshed, destroying people and cattle,

²⁰and if Noah, Daniel, and Job were there, as I live, says the Lord GOD, they would save neither son nor daughter; they would by their righteousness save none but themselves.

²¹ The Lord GOD says: How much less hope is there for Jerusalem when I inflict on her these four terrible punishments of mine, sword, famine, wild beasts, and pestilence, to destroy both people and cattle!

²² Yet some will be left in her, some survivors to be brought out, both men and women. Look at them as they come out to you, and see how they have behaved and what they have done. This will be consolation to you for the disaster I have brought on Jerusalem, for all I have inflicted on her.

²³ It will bring you consolation when you consider how they have behaved and what they have done; for you will know that it was not without good reason that I dealt thus with her. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

15 ¹ THIS word of the LORD came to me:

² O man, how is the vine better than any other tree, than a branch from a tree in the forest?

³ Is wood got from it useful for making anything? Can one make it into a peg and hang something on it?

⁴If it is put on the fire for fuel, if its two ends are burnt by the fire and the middle is charred, is it fit for anything useful?

⁵Nothing useful could be made from it, even when whole; how much less is it useful for making anything when burnt and charred by fire!

⁶The Lord GOD says: As the wood of the vine among all kinds of wood from the forest is useful only for burning, even so I treat the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

⁷I have set my face against them. They have escaped from the fire, but fire will burn them up. Thus you will know that I am the LORD when I set my face against them,

⁸and make the land a waste because they have broken faith. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

16¹This word of the LORD came to me:

²O man, make Jerusalem see her abominable conduct.

³Tell her that these are the words of the Lord GOD to her: Canaan is the land of your ancestry and your birthplace; your father was an Amorite, your mother a Hittite.

⁴This is how you were treated when you were born: at birth your navel-string was not tied, you were not bathed in water and rubbed with oil; no salt was put on you, nor were you wrapped in swaddling clothes.

⁵No one cared enough for you to do any of these things, or felt enough compassion; you were thrown out on the bare ground in your own filth on the day you were born.

⁶I came by and saw you kicking helplessly as you lay in your blood; I decreed that you should continue to live in your blood.

⁷I tended you like an evergreen plant growing in the fields; you thrived and grew. You came to full womanhood; your breasts became firm and your hair grew, but you were still quite naked and exposed.

⁸I came by again and saw that you were ripe for love. I spread the skirt of my robe over you and covered your naked body. I plighted my troth and entered into a covenant with you, says the Lord GOD, and you became mine.

⁹Then I bathed you with water to wash off the blood; I anointed you with oil.

¹⁰I gave you robes of brocade and sandals of dugong-hide; I fastened a linen girdle round you and dressed you in fine linen.

¹¹I adorned you with jewellery: bracelets on your wrists, a chain round your neck,

¹²a ring in your nose, pendants in your ears, and a splendid crown on your head.

¹³You were adorned with gold and silver, and clothed with linen, fine linen and brocade. Fine flour and honey and olive oil were your food; you became a great beauty and rose to be a queen.

¹⁴Your beauty was famed throughout the world; it was perfect because of the splendour I bestowed on you. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

¹⁵Relying on your beauty and exploiting your fame, you played the harlot and offered yourself freely to every passer-by.

¹⁶You used some of your clothes to deck shrines in gay colours and there you committed fornication.

¹⁷You took the splendid gold and silver jewellery that I had given you, and made for yourself male images with which you committed fornication.

¹⁸You covered them with your robes of brocade, and you offered up my oil and my incense to them.

¹⁹The food I had provided for you, the fine flour, the oil, and the honey, you set before them as an offering of soothing odour. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

²⁰The sons and daughters whom you had borne to me you took and sacrificed to these images as their food. Was this slaughtering of my children, this handing them over and surrendering them to your images, any less a sin than your fornication?

²¹ (16: 20)

²²With all your abominable fornication you never recalled those early days when you lay quite naked, kicking helplessly in your blood.

²³Woe betide you! says the Lord GOD. After all the evil you had done

²⁴you set up a couch for yourself and erected a shrine in every open place.

²⁵You built your shrines at the top of every street and debased your beauty, offering your body to every passer-by in countless acts of harlotry.

²⁶You committed fornication with your lustful neighbours, the Egyptians, and provoked me to anger by your repeated harlotry.

²⁷I stretched out my hand against you and reduced your territory. I gave you up to the will of your enemies, the Philistine women, who were disgusted by your lewd conduct.

²⁸Still unsatisfied, you committed fornication with the Assyrians, and still were not satisfied.

²⁹You committed many acts of fornication in Chaldea, a land of traders, and even with this you were not satisfied.

³⁰How you anger me! says the Lord GOD. You have done all this like the headstrong harlot you are.

³¹You have set up your couches at the top of every street and erected your shrines in every open place, but, unlike the common prostitute, you have scorned a fee.

³²You adulterous wife who receives strangers rather than her husband!

³³All prostitutes receive presents; but you give presents to all your lovers, bribing them to come from far and wide to commit fornication with you.

³⁴When you are so engaged you are the very opposite of those other women: no one runs after you, and you do not receive a fee; you give one!

³⁵Listen, you harlot, to the word of the LORD.

³⁶The Lord GOD says: Because of your brazen excesses, exposing your naked body in fornication with your lovers, because of your abominable idols and the slaughter of the children you have offered to them,

³⁷I shall assemble all those lovers whom you charmed, all whom you loved and all whom you turned against. I shall gather them in from all around against you; I shall strip you before them, and they will see you altogether naked.

³⁸I shall bring you to trial for adultery and murder, and I shall give you over to blood spilt in fury and jealousy.

³⁹When I hand you over to them, they will demolish your couch and pull down your shrine; they will strip off your clothes, take away your splendid jewellery, and leave you stark naked.

⁴⁰They will bring up a mob to punish you; they will stone you and hack you to pieces with their swords.

⁴¹They will burn down your houses and execute judgement on you in the sight of many women. I shall put a stop to your harlotry, and never again will you pay a fee to your lovers.

⁴²Then I shall abate my fury, and my jealousy will turn away from you. I shall be calm and no longer be provoked to anger.

⁴³You never called to mind the days of your youth, but enraged me with all your doings; I in turn brought retribution on you for your conduct. This is the word of the Lord GOD. Did you not commit these obscenities, as well as all your other abominations?

⁴⁴Everyone who quotes proverbs will quote this one about you, Like mother, like daughter.

⁴⁵You are a true daughter of a mother who rejected her husband and children. You are a true sister of your sisters who rejected their husbands and children. You are daughters of a Hittite mother and an Amorite father.

⁴⁶Your elder sister was Samaria, who lived with her daughters to the north of you; your younger sister was Sodom, who lived with her daughters to the south.

⁴⁷Did you not behave as they did and commit the same abominations? Indeed you surpassed them in depraved conduct.

⁴⁸As I live, says the Lord GOD, your sister Sodom and her daughters never behaved as you and your daughters have done!

⁴⁹This was the iniquity of your sister Sodom: she and her daughters had the pride that goes with food in plenty, comfort, and ease, yet she never helped the poor in their need.

⁵⁰They grew haughty and committed what was abominable in my sight, and I swept them away, as you are aware.

⁵¹ Nor did Samaria commit half the sins of which you have been guilty; you have committed more abominations than she. All the abominations you have committed have made your sister look innocent.

⁵² It is you that must bear the humiliation, for your sins have pleaded your sisters cause; your conduct is so much more abominable than theirs that they appear innocent in comparison. Now you must bear your shame and humiliation and make your sisters look innocent.

⁵³ I shall restore the fortunes of Sodom and her daughters and of Samaria and her daughters (and I shall restore yours at the same time).

⁵⁴ When you bring them comfort, you will bear your shame and be disgraced for all you have done.

⁵⁵ After your sister Sodom and her daughters become what they were of old, and when your sister Samaria and her daughters become what they were of old, then you and your daughters will be restored likewise.

⁵⁶Did you not speak contemptuously of your sister Sodom in the days of your pride,

⁵⁷before your wickedness was exposed? Even so now you are despised by the daughters of Aram and all those nations around them, and the daughters of Philistia round about who also despise you.

⁵⁸You must bear the consequences of your lewd and abominable conduct. This is the word of the LORD.

⁵⁹The Lord GOD says: I shall treat you as you have deserved, because you violated an oath and made light of a covenant.

⁶⁰But I shall call to mind the covenant I made with you when you were young, and I shall establish with you a covenant which will last for ever.

⁶¹You will remember your past conduct and feel ashamed when you receive your sisters, the elder and the younger. I shall give them to you as daughters, though they are not included in my covenant with you.

⁶² Thus I shall establish my covenant with you, and you will know that I am the LORD.

⁶³ You will remember, and will be so ashamed and humiliated that you will never open your mouth again, once I have pardoned you for all you have done. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

17 ¹ This word of the LORD came to me:

² O man, pose this riddle, expound this parable to the Israelites.

³ Tell them that these are the words of the Lord GOD: A great eagle with broad wings and long pinions, in full plumage, richly patterned, came to Lebanon. He took the very top of a cedar tree,

⁴ plucked its highest twig; he carried it off to a land of traders, and planted it in a city of merchants.

⁵ Then he took a native seed and put it in a prepared plot; he set it like a willow, a shoot beside abundant water.

⁶ It sprouted and became a vine, sprawling low along the ground and bending its boughs towards him with its roots growing beneath him. So it became

a vine; it branched out and sent forth shoots.

⁷ But there was another great eagle with broad wings and thick plumage; and this vine gave its roots a twist towards him; from the bed where it was planted, seeking drink, it pushed out its trailing boughs towards him,

⁸ though it had been set in good ground beside abundant water that it might branch out and be fruitful, and become a noble vine.

⁹ Tell them that the Lord GOD says: Will such a vine flourish? Will not its roots be torn up and its fruit stripped off, and all its freshly sprouted leaves wither, until it is uprooted and carried away with little effort and a small force?

¹⁰ If it is transplanted, will it flourish? Will it not be utterly shrivelled, as though by the touch of the east wind, on the bed where it ought to sprout?

¹¹ This word of the LORD came to me:

¹² Say to that rebellious people: Have you no idea what all this means? The king of Babylon came to Jerusalem, took its king and those in high office, and brought them back with him to Babylon.

¹³He chose a prince of the royal line and made a treaty with him, putting him on his oath. He carried away the chief men of the country,

¹⁴so that it should become a humble kingdom, submissive, ready to observe the treaty and keep it in force.

¹⁵But the prince rebelled against him and sent envoys to Egypt with a request for horses and a large force of troops. Will such a man be successful? Will he escape destruction if he acts in this way? Can he violate a treaty and escape unpunished?

¹⁶As I live, says the Lord GOD, I swear that he will die in Babylon, in the land of the king who put him on the throne, the king whose oath he disregarded, whose treaty he violated.

¹⁷No large army will come from Pharaoh, no great force to be a protection for him in battle, when siege-ramps are thrown up and towers are built for the destruction of many.

¹⁸Because he violated a treaty and disregarded his oath, because he submitted, and yet did all these things, he will not escape.

¹⁹The Lord GOD says: As I live, he has made light of the oath sworn in my name and has violated the covenant he made with me. For this I shall bring retribution upon him.

²⁰Because he has broken faith with me I shall throw my net over him, and he will be caught in the meshes; I shall carry him to Babylon and bring him to judgement there.

²¹The picked troops in all his squadrons will fall by the sword; those who are left will be scattered to all the winds. Thus you will know that it is I, the LORD, who have spoken.

²²The Lord GOD says: I, too, shall take a slip from the lofty crown of the cedar and set it in the soil; I shall pluck a tender shoot from the topmost branch and plant it on a high and lofty mountain,

²³the highest mountain in Israel. It will put out branches, bear its fruit, and become a noble cedar. Birds of every kind will roost under it, perching in the shelter of its boughs.

²⁴All the trees of the countryside will know that it is I, the LORD, who bring low the tall tree and raise the lowly tree

high, who shrivel up the green tree and make the shrivelled tree put forth buds. I, the LORD, have spoken; I shall do it.

18¹ THIS word of the LORD came to me:

² What do you all mean by repeating this proverb in the land of Israel: Parents eat sour grapes, and their children's teeth are set on edge?

³ As I live, says the Lord GOD, this proverb will never again be used by you in Israel.

⁴ Every living soul belongs to me; parent and child alike are mine. It is the person who sins that will die.

⁵ Consider the man who is righteous and does what is just and right.

⁶ He never feasts at mountain shrines, never looks up to idols worshipped in Israel, never dishonours another man's wife, never approaches a menstruous woman;

⁷ he oppresses no one, he returns the debtor's pledge, he never commits robbery; he gives his food to the hungry and clothes to those who have none.

⁸He never lends either at discount or at interest, but shuns injustice and deals fairly between one person and another.

⁹He conforms to my statutes and loyally observes my laws. Such a one is righteous: he will live, says the Lord GOD.

¹⁰He may have a son who is given to violence and bloodshed, one who turns his back on these commandments;

¹¹obeying none of them, he feasts at mountain shrines, dishonours another man's wife,

¹²oppresses the poor in their need; he commits robbery, he does not return the debtor's pledge, he looks up to idols, and joins in abominable rites;

¹³he lends both at discount and at interest. Such a one will not live; because he has committed all these abominations he must die. His blood be on his own head!

¹⁴This person in turn may have a son who sees all his father's sins, but in spite of seeing them commits none of them.

¹⁵He never feasts at mountain shrines, never looks up to the idols worshipped in

Israel, never dishonours another man's wife,

¹⁶ oppresses no one, takes no pledge, does not rob; he gives his food to the hungry and clothes to those who have none;

¹⁷ he shuns injustice and never lends either at discount or at interest. He keeps my laws and conforms to my statutes. Such a one is not to die for his father's wrongdoing; he will live.

¹⁸ If his father has been guilty of oppression and robbery and lived an evil life in the community, and died because of his iniquity,

¹⁹ you may ask, Why is the son not punished for his father's iniquity? Because he has always done what is just and right and has been careful to obey all my laws, he will live.

²⁰ It is the person who sins that will die; a son will not bear responsibility for his father's guilt, nor a father for his son's. The righteous person will have his own righteousness placed to his account, and the wicked person his own wickedness.

²¹ If someone who is wicked renounces all his sinful ways and keeps all my laws,

doing what is just and right, he will live; he will not die.

²²None of the offences he has committed will be remembered against him; because of his righteous conduct he will live.

²³Have I any desire for the death of a wicked person? says the Lord GOD. Is not my desire rather that he should mend his ways and live?

²⁴If someone who is righteous turns from his righteous ways and commits every kind of abomination that the wicked practise, is he to do this and live? No, none of his former righteousness will be remembered in his favour; because he has been faithless and has sinned, he must die.

²⁵You say that the Lord acts without principle? Listen, you Israelites! It is not I who act without principle; it is you.

²⁶If a righteous man turns from his righteousness, takes to evil ways, and dies, it is because of these evil ways that he dies.

²⁷Again, if a wicked man gives up his wicked ways and does what is just and right, he preserves his life;

²⁸ he has seen his offences and turned his back on them all, and so he will not die; he will live.

²⁹ The Lord acts without principle, say the Israelites. No, it is you, Israel, that acts without principle, not I.

³⁰ Therefore I shall judge every one of you Israelites on his record, says the Lord GOD. Repent, renounce all your offences, or your iniquity will be your downfall.

³¹ Throw off the load of your past misdeeds; get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit. Why should you Israelites die?

³² I have no desire for the death of anyone. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

19¹ Raise a dirge over the rulers of Israel

² and say: What a lioness was your mother among the lions! She made her lair among the young lions and reared her cubs.

³ One of her cubs she singled out; he grew into a young lion, he learnt to tear his prey, he devoured men.

⁴Then the nations raised a shout at him; he was caught in their pit, and they dragged him off with hooks to Egypt.

⁵When she saw that her hope in him was disappointed and dashed, she took another of her cubs and made a young lion of him.

⁶He prowled among the lions and acted like a young lion. He learnt to tear his prey, he devoured men;

⁷he broke down their palaces, laid their cities in ruins. The land and all in it were aghast at the sound of his roaring.

⁸From the regions all around the nations raised a hue and cry; they cast their net over him and he was caught in their pit.

⁹With hooks they drew him into a cage and brought him to the king of Babylon; he was put in prison that his roar might never again be heard on the mountains of Israel.

¹⁰Your mother was a vine planted by the waterside. It grew fruitful and luxuriant, for there was water in plenty.

¹¹It had stout branches, sceptres for those who bear rule. It grew tall, finding its way through the foliage; it was

conspicuous for its height and many boughs.

¹²But it was torn up in anger and thrown to the ground; the east wind blighted it, its fruit was blown off, its strong branches were blighted, and fire burnt it.

¹³Now it is transplanted in the wilderness, in a dry and thirsty land;

¹⁴fire bursts forth from its own branches and burns up its shoots. It has no strong branch any more, no sceptre for those who bear rule. This is a lament and it has passed into use as such.

20¹ON the tenth day of the fifth month in the seventh year, some of the elders of Israel came to consult the LORD and were sitting with me.

²Then this word of the LORD came to me:

³O man, say to the elders of Israel: The Lord GOD says: Do you come to consult me? As I live, I refuse to be consulted by you. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

⁴Bring a charge against them, O man! Tell them of the abominations of their forefathers

⁵and say to them: The Lord GOD says: On the day I chose Israel, with uplifted hand I bound myself by oath to the descendants of Jacob and revealed myself to them in Egypt, declaring: I am the LORD your God.

⁶That day I swore with hand uplifted that I would bring them out of Egypt into the land I had sought out for them, a land flowing with milk and honey, the fairest of all lands.

⁷I told every one of them to cast away the loathsome things to which they looked up, and not to defile themselves with the idols of Egypt. I am the LORD your God, I said.

⁸But in rebellion against me they refused to listen, and not one of them cast away the loathsome things to which he looked up or forsook the idols of Egypt. I resolved to pour out my wrath and exhaust my anger on them in Egypt.

⁹But then I acted for the honour of my name, that it might not be profaned in the sight of the nations among whom Israel was living: I revealed myself to them by bringing Israel out of Egypt.

¹⁰I brought them out of Egypt and led them into the wilderness.

¹¹There I gave my statutes to them and taught them my laws; it is by keeping them that mortals have life.

¹²Further, I gave them my sabbaths to serve as a sign between us, so that they would know that I am the LORD who sanctified them.

¹³But the Israelites rebelled against me in the wilderness; they did not conform to my statutes, they rejected my laws, though it is by keeping them that mortals have life, and they totally desecrated my sabbaths. I resolved to pour out my wrath on them in the wilderness to destroy them.

¹⁴But then I acted for the honour of my name, that it might not be profaned in the sight of the nations who had seen me bring them out.

¹⁵However, in the wilderness I swore to them with uplifted hand that I would not bring them into the land I had given them, that land flowing with milk and honey, the fairest of all lands.

¹⁶They loved to follow idols of their own, so they rejected my laws, they

would not conform to my statutes, and they desecrated my sabbaths.

¹⁷Yet I pitied them too much to destroy them and did not make an end of them in the wilderness.

¹⁸I warned their children in the wilderness not to conform to the rules and usages of their fathers, nor to defile themselves with their idols.

¹⁹I am the LORD your God, I said; you must conform to my statutes, you must observe my laws and act according to them.

²⁰You must keep my sabbaths holy, and they will become a sign between us; so you will know that I am the LORD your God.

²¹But those children rebelled against me; they did not conform to my statutes or observe my laws, though obedience to them would have given life. Moreover they desecrated my sabbaths. Again I resolved to pour out my wrath and vent my anger on them in the wilderness.

²²But I stayed my hand. I acted for the honour of my name, so that it might not be profaned in the sight of the nations

who had seen me bring them out of Egypt.

²³ However, in the wilderness I swore to them with uplifted hand that I would disperse them among the nations and scatter them over the earth,

²⁴ because they had disobeyed my laws, rejected my statutes, desecrated my sabbaths, and had regard only for the idols of their forefathers.

²⁵ I even imposed on them statutes that were malign and laws which would not lead to life.

²⁶ I let them defile themselves with gifts to idols; I made them surrender their eldest sons to them so that I might fill them with revulsion. Thus they would know that I am the LORD.

²⁷ Speak therefore, O man, to the Israelites; say to them: The Lord GOD says: Once again your forefathers reviled me and broke faith with me:

²⁸ when I brought them into the land which I had sworn with uplifted hand to give them, they noted every hilltop and every leafy tree, and there they offered their sacrifices, there they presented the gifts which roused my anger, there they

set out their offerings of soothing odour and poured out their drink-offerings.

²⁹I asked them: What is this bamah to which you go? And bamah has been the name for a shrine ever since.

³⁰So tell the Israelites: The Lord GOD says: Are you defiling yourselves as your forefathers did, and lusting after their loathsome gods?

³¹You are defiling yourselves to this very day with all your idols when you bring your gifts and pass your children through the fire. How then can I let you consult me, men of Israel? As I live, says the Lord GOD, I refuse to be consulted by you.

³²When you say to yourselves, Let us become like the nations and tribes of other lands and worship wood and stone, you are thinking of something that can never be.

³³As I live, says the Lord GOD, I shall reign over you with a strong hand, with arm outstretched and wrath outpoured.

³⁴By my strong hand, an outstretched arm, and outpoured wrath I shall bring you out from the peoples and gather you

from the lands where you have been dispersed.

³⁵I shall bring you into the Wilderness of the Peoples; there I shall confront you and bring you to judgement.

³⁶Even as I did in the wilderness of Egypt against your forefathers, so against you I shall state my case. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

³⁷I shall make you pass under the rod, counting you as you enter.

³⁸I shall purge you of those who revolt and rebel against me. I shall take them out of the land where they now live, but they will not set foot on the soil of Israel. Thus you will know that I am the LORD.

³⁹Now, you Israelites, the Lord GOD says: Go, each one of you, and serve your idols! But in days to come I shall punish you for your disobedience to me, and no more will you desecrate my holy name with your gifts and your idolatries.

⁴⁰But on my holy mountain, the lofty mountain of Israel, says the Lord GOD, there in the land all the Israelites will serve me. There I shall accept them; there I shall require your gifts and your

choicest offerings, with all else that you consecrate to me.

⁴¹ I shall accept you when you make offerings with their soothing odour, after I have brought you out from the peoples and gathered you from the lands where you have been dispersed. I alone shall have your worship, and the nations will witness it.

⁴² You will know that I am the LORD, when I bring you home to the soil of Israel, to the land which I swore with uplifted hand to give your forefathers.

⁴³ There you will remember your past conduct and all the acts by which you defiled yourselves, and you will loathe yourselves for all the wickedness you have committed.

⁴⁴ You will know that I am the LORD, when I deal with you Israelites, not as your wicked ways and your vicious deeds deserve, but as the honour of my name demands. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

⁴⁵ This word of the LORD came to me:

⁴⁶ O man, turn and face towards the south and utter your words towards it; prophesy to the scrubland of the Negeb.

⁴⁷ Say to it: Listen to the word of the LORD. The Lord GOD says: I am about to kindle a fire in you, and it will consume all the wood, green and dry alike. Its fiery flame will not be put out, but from the Negeb northwards everyone will be scorched by it.

⁴⁸ Everyone will see that it is I, the LORD, who have set it ablaze; it will not be put out.

⁴⁹ Ah Lord GOD, I cried; they are always saying of me, He deals only in figures of speech.

21 ¹ THIS word of the LORD came to me:

² O man, turn and face towards Jerusalem, and utter your words against her sanctuary; prophesy against the land of Israel.

³ Say to that land: The LORD says: I am against you; I shall draw my sword from the scabbard and make away with both righteous and wicked from among you.

⁴ It is because I intend to make away with righteous and wicked alike that my sword will be drawn from the scabbard against everyone, from the Negeb northwards.

⁵All shall know that I, the LORD, have drawn my sword; it will never again be sheathed.

⁶Groan while they look on, O man, groan bitterly until you collapse.

⁷When they ask why you are groaning, say, Because what I have heard is about to come. All hearts will melt, all hands will hang limp, all courage will fail, all knees will turn to water. See, it is coming; it is here! This is the word of the Lord GOD.

⁸The LORD said to me:

⁹Prophecy, O man, and say: This is the word of the LORD: A sword, a sword is sharpened and burnished,

¹⁰sharpened to kill and kill again, burnished to flash like lightning. (Look, the rod is brandished, my son, to defy all wooden idols!)

¹¹The sword is given to be burnished ready for the hand to grasp. The sword is sharpened, it is burnished, ready to be given into the slayer's hand.

¹²Cry aloud and wail, O man; for it falls on my people, and on all Israel's rulers who are delivered over to the sword and

are slain with my people. Therefore slap your thigh in remorse.

¹³(When the test comes, what if the rod does not in truth defy?) This is the word of the Lord GOD.

¹⁴But you, O man, prophesy and strike your hands together; swing the sword twice, thrice: it is the sword of slaughter, the great sword of slaughter whirling about them.

¹⁵That their hearts may be fearful and many may stumble and fall, I have set the threat of the sword at all their gates, the threat of the sword flashing like lightning and drawn to kill.

¹⁶Be sharpened, turn right; be unsheathed, turn left, wherever your point is aimed.

¹⁷I, too, shall strike my hands together and abate my anger. I, the LORD, have spoken.

¹⁸This word of the LORD came to me:

¹⁹O man, trace out two roads by which the sword of the king of Babylon may come, both starting from the same land. Then make a signpost for the point where the highway forks.

²⁰ Mark a road for the sword to come to the Ammonite city of Rabbah, and a road to Judah, with Jerusalem at its heart.

²¹ At the parting of the ways where the road divides, the king of Babylon will halt to take the omens. He will cast lots with arrows, consult household gods, and inspect the livers of beasts.

²² The arrow marked Jerusalem will fall at his right hand: here, then, he will give the command for slaughter and sound the battle cry, set battering-rams against the gates, cast up siege-ramps, and build watch-towers.

²³ The people will think that the auguries are groundless, the king of Babylon will remind me of their wrongdoing, and they will fall into his hand.

²⁴ Therefore the Lord GOD says: Because you have kept me mindful of your wrongdoing by your open rebellion, and your sins have been revealed in everything you do, because you have kept yourselves in my mind, you will fall into the enemy's hand.

²⁵ And you, impious and wicked ruler of Israel, your fate has come upon you in the hour of final punishment.

²⁶The Lord GOD says: Off with the diadem! Away with the crown! All is overturned; raise the low and bring down the high.

²⁷Ruin! Ruin! I shall bring about such ruin as never was, until one comes who is the rightful ruler; and I shall install him.

²⁸O MAN, prophesy and say: The Lord GOD says to the Ammonites and to their shameful god: A sword, a sword drawn for slaughter, burnished for destruction to flash like lightning!

²⁹Your visions are false, your auguries a lie, which bid you bring it down upon the necks of the impious and the wicked; their fate will come upon them in the hour of final punishment.

³⁰Return the sword to the sheath. I shall judge you in the place where you were born, the land of your origin.

³¹I shall pour out my wrath on you; I shall fan my blazing anger over you. I shall hand you over to barbarous men, skilled in destruction.

³²You will become fuel for fire, your blood will be shed within the land and

you will leave no memory behind. I, the LORD, have spoken.

22 ¹ THIS word of the LORD came to me:

² O man, will you bring a charge against her? Will you charge the murderous city and bring home to her all her abominable deeds?

³ Say to her: The Lord GOD has said: Woe betide the city that sheds blood within her walls and brings her fate on herself, the city that makes idols for herself and is defiled by them!

⁴ You are guilty because of the blood you have shed, you are defiled because of the idols you have made. You have shortened your days by this and hastened your end. This is why I exposed you to the contempt of the nations and the mockery of every country.

⁵ Lands both far and near will taunt you with your infamy and monstrous disorder.

⁶ In you all the rulers of Israel have used their power to shed blood;

⁷ in you fathers and mothers have been treated contemptuously, aliens have

been oppressed, the fatherless and the widow have been wronged.

⁸You have despised what I hold sacred, and desecrated my sabbaths.

⁹In you, Jerusalem, perjurers have worked to procure bloodshed; in you are men who have feasted at mountain shrines and have committed lewdness.

¹⁰In you men have exposed their fathers nakedness; they have violated women who were menstruating;

¹¹they have committed an outrage with their neighbours' wives and have lewdly defiled their own daughters-in-law; they have ravished their sisters, their own fathers' daughters.

¹²In you people have accepted bribes to shed blood. You have exacted discount and interest, and have oppressed your fellows for gain. You have committed apostasy. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

¹³See, I strike with my clenched fist at your ill-gotten gains and at the bloodshed within your walls.

¹⁴Will your courage and strength endure when I deal with you? I, the LORD, have spoken and I shall act.

¹⁵I shall disperse you among the nations and scatter you over the earth to rid you of your defilement.

¹⁶I shall sift you in the sight of the nations, and you will know that I am the LORD.

¹⁷THIS word of the LORD came to me:

¹⁸O man, to me all Israelites are but an alloy, their silver debased with copper, tin, iron, and lead.

¹⁹Therefore, these are the words of the Lord GOD: Because you are all alloyed, I shall gather you into Jerusalem,

²⁰as silver, copper, iron, lead, and tin are gathered into a crucible, where fire is blown to full heat to melt them. So shall I gather you in my anger and wrath, put you in it, and melt you;

²¹I shall gather you in Jerusalem and fan the fire of my anger until you are melted.

²²As silver is melted in a crucible so will you be melted, and you will know that I, the LORD, have poured out my anger on you.

²³THIS word of the LORD came to me:

²⁴O man, say to Jerusalem: You are like a land on which no rain has fallen,

no shower has come in the time of my wrath.

²⁵The princes within her are like lions growling as they tear their prey. They devour the people, and seize their wealth and valuables; they make widows of many women within her.

²⁶Her priests give rulings which violate my law, and profane what is sacred to me. They do not distinguish between sacred and profane, and enforce no distinction between clean and unclean. They disregard my sabbaths, and I am dishonoured among them.

²⁷The city's leaders are like wolves tearing their prey, shedding blood and destroying people's lives to obtain ill-gotten gain.

²⁸Her prophets whitewash over the cracks, their vision is false and their divination a lie. They say, This is the word of the Lord GOD, when the LORD has not spoken.

²⁹The common people resort to oppression and robbery; they ill-treat the unfortunate and the poor, they oppress the alien and deny him justice.

³⁰I looked among them for a man who would build a barricade in the breach and withstand me, to avert the destruction of the land; but I found no such person.

³¹I poured out my wrath on them and utterly consumed them in my blazing anger. Thus I brought on them the punishment they had deserved. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

23 ¹This word of the LORD came to me:

²O man, there were once two women, daughters of the same mother,

³who while they were still girls played the whore in Egypt. There they let their breasts be fondled and their virgin bosoms be pressed.

⁴The elder was named Oholah, her sister Oholibah. They became mine and gave birth to sons and daughters. Oholah is Samaria, Oholibah Jerusalem.

⁵Though Oholah owed me obedience she played the whore and was infatuated with her Assyrian lovers, officers

⁶in blue, viceroys and governors, all of them handsome young men riding on horseback.

⁷ She played the whore with all of them, the flower of Assyrian manhood; and because of her lust for all their idols she was defiled.

⁸ She never gave up the ways she had learnt in Egypt, where men had lain with her while she was still young, had pressed her virgin bosom and overwhelmed her with their fornication.

⁹ So I abandoned her to her lovers, the Assyrians, with whom she was infatuated.

¹⁰ They ravished her, they took away her sons and daughters, and they put her to the sword. She became notorious among women, and judgement was executed on her.

¹¹ Oholibah, her sister, saw it, but she surpassed her sister in lust and outdid her in playing the whore.

¹² She too was infatuated with Assyrians, viceroys and governors, all handsome officers in full dress and riding on horseback.

¹³ I saw that she too had let herself be defiled. Both had gone the same way,

¹⁴ but she carried her fornication to greater lengths: she saw male figures

carved on the wall, sculptured forms of Chaldaeans picked out in vermilion,

¹⁵with belts round their waists and flowing turbans on their heads. All had the appearance of high Babylonian officers, natives of Chaldaeia.

¹⁶When she set eyes on them she was infatuated, and sent messengers to Chaldaeia for them.

¹⁷The Babylonians came to her to share her bed, and defiled her with fornication; she was defiled by them until her love turned to revulsion.

¹⁸When she made no secret that she was a whore and let herself be ravished, I recoiled with revulsion from her as I recoiled from her sister.

¹⁹Remembering how in her youth she had played the whore in Egypt, she played the whore over and over again.

²⁰She was infatuated with their male prostitutes, whose members were like those of donkeys and whose seed came in floods like that of stallions.

²¹So, Oholibah, you relived the lewdness of your girlhood in Egypt when you let your bosom be pressed and your breasts fondled.

²²The Lord GOD has said: I shall rouse against you, Oholibah, those lovers of yours who have filled you with revulsion, and bring them against you from every side:

²³the Babylonians, all the Chaldaeans from Pekod, Shoa, and Koa, and with them all the Assyrians, handsome young men, viceroys and governors, commanders and officers, all on horseback.

²⁴They will advance against you with war-horses, with chariots and wagons, with a host drawn from the nations, armed with shield, buckler, and helmet; they will beset you on every side. I shall give them authority to judge, and they will use that authority to execute judgement on you.

²⁵I shall turn my jealous wrath against you, and they will bring their fury to bear on you. They will cut off your nose and ears, and those of you left will fall by the sword. They will take your sons and daughters, and those of you left will end in flames.

²⁶They will strip you of your clothes and take away your finery.

²⁷ So I shall put a stop to your lewdness and the harlotry which you first learnt in Egypt. You will never cast longing eyes on such things again, never remember Egypt any more.

²⁸ The Lord GOD says: I am handing you over to those whom you hate, those who have filled you with revulsion;

²⁹ and they will bring their fury to bear on you. They will take all you have earned and leave you stark naked; the body with which you have played the whore will be ravished. It is your lewdness and your fornication

³⁰ that have brought this on you; it is because you adopted heathen ways, played the whore, and became defiled with idols.

³¹ As you have followed in your sister's footsteps, I shall put her cup into your hand.

³² The Lord GOD says: You will drink from your sister's cup, a cup deep and wide, charged to the very brim with mockery and scorn.

³³ It will be full of drunkenness and grief, a cup of uttermost ruin, the cup of your sister Samaria;

³⁴ you will drink it to the dregs, and then gnaw it into shreds while you tear your breasts. This is my sentence, says the Lord GOD.

³⁵ The Lord GOD says: Because you have forsaken me and cast me behind your back, you will have to bear the guilt of your lewdness and fornication.

³⁶ The LORD said to me, O man, will you bring a charge against Oholah and Oholibah? Then tax them with their vile offences.

³⁷ They have committed adultery, and there is blood on their hands. They have committed adultery with their idols and offered to them as food the children they had borne me.

³⁸ Here is another thing they have done to me: they have polluted my sanctuary and desecrated my sabbaths.

³⁹ They came into my sanctuary and desecrated it by slaughtering their sons as an offering to their idols; this they did in my house.

⁴⁰ Then also they would send for men from a far-off country, who would come at the messenger's bidding. For them

you bathed your body, painted your eyes, decked yourself in your finery,
⁴¹ sat yourself on a splendid couch, and had a table placed before it on which you laid my incense and oil.

⁴² There was loud shouting from a carefree crowd. Besides ordinary folk, Sabaeans were there, brought in from the desert; they put bracelets on the harlots arms and beautiful garlands on their heads.

⁴³ I thought: Ah, that woman, grown old in adultery! Now they will commit fornication with her -- her of all women!

⁴⁴ They resorted to her as to a prostitute; they resorted to Oholah and Oholibah, those lewd women.

⁴⁵ Upright men will condemn them for their adultery and bloodshed; they are adulterous, and have blood on their hands.

⁴⁶ The Lord GOD says: Bring up a mob to punish them; give them over to terror and pillage.

⁴⁷ Let the mob stone them and hack them to pieces with their swords, kill their sons and daughters, and burn down their houses.

⁴⁸In this way I shall put an end to lewdness in the land, and all the women will take warning not to follow their lewd example.

⁴⁹When they punish you for your lewd conduct and you pay the penalty for your idolatries, you will know that I am the Lord GOD.

24¹ THIS word of the LORD came to me on the tenth day of the tenth month in the ninth year:

²O man, write down as the name for this special day: This day the king of Babylon besieged Jerusalem.

³Sing a song of derision to this body of rebels; say to them: These are the words of the Lord GOD: Set a cauldron on the fire, set it on and pour in water.

⁴Into it collect the pieces, every choice piece, fill it with leg and shoulder, the best of the bones;

⁵take the pick of the flock. Pile the wood underneath; seethe the stew and boil the bones in it.

⁶The Lord GOD says: Woe betide the city running with blood, woe to the pot green with corrosion which will never

come off! Empty it, piece after piece, with no lot cast for any of them.

⁷The city had blood in her midst and she poured it on the bare rock; it was not shed on the ground for the dust to cover it.

⁸I have spilt her blood on the bare rock so that it cannot be covered; it will arouse anger and call out for vengeance.

⁹The Lord GOD says: Woe betide the city running with blood! I myself shall make a great fire-pit.

¹⁰Fill it with logs, kindle the fire; make an end of the meat, pour out all the broth and the bones with it.

¹¹Then set the pot empty on the coals so that its copper may be heated red-hot, that the impurities in it may be melted and the corrosion burnt off.

¹²Though you exhaust yourself with your efforts the corrosion is so deep it will not come off; only fire will rid it of corrosion.

¹³When in your filthy lewdness I wished to cleanse you, you did not become clean, nor will you ever be clean again until I have spent my anger against you.

¹⁴I, the LORD, have spoken: The time is coming and I shall act. I shall not condone or pity or relent. You will be judged by your conduct and by what you have done. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

¹⁵THIS word of the LORD came to me:

¹⁶O man, I am taking from you at one stroke the dearest thing you have, but you are not to wail or weep or give way to tears.

¹⁷Suppress your grief, and observe no mourning for the dead. Wrap your turban on your head and put on your sandals. You are not to veil your beard in mourning or eat the bread of sorrow.

¹⁸I spoke to the people in the morning. That evening my wife died, and next morning I did as I had been commanded.

¹⁹The people asked me what meaning my actions had for them.

²⁰I answered, This word of the LORD came to me:

²¹Tell the Israelites: The Lord GOD has said: I am about to desecrate my sanctuary, which has been your strong boast, the delight of your eyes, and your heart's desire, and the sons and

daughters you have left behind will fall by the sword.

²²You are to do as I have done, I said: you are not to cover your beard in mourning or eat the bread of sorrow.

²³Your turbans are to be on your heads and your sandals on your feet; you are not to wail or weep. Because of your wickedness you will pine away, groaning to each other.

²⁴Ezekiel will be a sign to warn you, says the LORD, and you are to do as he has done. When judgement befalls you, you will know that I am the Lord GOD.

²⁵Now, O man, I am taking from them at that time the stronghold whose beauty so gladdened them, the delight of their eyes, their heart's desire, and I am taking their sons and daughters.

²⁶When a fugitive then comes and brings the news to you,

²⁷you will recover the power of speech and, no longer dumb, you will speak with the fugitive. So you will be a warning to the people, and they will know that I am the LORD.

25¹ THIS word of the LORD came to me:

²O man, face towards the Ammonites and prophesy against them.

³Say this to them: Listen to the word of the Lord GOD. He says: Because you cried Hurrah! when my holy place was desecrated, when Israel's land was laid waste, and the people of Judah sent into exile,

⁴I am giving you into the possession of tribes from the east. They will pitch their tents and establish their camps among you; they will eat your crops and drink your milk.

⁵I shall turn Rabbah into a camel pasture and Ammon into a sheep-walk. Thus you will know that I am the LORD.

⁶These are the words of the Lord GOD: Because you clapped your hands and stamped your feet and exulted over the land of Israel with spiteful contempt,

⁷I shall stretch out my hand over you and give you up to be plundered by the nations. I shall cut you off from other peoples, destroy you in every land, and bring you to ruin. Thus you will know that I am the LORD.

⁸The Lord GOD says: Because Moab said, Judah is like all other nations,

⁹I shall expose the flank of Moab and from one end to the other lay open its towns, the glory of the land: Beth-jeshimoth, Baal-meon, and Kiriathaim.

¹⁰I shall give Moab and Ammon into the possession of tribes from the east, so that all memory of the Ammonites will be blotted out among the nations,

¹¹and so that I may execute judgement upon Moab. Thus they will know that I am the LORD.

¹²The Lord GOD says: Because Edom exacted harsh revenge on Judah and by so doing incurred lasting guilt,

¹³I shall stretch my hand out over Edom, says the Lord GOD, and destroy both people and animals in it, laying waste the land from Teman as far as Dedan; they will fall by the sword.

¹⁴I shall wreak my vengeance on Edom through my people Israel. They will deal with Edom as my anger and fury demand, and it will feel my vengeance. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

¹⁵The Lord GOD says: Because the Philistines have resorted to revenge, avenging themselves with spiteful

contempt, and destroying to satisfy an age-long enmity,

¹⁶I shall stretch out my hand over the Philistines, says the Lord GOD. I shall wipe out the Kerethites and destroy the other dwellers by the sea.

¹⁷I shall take mighty vengeance upon them and punish them in my fury. When I exact my vengeance, they will know that I am the LORD.

26 ¹This word of the LORD came to me on the first day of the first month in the eleventh year:

²O man, since Tyre has said of Jerusalem, Aha! She who was the gateway of the nations is broken, her gates lie open before me; I prosper, she lies in ruin,

³the Lord GOD says: I am against you, Tyre! As the sea raises up its waves, so shall I raise up many nations against you.

⁴They will destroy the walls of Tyre and overthrow her towers. I shall scrape the soil off her and leave her only bare rock;

⁵she will be an island where nets are spread to dry. This is my word, says the

Lord GOD. She will become the prey of nations,

⁶and her daughters on the mainland will be slain. Then they will know that I am the LORD.

⁷The Lord GOD says: From the north I am bringing against Tyre King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, king of kings. He will come with horses and chariots, cavalry, and a great force of infantry.

⁸He will put to the sword your daughters on the mainland. He will set up siege-towers and cast up siege-ramps against you, and raise a screen of shields facing you.

⁹He will launch his battering-rams on your walls and break down your towers with his axes.

¹⁰Dust will cover you from his innumerable cavalry. At the thunder of the horses and of the chariot wheels your walls will shake when he enters your gates as though entering a city that is breached.

¹¹All your streets will be trampled by the hoofs of his horses. He will put your

people to the sword, and bring your strong pillars to the ground.

¹²Your wealth will become spoil, your merchandise will be plundered. Your walls will be levelled, and your fine houses pulled down; the stones, timber, and rubble will be dumped in the sea.

¹³I shall silence the chorus of your songs, and the sound of your harps will be heard no more.

¹⁴I shall make you a bare rock, a place where nets are spread to dry. You will never be rebuilt. I, the LORD, have spoken. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

¹⁵THE Lord GOD says to Tyre: How the coasts and islands will shake at the sound of your downfall, while the wounded groan and slaughter prevails in your midst!

¹⁶Then the sea-kings will descend from their thrones, lay aside their cloaks, and strip off their brocaded robes. They will put on loincloths and sit on the ground, shuddering incessantly, aghast at your fate.

¹⁷They will raise this dirge over you: How you are undone, swept from the

seas, you city of renown! You whose strength lay in the sea, you and your inhabitants, who spread your terror throughout the world.

¹⁸Now the coastlands shudder on the day of your downfall, and the isles are appalled at your passing.

¹⁹For the Lord GOD says: When I make you a desolate city, like cities where no one lives, when I bring the primeval ocean up over you and the great waters cover you,

²⁰I shall thrust you down with those who go down to the abyss, to the dead of all the ages; I shall make you dwell in the underworld as in places long desolate, with those that go down to the abyss. So you will never again be inhabited or take your place in the land of the living.

²¹I shall bring destruction on you, and you will be no more; people may look for you but will never find you again. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

27 ¹This word of the LORD came to me:

²O man, raise a dirge over Tyre

³and say to her who is enthroned at the gateway to the sea, who carries the trade of the nations to many coasts and islands: These are the words of the Lord GOD: Tyre, you declared, I am perfect in beauty.

⁴Your frontiers were on the high seas, your builders made your beauty perfect;

⁵they used pine from Senir to fashion all your ribs; they took a cedar from Lebanon to set up a mast for you.

⁶They made your oars of oaks from Bashan; for your deck they used cypress from the coasts of Kittim.

⁷Your canvas was linen, patterned linen from Egypt to serve you for sails; your awnings were violet and purple from the coasts of Elishah.

⁸Men from Sidon and Arvad served as your oarsmen; you had skilled men among you, Tyre, acting as your helmsmen.

⁹You had skilled veterans from Gebal to caulk your seams. Every fully manned seagoing ship visited your harbour to traffic in your wares;

¹⁰Persia, Lydia, and Put supplied mercenaries for your army; they arrayed

shield and helmet in you, and it was they who gave you your splendour.

¹¹Men of Arvad and Cilicia manned your walls on every side, men of Gammad were posted on your towers; they arrayed their bucklers around your battlements, making your beauty perfect.

¹²Tarshish was a source of your commerce, from its abundant resources offering silver, iron, tin, and lead as your staple wares.

¹³Javan, Tubal, and Meshech dealt with you, offering slaves and bronze utensils as your imports.

¹⁴Men from Togarmah offered horses, cavalry steeds, and mules as your wares.

¹⁵Rhodians dealt with you; many islands were a source of your commerce, paying their dues to you in ivory tusks and ebony.

¹⁶Edom was a source of your commerce, so many were your undertakings, and offered purple garnets, brocade and fine linen, black coral and red jasper, for your wares.

¹⁷Judah and Israel traded with you, offering wheat from Minnith, and meal,

grape-syrup, oil, and balm as your imports.

¹⁸Damascus was a source of your commerce, so many were your undertakings, from its abundant resources offering Helbon wine and Suhar wool,

¹⁹and casks of wine from Izalla, in exchange for your wares; wrought iron, cassia, and sweet cane were among your imports.

²⁰Dedan traded with you in coarse woollens for saddle-cloths.

²¹Arabia and all the rulers of Kedar traded with you; they were the source of your commerce in lambs, rams, and goats.

²²Merchants from Sheba and Raamah traded with you, offering all the choicest spices, every kind of precious stone, and gold as your wares.

²³Harran, Kanneh, and Eden, merchants from Asshur and all Media, traded with you;

²⁴they were your dealers in choice stuffs: violet cloths and brocades, in stores of coloured fabric rolled up and tied with cords.

²⁵ Ships of Tarshish were the caravans for your imports; you were deeply laden with full cargoes on the high seas.

²⁶ Your oarsmen brought you into many waters, but an east wind wrecked you on the high seas.

²⁷ Your wealth, your wares, your imports, your sailors and your helmsmen, your caulkers, your merchants, and all your warriors, all who were in the ship with you were flung into the sea when it sank.

²⁸ Amid the cries of your helmsmen the troubled waters tossed.

²⁹ When rowers disembark from their ships, when sailors and the helmsmen, all together, go ashore,

³⁰ they mourn aloud over your fate and cry out bitterly; they throw dust on their heads and sprinkle themselves with ashes.

³¹ At your plight they cut off their hair and put on sackcloth; they weep bitterly over you with most bitter wailing.

³² In their lamentation they raise a dirge and bewail you, saying: Who was like Tyre, set in the midst of the sea?

³³When your wares were unloaded off the seas you met the needs of many nations; with your vast resources and your imports you enriched the kings of the earth.

³⁴Now you are wrecked at sea, sunk in deep water; your wares and all your crew have gone down with you.

³⁵All who dwell on the coasts and islands are aghast at your fate; horror is written on the faces of their kings and their hair stands on end.

³⁶Among the nations the merchants gasp at the sight of you; destruction has come on you, and you shall be no more.

28¹This word of the LORD came to me:

²O man, say to the ruler of Tyre: This is what the Lord GOD says: In your arrogance you say, I am a god; I sit enthroned like a god on the high seas. Though you are a man and no god, you give yourself godlike airs.

³What, are you wiser than Daniel? Is no secret beyond your grasp?

⁴By your skill and shrewdness you have amassed wealth, gold and silver in your treasuries.

⁵By great skill in commerce you have heaped up riches, and with your riches your arrogance has grown.

⁶The Lord GOD says: Because you give yourself godlike airs,

⁷I am about to bring foreigners against you, the most ruthless of nations; they will draw their swords against your fine wisdom and defile your splendour;

⁸they will thrust you down to destruction, to a violent death on the high seas.

⁹When you face your attackers, will you still say, I am a god? You are a man and no god in the hands of those who lay you low.

¹⁰You will die the death of the uncircumcised at the hands of foreigners. I have spoken. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

¹¹THIS word of the LORD came to me:

¹²O man, raise this dirge over the king of Tyre, and say to him: This is what the Lord GOD says: You set the seal on perfection; you were full of wisdom and flawless in beauty.

¹³In an Eden, a garden of God, you dwelt, adorned with gems of every kind:

sardin and chrysolite and jade, topaz, cornelian, and green jasper, sapphire, purple garnet, and green feldspar. Your jingling beads were of gold, and the spangles you wore were made for you on the day of your birth.

¹⁴I appointed a towering cherub as your guardian; you were on God's holy mountain and you walked proudly among stones of fire.

¹⁵You were blameless in your ways from the day of your birth until iniquity came to light in you.

¹⁶Your commerce grew so great that lawlessness filled your heart and led to wrongdoing. I brought you down in disgrace from the mountain of God, and the guardian cherub banished you from among the stones that flashed like fire.

¹⁷Your beauty made you arrogant; you debased your wisdom to enhance your splendour. I flung you to the ground, I left you exposed to the gaze of kings.

¹⁸So great was the sin in your dishonest trading that you desecrated your sanctuaries. I kindled a fire within you, and it devoured you. I reduced you

to ashes on the ground for everyone to see.

¹⁹Among the nations all who knew you were aghast: destruction has come on you, and you will be no more.

²⁰This word of the LORD came to me:

²¹O man, face towards Sidon and prophesy against her.

²²The Lord GOD says: Sidon, I am against you and I shall show my glory in your midst. People will know that I am the LORD when I execute judgement on her and show my holiness in her.

²³I shall let loose pestilence on her and bloodshed in her streets; beset on all sides by the sword the slain will fall within her walls. Then people will know that I am the LORD.

²⁴No longer will the Israelites suffer from the scorn of their neighbours, the pricking of briars and scratching of thorns, and they will know that I am the Lord GOD.

²⁵The Lord GOD says: When I gather the Israelites from the peoples among whom they are dispersed, I shall show my holiness in them for all the nations

to see. They will live on their own soil, which I gave to my servant Jacob.

²⁶They will live there undisturbed, build houses, and plant vineyards. When I execute judgement on all their scornful neighbours, they will live undisturbed. Thus they will know that I am the LORD their God.

29¹ THIS word of the LORD came to me on the twelfth day of the tenth month in the tenth year:

²O man, face towards Pharaoh king of Egypt and prophesy against him and the whole of Egypt.

³Say to them: The Lord GOD says: I am against you, Pharaoh king of Egypt, you great monster, lurking in the streams of the Nile. You have said, My Nile is my own; it was I who made it.

⁴But I shall put hooks in your jaws and they will cling to your scales. I shall haul you up out of its streams with all its fish clinging to your scales.

⁵I shall fling you into the desert, you and all the fish in your streams; you will fall on the ground with none to give you burial; I shall give you as food to beasts and birds.

⁶Then all who live in Egypt will know that I am the LORD. The support you gave the Israelites was no better than a reed.

⁷When they grasped you, you splintered in their hands and tore their armpits; when they leaned on you, you broke and their limbs gave way.

⁸The Lord GOD says: I am bringing a sword on you to destroy both people and animals.

⁹Egypt will become a desolate waste land, and they will know that I am the LORD. Because you said, The Nile is mine; it was I who made it,

¹⁰I am against you and your Nile. I shall make Egypt desolate, wasted by drought, from Migdol to Syene and as far as the frontier of Cush.

¹¹Untrodden by people or animals, it will lie uninhabited for forty years.

¹²I shall make Egypt the most desolate of desolate lands, her cities the most derelict of derelict cities. For forty years they will lie derelict, and I shall scatter the Egyptians among the nations, dispersing them throughout the earth.

¹³The Lord GOD says: At the end of forty years I shall gather the Egyptians from the peoples among whom they are scattered.

¹⁴I shall restore the fortunes of Egypt and bring her people back to Pathros, the land of their origin, where they will be a petty kingdom.

¹⁵It will become the most paltry of kingdoms and never again lord it over the nations, for I shall make the Egyptians too few to rule over them.

¹⁶The Israelites, always mindful of their sin in turning to Egypt for help, will never trust Egypt again. They will know that I am the Lord GOD.

¹⁷This word of the LORD came to me on the first day of the first month in the twenty-seventh year:

¹⁸O man, King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon kept his army in the field against Tyre so long that everyone's head was rubbed bare and everyone's shoulder chafed. But no gain from Tyre accrued to him or to his army from their campaign.

¹⁹This, therefore, is the word of the Lord GOD: I am now giving Egypt to King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon. He will

carry off its wealth, he will despoil and plunder it, and so his army will receive their wages.

²⁰I have given him Egypt in payment for his service because they have spurned my authority. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

²¹At that time I shall make Israel renew her strength, and give you back the power to speak among them, and they will know that I am the LORD.

30¹This word of the LORD came to me:

²O man, prophesy and say: The Lord GOD says: Wail! Alas for the day!

³A day is near, a day of the LORD is near, a day of cloud, a day of reckoning for the nations!

⁴A sword will come on Egypt, and there will be anguish in Cush, when the slain fall in Egypt, when her wealth is seized, her foundations are demolished.

⁵Cush and Put and Lydia, all the Arabs, Libyans, and peoples of allied lands will fall by the sword along with Egypt.

⁶The LORD says: Those who support Egypt will fall and her boasted might will be brought low; from Migdol to Syene

they will fall by the sword. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

⁷They will be the most desolate of desolate lands, their cities the most derelict of derelict cities.

⁸When I set Egypt on fire and all her helpers are shattered, they will know that I am the LORD.

⁹When that day comes messengers will go out in ships from my presence to strike terror into Cush, still undisturbed, and anguish shall come on her in Egypt's hour. Now it is near.

¹⁰The Lord GOD says: I shall make an end of Egypt's hordes at the hand of King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon.

¹¹He and his people with him, the most ruthless of nations, will be brought to ravage the land. They will draw their swords against Egypt and fill the land with the slain.

¹²I shall turn the streams of the Nile into dry land and sell Egypt into the power of evil men. By the hands of foreigners I shall lay waste the land and everything in it. I, the LORD, have spoken.

¹³The Lord GOD says: I shall make an end of the petty rulers and wipe out the chieftains of Noph; never again will a prince arise in Egypt. I shall instil terror into that land:

¹⁴I shall lay Pathros waste and set fire to Zoan and execute judgement on No.

¹⁵I shall vent my wrath on Sin, the bastion of Egypt, and destroy the hordes of Noph.

¹⁶I shall set Egypt on fire, and Syene will writhe in anguish; the walls of No will be breached and floodwaters will burst into it.

¹⁷The young men of On and Pi-beseth will fall by the sword and the cities themselves will go into captivity.

¹⁸Daylight will fail in Tahpanhes when I break the power of Egypt there; there her boasted might will be brought to an end. A cloud will cover her, and her daughters will go into captivity.

¹⁹I shall execute judgement on Egypt, and they will know that I am the LORD.

²⁰This word of the LORD came to me on the seventh day of the first month in the eleventh year:

²¹ O man, I have broken the arm of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and it has not been bound up with dressings or bandaged to make it strong enough to wield a sword.

²² The Lord GOD says: I am against Pharaoh king of Egypt; I shall break both his arms, the sound and the broken, and make the sword fall from his hand.

²³ I shall scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them throughout the earth.

²⁴ I shall strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon and put my sword in his hand; I shall break Pharaoh's arms, and he will lie wounded and groaning before him.

²⁵ I shall give strength to the arms of the king of Babylon, but Pharaoh's arms will fall. All will know that I am the LORD, when I put my sword into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he stretches it out over the land of Egypt.

²⁶ I shall scatter the Egyptians among the nations and disperse them throughout the earth, and they will know that I am the LORD.

31 ¹ On the first day of the third month in the eleventh year this word of the LORD came to me:

² O man, say to Pharaoh king of Egypt and to his hordes: In your greatness, what are you like?

³ Look at Assyria: it was a cedar in Lebanon, towering high with its crown pushing through the foliage and its fair branches overshadowing the forest.

⁴ Springs nourished it, the underground waters made it lofty, their streams washed the soil all round it and sent channels of water to every tree in the country.

⁵ So it grew taller than every other tree. Its boughs were many, its branches far-spreading; for water was abundant in the channels.

⁶ In its boughs all the birds of the air had their nests, under its branches all wild creatures bore their young, and in its shade all great nations made their home.

⁷ A splendid, great tree it was, with its far-spreading boughs, for its roots were beside abundant waters.

⁸No cedar in God's garden eclipsed it, no juniper could compare with its boughs, and no plane tree had such branches; not a tree in God's garden could rival its beauty.

⁹I, the LORD, made it beautiful with its mass of spreading boughs, the envy of every tree in Eden, the garden of God.

¹⁰The Lord GOD says: Because it grew so high, raising its crown through the foliage, and its pride mounted as it grew,

¹¹I handed it over to a prince of the nations to deal with it; I made an example of it as its wickedness deserved.

¹²Foreigners, the most ruthless of nations, cut it down and left it lying. Its sweeping boughs fell on the mountains and in all the valleys, and its branches lay broken beside every water-channel on earth. All the peoples of the earth came out from under its shade and left it.

¹³On its fallen trunk the birds all settled, the wild creatures all sought shelter among its branches.

¹⁴Never again will the well-watered trees grow so high or push their crowns up through the foliage. Nor will the

strongest of them, though well-watered, attain their full height; for all have been given over to death, to the world below, to share the fate of mortals and go down to the abyss.

¹⁵The Lord GOD says: When he went down to Sheol, I dried up the deep, I dammed its rivers, the great waters were held back. I brought mourning on Lebanon for him, and all the trees of the countryside wilted.

¹⁶I made nations shake at the sound of his downfall, when I brought him down to Sheol with those who go down to the abyss. From this all the trees of Eden, the choicest and best of Lebanon, all the well-watered trees, drew comfort in the world below.

¹⁷They too like him had gone down to Sheol, to those slain by the sword, and those among the nations who had lived in his shade.

¹⁸Which among the trees of Eden was like you in glory and greatness? Yet you will be brought down with the trees of Eden to the world below; you will lie with those who have been slain by the sword, in the company of the uncircumcised

dead. So it will be with Pharaoh and all his hordes. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

32¹ On the first day of the twelfth month in the twelfth year this word of the LORD came to me:

² O man, raise a dirge over Pharaoh king of Egypt and say to him: Young lion of the nations, your end has come. You were like a monster in the waters of the Nile scattering the water with its snout, churning up the water with its feet and muddying the streams.

³ The Lord GOD says: When many nations are assembled I shall spread my net over you, and you will be hauled ashore in its meshes.

⁴ I shall fling you on land, dashing you on the ground. I shall let all the birds of the air settle upon you and all the wild beasts gorge themselves on you.

⁵ I shall leave your carcass on the mountains, and fill the valleys with the worms that feed on it.

⁶ I shall drench the land with your blood as it pours out on the mountains, and the ravines will be filled with it.

⁷ When your light is quenched I shall veil the sky and darken its stars; I shall veil the sun with clouds, and the moon will give no light.

⁸ I shall darken all the shining lights of the sky above you and bring darkness over your land. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

⁹ I shall cause disquiet to many peoples when I bring your broken army among the nations, into lands you have never known.

¹⁰ I shall appal many peoples with your fate; when I brandish my sword in the presence of their kings, their hair will stand on end. On the day of your downfall not a moment will pass without each trembling for his own fate.

¹¹ For the Lord GOD has said: The king of Babylon's sword will come upon you.

¹² I shall make your hordes of people fall by the sword of warriors who are of all men the most ruthless. They will shatter the pride of Egypt, and all her hordes will be wiped out.

¹³ I shall destroy all their cattle beside abundant waters. No foot or hoof will ever churn them up again.

¹⁴ Then I shall let their waters settle and their streams glide smooth as oil. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

¹⁵ When I have laid Egypt waste, and the whole land lies empty, when I strike down all who live there, they will know that I am the LORD.

¹⁶ The women of the nations will raise this dirge, singing it as a dirge over Egypt and all her hordes. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

¹⁷ On the fifteenth day of the first month in the twelfth year, this word of the LORD came to me:

¹⁸ O man, raise a lament, you and the daughters of the nations, over Egypt's hordes and her nobility. I shall consign them to the world below, in company with those who go down to the abyss.

¹⁹ Are you better favoured than others? Go down and lie with the uncircumcised dead.

²⁰ A sword is drawn. Those who marched with her, together with all her hordes, will descend into the company of those slain by the sword.

²¹ Warrior chieftains in Sheol speak to Pharaoh and his allies. The uncircumcised

dead, slain by the sword, have come down and lie there.

²² Assyria is there with all her company buried around her, all of them slain, victims of the sword.

²³ Their graves are set in the farthest depths of the abyss, with her slain buried round about her, all victims of the sword, who once spread terror in the land of the living.

²⁴ Elam is there with all her people buried around her, all of them slain, victims of the sword. They have gone down uncircumcised to the world below, who spread terror in the land of the living, but now bear disgrace with those who go down to the abyss.

²⁵ A bed has been made for her in the midst of the slain. All her peoples are buried around her, all of them uncircumcised, victims of the sword. Those, who once spread terror in the land of the living, now bear disgrace with those who go down to the abyss, and are assigned a place in the midst of the slain.

²⁶ Meshech and Tubal are there with all their hordes buried around them, all of

them uncircumcised, slain by the sword, who once spread terror in the land of the living.

²⁷ Do they not rest with warriors fallen uncircumcised, who have gone down to Sheol with their weapons, their swords laid under their heads and their shields over their bones, though the terror of the warriors once weighed heavily on the land of the living?

²⁸ Pharaoh, you also will lie broken in the company of the uncircumcised dead, lying with those slain by the sword.

²⁹ Edom is there, with her kings and all her princes, who, despite their might, have been laid with those slain by the sword. They will lie with the uncircumcised dead and with those who go down to the abyss.

³⁰ All the princes of the north and the Sidonians are there, who, despite the terror inspired by their might, have gone down in shame with the slain. They lie uncircumcised with those slain by the sword, and they bear disgrace with those who go down to the abyss.

³¹ Pharaoh will see them and be consoled for his lost hordes -- Pharaoh

who, with all his army, is slain by the sword, says the Lord GOD.

³²Though he spread terror throughout the land of the living, yet he with all his hordes is laid with those slain by the sword, in the company of the uncircumcised dead. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

33¹ THIS word of the LORD came to me:

²O man, say to your fellow-countrymen: When I bring a sword against a land, its people choose one of themselves to be their watchman,

³and if he sees the enemy approach, he blows his trumpet to warn the people.

⁴If anyone does not heed the warning and is overtaken by the sword, his fate be on his own head!

⁵He ignored the alarm when he heard it. Had he taken heed, he would have escaped with his life.

⁶But if the watchman does not blow his trumpet to give warning when he sees the approach of the enemy, and if anyone who is killed is caught with his sins on him, I shall hold the watchman answerable for his death.

⁷I have appointed you, O man, a watchman for the Israelites, and you must pass to them any warnings you receive from me.

⁸If I pronounce sentence of death on a person because he is wicked and you do not speak out to dissuade him from his ways, that person will die because of his sin, but I shall hold you answerable for his death.

⁹However, if you have warned him to give up his ways, and he persists in them, he will die because of his sin, but you will have saved yourself.

¹⁰O man, say to the Israelites: You complain, We are burdened by our sins and offences; we are pining away because of them, and despair of life.

¹¹Tell them: As I live, says the Lord GOD, I have no desire for the death of the wicked. I would rather that the wicked should mend their ways and live. Give them up, give up your evil ways. Israelites, why should you die?

¹²O man, say to your fellow-countrymen: When a righteous person transgresses, his righteousness will not save him. When a wicked person mends

his ways, his former wickedness will not bring him down. When a righteous person sins, all his righteousness cannot save his life.

¹³When I tell the righteous person that he will save his life, then if he presumes on his righteousness and does wrong, none of his righteous deeds will be remembered: but for the wrong he has done he will die.

¹⁴When I pronounce sentence of death on the wicked, then if he mends his ways and does what is just and right --

¹⁵if he restores the pledges he has taken, makes good what he has stolen, and, doing no more wrong, follows the rules that ensure life -- he will live and not die.

¹⁶None of the sins he has committed will be remembered against him; because he does what is just and right, he will live.

¹⁷Yet your fellow-countrymen say, The Lord acts without principle, but in fact it is their ways which are unprincipled.

¹⁸If a righteous man gives up his righteousness and does wrong, he will die because of it;

¹⁹if a wicked man gives up his wickedness and does what is just and right, he will live.

²⁰Israel, how can you say that the Lord acts without principle, when I judge each one of you according to his deeds?

²¹In the twelfth year of our captivity, on the fifth day of the tenth month, a fugitive came from Jerusalem and reported that the city had fallen.

²²The evening before he arrived, the hand of the LORD had come upon me, but by the time the fugitive reached me in the morning the LORD had given me back the power of speech. My speech was restored and I was no longer dumb.

²³The word of the LORD came to me:

²⁴O man, the inhabitants of these ruins on Israel's soil say, When Abraham took possession of the land he was but one man; we are many, and surely the land has been granted to us.

²⁵Tell them, therefore, that the Lord GOD says: You eat meat with the blood still in it, you worship idols, you shed blood; and yet you expect to possess the land!

²⁶You resort to the sword, you commit abominations, you defile one another's wives, and yet you expect to keep possession of the land!

²⁷Tell them that the Lord GOD says: As I live, those among the ruins will fall by the sword; those in the open country I shall give to wild beasts for food; those in dens and caves will die by pestilence.

²⁸I shall make the land a desolate waste; her boasted might will be brought to an end, and the mountains of Israel will be an untrodden desert.

²⁹When I make the land a desolate waste because of all the abominations they have committed, then they will know that I am the LORD.

³⁰O man, your fellow-countrymen gather in groups and talk of you by the walls and in doorways, saying to one another, Let us go and see what message there is from the LORD.

³¹So my people will come in to you, as people are wont to do. They will sit down in front of you, and hear what you have to say, but they will not act on it. Fine words! they will say with insincerity, for their hearts are set on selfish gain.

³²To them you are no more than a singer of fine songs with a lovely voice and skill as a harpist. They will listen to what you say, but none of them will act on it.

³³When it comes, as come it will, they will know that there has been a prophet in their midst.

34¹This word of the LORD came to me:

²Prophecy, O man, against the rulers of Israel. Prophecy and say to them: You shepherds, these are the words of the Lord GOD: Woe betide Israel's shepherds who care only for themselves! Should not the shepherd care for the flock?

³You consume the milk, wear the wool, and slaughter the fat beasts, but you do not feed the sheep.

⁴You have not restored the weak, tended the sick, bandaged the injured, recovered the straggler, or searched for the lost; you have driven them with ruthless severity.

⁵They are scattered abroad for want of a shepherd, and have become the prey of every wild beast. Scattered,

⁶ my sheep go straying over all the mountains and on every high hill; my flock is dispersed over the whole earth, with no one to enquire after them or search for them.

⁷ Therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD.

⁸ As surely as I live, says the Lord GOD, because for lack of a shepherd my sheep are ravaged by all the wild beasts and have become their prey, because my shepherds have not taken thought for the sheep, but have cared only for themselves and not for the sheep --

⁹ therefore, you shepherds, hear the word of the LORD.

¹⁰ The Lord GOD says: I am against the shepherds and shall demand from them an account of my sheep. I shall dismiss those shepherds from tending my flock: no longer will they care only for themselves; I shall rescue my sheep from their mouths, and they will feed on them no more.

¹¹ For the Lord GOD says: Now I myself shall take thought for my sheep and search for them.

¹²As a shepherd goes in search of his sheep when his flock is scattered from him in every direction, so I shall go in search of my sheep and rescue them, no matter where they were scattered in a day of cloud and darkness.

¹³I shall lead them out from the nations, gather them in from different lands, and bring them home to their own country. I shall shepherd them on the mountains of Israel and by her streams, wherever there is a settlement.

¹⁴I shall feed them on good grazing-ground, and their pasture will be Israel's high mountains. There they will rest in good pasture, and find rich grazing on the mountains of Israel.

¹⁵I myself shall tend my flock, and find them a place to rest, says the Lord GOD.

¹⁶I shall search for the lost, recover the straggler, bandage the injured, strengthen the sick, leave the healthy and strong to play, and give my flock their proper food.

¹⁷The Lord GOD says to you, my flock: I shall judge between one sheep and another. As for you rams and he-goats,

¹⁸are you not satisfied with grazing on the best pastures, that you must also trample down the rest with your feet? Or with drinking clear water, that you must also muddy the rest with your feet?

¹⁹My flock has to graze on what you have trampled underfoot and drink what you have muddied.

²⁰Therefore, the Lord GOD says to them: Now I myself shall judge between the fat sheep and the lean.

²¹You push aside the weak with flank and shoulder, you butt them with your horns until you have scattered them in every direction.

²²Therefore I shall save my flock, and they will be ravaged no more; I shall judge between one sheep and another.

²³I shall set over them one shepherd to take care of them, my servant David; he will care for them and be their shepherd.

²⁴I, the LORD, shall be their God, and my servant David will be prince among them. I, the LORD, have spoken.

²⁵I shall make a covenant with them to ensure peace and prosperity; I shall rid the land of wild beasts, and people will

live on the open pastures and sleep in the woods free from danger.

²⁶I shall settle them in the neighbourhood of my hill and bless them with rain in due season.

²⁷Trees in the countryside will bear their fruit, the ground will yield its produce, and my people will live in security on their own soil. When I break the bars of their yokes and rescue them from the power of those who have enslaved them they will know that I am the LORD.

²⁸They will never again be ravaged by the nations, nor will wild beasts devour them; they will live in security, free from terror.

²⁹I shall make their crops renowned, and they will never again be victims of famine in the land, nor bear any longer the taunts of the nations.

³⁰Then they will know that I, the LORD their God, am with them, and that they are my people Israel, says the Lord GOD.

³¹You are my flock, the flock I feed, and I am your God. It is the word of the Lord GOD.

35¹This word of the LORD came to me:

²O man, face towards the hill-country of Seir and prophesy against it.

³Say: These are the words of the Lord GOD: Hill-country of Seir, I am against you: I shall stretch out my hand to strike you and reduce you to a desolate waste.

⁴I shall lay your towns in ruins and you will become a desolation. Then you will know that I am the LORD;

⁵for you have kept up an ancient feud and handed over the Israelites to the sword in the hour of their doom, the hour of their final punishment.

⁶Therefore, as I live, says the Lord GOD, I shall make blood your destiny, and it will pursue you; you are most surely guilty of blood, and it will pursue you.

⁷I shall make the hill-country of Seir a desolate waste and prevent anyone travelling to and fro in it;

⁸I shall cover your hills and valleys with the slain, and those slain by the sword will fall into your streams.

⁹I shall make you desolate for ever, and your cities will not be inhabited. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

¹⁰You say, The two nations and the two countries will be mine and I shall take possession of them, though the LORD has been there.

¹¹Therefore, as I live, says the Lord GOD, your anger and jealousy will be repaid, for I shall do to you what you have done in your hatred towards them. I shall be known among you by the way I judge you;

¹²you will know that I am the LORD. I have heard all your blasphemous talk about the mountains of Israel. You have said, They are desolate and have been given to us to devour.

¹³You have boasted against me and spoken wildly. I myself have heard you.

¹⁴The Lord GOD says: I shall make you so desolate that the whole world will gloat over you.

¹⁵I shall treat you as you treated Israel my own possession when you gloated over its desolation. Hill-country of Seir, the whole of Edom, you will be desolate. Then all will know that I am the LORD.

36 ¹⁰O man, prophesy to the mountains of Israel and say:

Mountains of Israel, hear the word of the LORD.

²The Lord GOD says: The enemy has boasted over you, Aha! Now the ancient heights are ours.

³Therefore prophesy and say: These are the words of the Lord GOD: You gloated over you and trampled you down when you were seized and occupied by the rest of the nations; your name was bandied about in common gossip. Therefore, listen to the words of the Lord GOD when he speaks to the mountains and hills, to the streams and valleys, to ruined places and deserted cities, all plundered and despised by the rest of the surrounding nations.

⁴ (36: 3)

⁵The Lord GOD says: In the heat of my jealousy I have spoken out against the rest of the nations, and against Edom above all, for with hearts full of glee and feelings of contempt they seized my land as spoil.

⁶Therefore prophesy over the soil of Israel; say to the mountains and hills, the streams and valleys: The Lord GOD

has said: I have spoken my mind in jealous anger because you have had to endure the taunts of the nations.

⁷Therefore, says the Lord GOD, I swear with uplifted hand that the nations round about you will in turn endure taunting.

⁸But you, mountains of Israel, will put forth your branches and yield your fruit for my people Israel, for their homecoming is near.

⁹See now, I am for you, I shall turn to you, and you will be tilled and sown.

¹⁰I shall settle on you many people -- the whole house of Israel. The towns will again be inhabited and the ruined places rebuilt.

¹¹I shall settle in you many people and beasts; they will increase and be fruitful. I shall make you populous as in days of old, and more prosperous than you were in your earliest times. Thus you will know that I am the LORD.

¹²I shall make my people Israel tread your paths again. They will settle in you, and you will be their possession. Never again will you leave them childless.

¹³The Lord GOD says: It is said that you are a land that devours human beings and leaves your nation childless.

¹⁴But never again will you devour them or leave your nation childless, says the Lord GOD.

¹⁵I shall never let you hear again the taunts of the surrounding nations, nor will you have to suffer the scorn of foreigners. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

¹⁶This word of the LORD came to me:

¹⁷O man, when the Israelites were living on their own soil they defiled it with their ways and deeds; their ways were loathsome and unclean in my sight.

¹⁸I poured out my fury on them for the blood they had poured out on the land, and for the idols with which they had defiled it.

¹⁹I scattered them among the nations, and they were dispersed in many lands. I passed a sentence on them which their ways and deeds deserved.

²⁰But whenever they came among the nations, they caused my holy name to be profaned. It was said of them, These

are the LORD's people, and it is from his land they have gone into exile.

²¹ So I spared them for the sake of my holy name which the Israelites had profaned among the nations to whom they had gone.

²² Therefore tell the Israelites that the Lord GOD says: It is not for the sake of you Israelites that I am acting, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the peoples where you have gone.

²³ I shall hallow my great name, which you have profaned among those nations. When they see that I reveal my holiness through you, they will know that I am the LORD, says the Lord GOD.

²⁴ I shall take you from among the nations, and gather you from every land, and bring you to your homeland.

²⁵ I shall sprinkle pure water over you, and you will be purified from everything that defiles you; I shall purify you from the taint of all your idols.

²⁶ I shall give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I shall remove the heart of stone from your body and give you a heart of flesh.

²⁷ I shall put my spirit within you and make you conform to my statutes; you will observe my laws faithfully.

²⁸ Then you will live in the land I gave to your forefathers; you will be my people, and I shall be your God.

²⁹ Having saved you from all that defiles you, I shall command the grain to be plentiful; I shall bring no more famine upon you.

³⁰ I shall make the trees bear abundant fruit and the ground yield heavy crops, so that you will never again have to bear among the nations the reproach of famine.

³¹ You will recall your wicked conduct and evil deeds, and you will loathe yourselves because of your wrongdoing and your abominations.

³² I assure you it is not for your sake that I am acting, says the Lord GOD, so feel the shame and disgrace of your ways, people of Israel.

³³ The Lord GOD says: When I have cleansed you of all your wrongdoing, I shall resettlement the towns, and the ruined places will be rebuilt.

³⁴The land now desolate will be tilled, instead of lying waste for every passer-by to see.

³⁵Everyone will say that this land which was waste has become like a garden of Eden, and the towns once ruined, wasted, and shattered will now be fortified and inhabited.

³⁶The nations still left around you will know that it is I, the LORD, who have rebuilt the shattered towns and replanted the land laid waste; I, the LORD, have spoken and I shall do it.

³⁷The Lord GOD says: Once again I shall let the Israelites pray to me for help. I shall make their people as numerous as a flock of sheep.

³⁸As Jerusalem is filled with sheep offered as holy-gifts at times of festival, so will their ruined cities be filled with flocks of people. Then they will know that I am the LORD.

37 ¹The LORD's hand was upon me, and he carried me out by his spirit and set me down in a plain that was full of bones.

²He made me pass among them in every direction. Countless in number and very dry, they covered the plain.

³He said to me, O man, can these bones live? I answered, Only you, Lord GOD, know that.

⁴He said, Prophecy over these bones; say: Dry bones, hear the word of the LORD.

⁵The Lord GOD says to these bones: I am going to put breath into you, and you will live.

⁶I shall fasten sinews on you, clothe you with flesh, cover you with skin, and give you breath, and you will live. Then you will know that I am the LORD.

⁷I began to prophesy as I had been told, and as I prophesied there was a rattling sound and the bones all fitted themselves together.

⁸As I watched, sinews appeared upon them, flesh clothed them, and they were covered with skin, but there was no breath in them.

⁹Then he said to me, Prophecy to the wind, prophesy, O man, and say to it: These are the words of the Lord GOD: Let winds come from every quarter and

breathe into these slain, that they may come to life.

¹⁰I prophesied as I had been told; breath entered them, and they came to life and rose to their feet, a mighty company.

¹¹He said to me, O man, these bones are the whole people of Israel. They say, Our bones are dry, our hope is gone, and we are cut off.

¹²Prophecy, therefore, and say to them: The Lord GOD has said: My people, I shall open your graves and bring you up from them, and restore you to the land of Israel.

¹³You, my people, will know that I am the LORD when I open your graves and bring you up from them.

¹⁴Then I shall put my spirit into you and you will come to life, and I shall settle you on your own soil, and you will know that I the LORD have spoken and I shall act. This is the word of the LORD.

¹⁵THIS word of the LORD came to me:

¹⁶O man, take one leaf of a wooden tablet and write on it, Judah and the Israelites associated with him. Then take another leaf and write on it, Joseph,

the leaf of Ephraim and all the Israelite tribes.

¹⁷ Now bring the two together to form one tablet; then they will be a folding tablet in your hand.

¹⁸ When your fellow-countrymen ask you to tell them what you mean by this,

¹⁹ say to them: The Lord GOD has said: I am taking the leaf of Joseph, which belongs to Ephraim and the other tribes of Israel, and joining to it the leaf of Judah. Thus I shall make them one tablet, and they will be one in my hand.

²⁰ When the leaves on which you write are there in your hand for all to see,

²¹ say to them: The Lord GOD has said: I am going to take the Israelites from their places of exile among the nations; I shall assemble them from every quarter and restore them to their own soil.

²² I shall make them a single nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel, and one king will be over them all. No longer will they be two nations, no longer divided into two kingdoms.

²³ They will never again be defiled with their idols, their loathsome ways, and all their acts of disloyalty. I shall save

them from all their sinful backsliding and purify them. Thus they will be my people, and I shall be their God.

²⁴My servant David will be king over them; they will all have one shepherd. They will conform to my laws and my statutes and observe them faithfully.

²⁵They will live in the land which I gave to my servant Jacob, the land where your forefathers lived. They and their descendants will live there for ever, and my servant David is to be their prince for ever.

²⁶I shall make an everlasting covenant with them to ensure peace and prosperity. I shall greatly increase their numbers, and I shall put my sanctuary in their midst for all time.

²⁷They will live under the shelter of my dwelling; I shall be their God and they will be my people.

²⁸The nations will know that I the LORD am keeping Israel sacred to myself, because my sanctuary is in their midst for ever.

38¹ THIS word of the LORD came to me:

²O man, face towards Gog in the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal, and prophesy against him.

³Say: These are the words of the Lord GOD: I am against you, Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal.

⁴I shall put hooks in your jaws and turn you round. I shall lead you out, you and your whole army, horses and horsemen, all fully equipped, a great host with bucklers and shields, every man wielding a sword.

⁵With them will march the men of Persia, Cush, and Put, all with shields and helmets,

⁶Gomer and all its squadrons, Beth-togarmah with all its squadrons from the far recesses of the north -- a great concourse of peoples with you.

⁷Be prepared; make ready, you and all the host which has rallied to you, and hold yourselves at my disposal.

⁸After a long time has passed you will be summoned; in years to come you will invade a land restored from ruin, whose people are gathered from many nations on the mountains of Israel that have been so long desolate. The Israelites,

brought out from the nations, will all be living undisturbed;

⁹and you will come up, advancing like a hurricane; you will be like a cloud covering the land, you and all your squadrons, a great concourse of peoples.

¹⁰The Lord GOD says: At that time a thought will enter your head and you will hatch an evil plan.

¹¹You will say, I shall attack a land of open villages and fall upon a people living quiet and undisturbed, undefended by walls or barred gates.

¹²You will expect to come plundering, spoiling, and stripping bare the settlements which once lay in ruins, but are now inhabited by a people gathered out of the nations, a people acquiring livestock and goods, and making their home at the very centre of the world.

¹³Sheba and Dedan, the traders of Tarshish and her leading merchants, will say to you, Is it for plunder that you have come? Have you mustered your host to get spoil, to carry off silver and gold, to take livestock and goods, to seize much booty?

¹⁴Therefore, O man, prophesy and say to Gog: The Lord GOD says: On that day when my people Israel are living undisturbed, will you not bestir yourself

¹⁵and come with many nations from your home in the far recesses of the north, all riding on horses, a large host, a mighty army?

¹⁶You will advance against my people Israel like a cloud that covers the earth. In the last days I shall bring you against my land, that the nations may know me, when they see me prove my holiness at Gog's expense.

¹⁷The Lord GOD says: When I spoke in days of old through my servants the prophets, who prophesied in those days unceasingly, it was you whom I threatened to bring against Israel.

¹⁸On that day, when at length Gog invades Israel, says the Lord GOD, my wrath will boil over.

¹⁹In my jealousy and in the heat of my anger I swear that there will be a great earthquake throughout the land of Israel on that day,

²⁰and the fish in the sea and the birds in the air, the wild animals and all

creatures that move on the ground, and every human being on the face of the earth will quake before me. Mountains will be overthrown, the terraced hills collapse, and every wall crash to the ground.

²¹ I shall summon universal terror against Gog, says the Lord GOD, and his men will turn their swords against one another.

²² I shall bring him to judgement with pestilence and bloodshed; I shall pour torrential rain and hailstones as well as fire and brimstone on him and his squadrons and the whole concourse of peoples with him.

²³ I shall show myself great and holy and make myself known to many nations. Then they will know that I am the LORD.

39¹ O man, prophesy against Gog and say: The Lord GOD says: I am against you, Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal.

² I shall turn you round and drive you on. I shall lead you from the far recesses of the north and bring you to the mountains of Israel.

³I shall strike the bow from your left hand and dash the arrows from your right hand.

⁴On the mountains of Israel you will fall, you and all your squadrons and allies. I shall give you as food to every kind of bird of prey and to the wild beasts.

⁵You will fall on the ground, for it is I who have spoken. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

⁶I shall send fire on Magog and on those who live undisturbed in the coasts and islands. Then they will know that I am the LORD.

⁷My holy name I shall make known in the midst of my people Israel and no longer let it be profaned; the nations will know that I, the LORD, am holy in Israel.

⁸See, it is coming; it is here! says the Lord GOD; it is the day of which I have spoken.

⁹Those who live in Israel's towns will go out and gather weapons for fuel, bucklers and shields, bows and arrows, throwing-sticks and lances; for seven years they will kindle fires with them.

¹⁰They will take no wood from the fields, nor cut it from the forests, but will use the weapons to light their fires. Thus they will plunder those who plundered them and spoil their despoilers. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

¹¹On that day, instead of a burial-ground in Israel, I shall assign to Gog the valley of Abarim east of the Dead Sea. There Gog with all his horde will be buried, and Abarim will be entirely blocked. It will be called the Valley of Gog's Horde.

¹²It will take the Israelites seven months to bury them and to purify the land,

¹³and all the people will share in the task. The day that I win myself honour will be a memorable day for them. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

¹⁴Men will be picked for the regular duty of going through the country to bury any left above ground, and so purify the land. They will begin their search at the end of the seven months:

¹⁵they will go up and down the country, and whenever one of them sees a human bone he is to put a marker beside it,

until it has been buried in the Valley of Gog's Horde.

¹⁶So no more will be heard of that great horde, and the land will be purified.

¹⁷O man, the Lord GOD says: Cry to every bird that flies and to all the wild beasts: Assemble and come, gather from every side to my sacrifice, the great sacrifice I am preparing for you on the mountains of Israel. Eat flesh and drink blood,

¹⁸eat the flesh of warriors and drink the blood of the rulers of the earth; all these are your rams, sheep, he-goats, and bulls, and buffaloes of Bashan.

¹⁹You will sate yourselves with fat and drink yourselves drunk on blood at the sacrifice which I am preparing for you.

²⁰At my table you will eat your fill of horses and riders, of warriors and fighting men of every kind. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

²¹I shall display my glory among the nations; all will see the judgement that I execute and the hand I lay upon them.

²²From that day forward the Israelites will know that I am the LORD their God,

²³and the nations will know that the Israelites went into exile for their iniquity in being unfaithful to me. I hid my face from them and handed them over to their enemies, and they fell, every one of them, by the sword.

²⁴I dealt out to them what their defilement and rebelliousness deserved, and I hid my face from them.

²⁵The Lord GOD says: Now I shall restore the fortunes of Jacob and show my compassion for all Israel, and I shall be jealous for my holy name.

²⁶They will forget their shame and all their unfaithfulness to me, when they live once more in their homeland undisturbed and free from terror.

²⁷When I bring them back from the nations and gather them from the lands of their enemies, I shall make them exemplify my holiness for many nations to see.

²⁸They will know that I am the LORD their God, because, having sent them into exile among the nations, I bring them together again in their homeland and leave none of them behind.

²⁹No longer shall I hide my face from them, I who have poured out my spirit on Israel. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

40¹AT the beginning of the year, on the tenth day of the month, in the twenty-fifth year of our exile, that is fourteen years after the city had fallen, on that very day the hand of the LORD came upon me and he brought me there.

²In a vision from God I was brought to the land of Israel and set on a very high mountain, on which were what seemed to be the buildings of a city to the south.

³He led me towards it, and I saw a man like a figure of bronze standing at the gate and holding a cord of linen thread and a measuring rod.

⁴O man, he said to me, look closely and listen carefully; note well all that I show you, for this is why you have been brought here. Tell the Israelites everything you see.

⁵Right round the outside of the temple ran a wall. The length of the rod which the man was holding was six cubits, reckoning by the long cubit which was one cubit and a hand's breadth. He

measured the thickness and the height of the wall; each was one rod.

⁶The man went to the gate which faced eastwards, and mounting its steps he measured the threshold of the gateway; its depth was one rod.

⁷Each cell was one rod long and one rod wide; and there was a space of five cubits between the cells. The threshold of the gateway at the end of the vestibule on the side facing the temple was one rod.

⁸He measured the vestibule of the gateway

⁹and it was eight cubits, with pilasters two cubits thick; the vestibule of the gateway lay at the end nearer the temple.

¹⁰Now the cells of the gateway, looking back eastwards, were three in number on each side, all of the same size, and their pilasters on either side were also identical in size.

¹¹He measured the entrance to the gateway; it was ten cubits wide, and the width of the gateway itself throughout its length was thirteen cubits.

¹²In front of the cells on each side lay a kerb, one cubit wide; each cell was six cubits by six.

¹³He measured the width of the gateway through the cell doors which faced one another, from the back of one cell to the back of the opposite cell; he made it twenty-five cubits,

¹⁴and the vestibule twenty cubits across; the gateway on every side projected into the court.

¹⁵From the front of the entrance gate to the outer face of the vestibule of the inner gate the distance was fifty cubits.

¹⁶Both cells and pilasters had embrasures all round inside the gateway, and the vestibule had windows all round within, and each pilaster was decorated with carved palm trees.

¹⁷The man brought me to the outer court, and I saw rooms and a pavement all round the court: there were thirty rooms along the pavement.

¹⁸The pavement ran up to the side of the gateways, as wide as they were long; this was the lower pavement.

¹⁹He measured the width of the court from the front of the lower gateway to

the outside of the inner gateway; it was a hundred cubits. The man led me round to the north

²⁰and I saw a gateway facing north belonging to the outer court, and he measured its length and its breadth.

²¹Its cells, three on each side, together with its pilasters and its vestibule, were the same size as those of the first gateway, fifty cubits long by twenty-five wide.

²²So too its windows, and those of its vestibule, and its palm trees were the same size as those of the gateway which faced east; it was approached by seven steps with its vestibule facing them.

²³A gate like that on the east side led to the inner court opposite the north gateway; he measured from gateway to gateway, and it was a hundred cubits.

²⁴Then the man led me round to the south, where I saw a gateway facing south. He measured its cells, its pilasters, and its vestibule, and found it the same size as the others,

²⁵fifty cubits long by twenty-five wide. Both gateway and vestibule had windows all round like the others.

²⁶It was approached by seven steps with a vestibule facing them and palms carved on each pilaster.

²⁷The inner court had a gateway facing south, and when he measured from gateway to gateway it was a hundred cubits.

²⁸The man brought me into the inner court through the south gateway, measured it, and found it the same size as the others.

²⁹So were its cells, pilasters, and vestibule, fifty cubits long by twenty-five wide. The court and its vestibule had windows all round.

³⁰[[EMPTY]]

³¹Its vestibule faced the outer court; it had palm trees carved on its pilasters, and eight steps led up to it.

³²The man brought me to the inner court on the east side and measured the gateway, and he found it the same size as the others.

³³So too were its cells, pilasters, and vestibule; it and its vestibule had windows all round, and it was fifty cubits long by twenty-five wide.

³⁴ Its vestibule gave on to the outer court and had a palm tree carved on each pilaster; eight steps led up to it.

³⁵ Then the man brought me to the north gateway and measured it and found it the same size as the others.

³⁶ So were its cells, pilasters, and vestibule, and it had windows all round; it was fifty cubits long by twenty-five wide.

³⁷ Its vestibule faced the outer court and had palm trees carved on the pilaster at each side; eight steps led up to it.

³⁸ Opening off the vestibule of the gateway was a room in which the whole-offerings were to be washed.

³⁹ On each side at the vestibule were two tables where the whole-offering, the purification-offering, and the reparation-offering were to be slaughtered.

⁴⁰ At the corner on the outside, on the way up to the entrance of the north gateway, stood two tables, and two more at the other corner of the vestibule of the gateway;

⁴¹ another four stood on each side at the corner of the gateway -- eight tables in all, at which the slaughtering was to be done.

⁴² Four tables used for the whole-offering were of hewn stone, each one and a half cubits long by one and a half cubits wide and a cubit high; and on them they put the instruments used for the whole-offering and other sacrifices.

⁴³ The flesh of the offerings was on the tables, and rims a hand's breadth in width were fixed all round facing inwards.

⁴⁴ Then the man brought me right into the inner court, where there were two rooms, one at the corner of the north gateway, facing south, and one at the corner of the south gateway, facing north.

⁴⁵ This room facing south, the man told me, is for the priests in charge of the temple buildings.

⁴⁶ The room facing north is for the priests in charge of the altar: that is, the descendants of Zadok, who alone of the Levites may come near to serve the LORD.

⁴⁷ He measured the court; it was square, a hundred cubits each way, and the altar stood in front of the temple.

⁴⁸ The man brought me into the vestibule of the temple, and measured a pilaster of the vestibule; it was five cubits on each side. The width of the gateway was fourteen cubits, and that of the corners of the gateway three cubits in each direction.

⁴⁹ The vestibule was twenty cubits long by twelve wide; ten steps led up to it, and by the pilasters rose pillars, one on either side.

41 ¹ He brought me into the sanctuary and measured the pilasters; they were six cubits wide on each side.

² The entrance was ten cubits wide and its corners five cubits wide in each direction. He measured the length of the sanctuary; it was forty cubits, and its width twenty.

³ He went into the inner sanctuary and measured the pilasters at the entrance: they were two cubits; the entrance itself was six cubits, and the corners of

the entrance were seven cubits in each direction.

⁴Then he measured the room at the far end of the sanctuary; its length and its breadth were each twenty cubits. He said to me, This is the Holy of Holies.

⁵The man measured the wall of the temple; it was six cubits high, and each arcade all round the temple was four cubits wide.

⁶The arcades were arranged in three tiers, each tier in thirty sections. In the wall all round the temple there were rebatements for the arcades, so that they could be supported without being fastened into the wall of the temple.

⁷The higher up the arcades were, the broader they were all round by the addition of the rebatements, one above the other all round the temple; the temple itself had a ramp running upwards on a base, and in this way there was access from the lowest to the highest tier by way of the middle tier.

⁸I saw the temple had a raised pavement all round it, and the foundations of the arcades were flush

with it and measured a full rod, six cubits high.

⁹The outer wall of the arcades was five cubits thick. There was an unoccupied area beside the terrace which was adjacent to the temple,

¹⁰There was a free space twenty cubits wide all round the temple.

¹¹and the arcades opened on to this area, one opening facing north and one south; the unoccupied area was five cubits wide on all sides.

¹²On the western side, at the far end of the free space, stood a building seventy cubits wide; its wall was five cubits thick all round, and its length ninety cubits.

¹³The man measured the temple; it was a hundred cubits long; the free space, the building, and its walls came to a hundred cubits in all.

¹⁴The east front of the temple along with the free space was a hundred cubits wide.

¹⁵He measured the length of the building at the far end of the free space to the west of the temple, and its corridors on each side: a hundred cubits.

The sanctuary, the inner shrine, and the outer vestibule were panelled;

¹⁶the embrasures around the three of them were framed with wood all round. From the ground up to the windows

¹⁷and above the door, in both the inner and outer chambers, round all the walls, inside and out,

¹⁸were carved figures, cherubim and palm trees, one palm tree between every pair of cherubim. Each cherub had two faces:

¹⁹one the face of a man, looking towards one palm tree, and the other the face of a lion, looking towards the palm tree on its other side. Such was the carving round the whole of the temple.

²⁰The cherubim and the palm trees were carved on the walls from the ground up to the top of the doorway.

²¹The doorposts of the sanctuary were square. In front of the Holy Place was what seemed

²²an altar of wood, three cubits high and two cubits long; it was fitted with corner-posts, and its base and sides also were of wood. He told me that this was the table which stands before the LORD.

²³The sanctuary had a double door, as also had the Holy Place:

²⁴the double doors had hinged leaves, a pair for each door.

²⁵Carved on them were cherubim and palm trees like those on the walls. Outside there was a wooden cornice over the vestibule;

²⁶on both sides of the vestibule were embrasures, with palm trees carved at the corners.

42¹Then the man took me to the outer court round by the north and brought me to the rooms facing the free space and facing the buildings to the north.

²The length along the northern side was a hundred cubits, and the breadth fifty.

³Facing the twenty cubits of free space which adjoined the inner court, and facing the pavement of the outer court, were corridors at three levels corresponding to each other.

⁴In front of the rooms a passage, ten cubits wide and a hundred cubits long, ran towards the inner court; the entrances to the rooms faced north.

⁵The upper rooms were narrower than the lower and middle rooms, because the corridors took building space from them.

⁶For they were all at three levels and had no pillars such as the courts had, so that the lower and middle levels were recessed from the ground upwards.

⁷An outside wall, fifty cubits long, ran parallel to the rooms and in front of them, on the side of the outer court,

⁸and while the rooms adjacent to the outer court were fifty cubits long, those facing the sanctuary were a hundred cubits.

⁹Below these rooms was an entry from the east on the way in from the outer court

¹⁰where the wall of the court began. On the south side, adjacent to the free space and the building,

¹¹were other rooms with a passage in front of them. These rooms corresponded, in length and breadth and in general character, to those facing north,

¹²whose exits and entrances were the same as those of the rooms on

the south. On the eastern approach, where the passages began, there was an entrance in the face of the inner wall.

¹³The man said to me, The north and south rooms facing the free space are the consecrated rooms where the priests who approach the LORD are to eat the most sacred offerings. There they are to put these offerings as well as the grain-offering, the purification-offering, and the reparation-offering; for the place is holy.

¹⁴When the priests have entered the Holy Place they must not go into the outer court again without leaving there the vestments they have worn while performing their duties. Those are holy vestments and they are to put on other garments before going to the place assigned to the people.

¹⁵When the man had finished measuring the inner temple, he brought me out through the gateway which faces east and measured the whole area.

¹⁶He measured the east side with the measuring rod, and it was five hundred cubits. He turned

¹⁷ and measured the north side with his rod, and it was five hundred cubits. He turned to

¹⁸ the south side and measured it with his rod; it was five hundred cubits.

¹⁹ He turned to the west and measured it with his rod; it was five hundred cubits.

²⁰ So he measured all four sides of the enclosing wall; in each direction it measured five hundred cubits. This marked off the sacred area from the secular.

43¹ The man led me to the gate which faced east,

² and there, coming from the east, was the glory of the God of Israel. The sound of his coming was like that of a mighty torrent, and the earth was bright with his glory.

³ The form that I saw was the same as I had seen when he came to destroy the city, the same I had seen by the river Kebar, and I prostrated myself.

⁴ As the glory of the LORD came to the temple by the east gate,

⁵ a spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court, and I saw the glory of the LORD fill the temple.

⁶With the man standing beside me I heard someone speak to me from the temple

⁷and say, O man, do you see the place of my throne, the place where I set my feet, and where I shall dwell among the Israelites for ever? Neither they nor their kings must ever defile my holy name again with their wanton idolatry, and with the monuments raised to dead kings.

⁸They set their threshold by mine and their doorpost beside mine, with only a wall between me and them. They defiled my holy name with the abominations they committed; so I destroyed them in my anger.

⁹But now they must put away their wanton idolatry and remove the monuments to their kings far from me, and I shall dwell among them for ever.

¹⁰Tell the Israelites, O man, about this temple, that they may be ashamed of their iniquities.

¹¹If they are ashamed of all they have done, you are to describe to them the temple and its fittings, its exits and entrances, all the details and particulars

of its elevation and plan. Make a sketch for them to look at, so that they may keep them in mind and carry them out.

¹²This is the plan of the temple to be built on the top of the mountain: all its precincts on every side shall be most holy.

¹³These were the dimensions of the altar in cubits (the cubit that is a cubit and a hand's breadth). This was the height of the altar: the base was a cubit high and projected a cubit; on its edge was a rim one span deep.

¹⁴From the base to the cubit-wide ridge of the lower pedestal-block was two cubits, and from this smaller pedestal-block to the cubit-wide ridge of the larger pedestal-block was four cubits.

¹⁵The altar-hearth was four cubits high and was surmounted by four horns a cubit high.

¹⁶The hearth was square, twelve cubits long and twelve cubits wide.

¹⁷The upper pedestal-block was fourteen cubits long and fourteen cubits wide on its four sides, and the rim round it was half a cubit deep. The base of the

altar projected a cubit, and there were steps facing east.

¹⁸He said to me, O man, the Lord GOD says: Here are the regulations for the altar when it has been made, for sacrificing whole-offerings on it and for flinging the blood against it.

¹⁹Only the levitical priests of the family of Zadok may come near to serve me, says the Lord GOD. You are to assign them a young bull for a purification-offering;

²⁰you must take some of the blood and apply it to the four horns of the altar, on the four corners of the upper pedestal, and all round the rim, and so purify and make expiation for the altar.

²¹Then take the bull chosen as the purification-offering, and let the priests destroy it by fire in the proper place within the precincts, but outside the Holy Place.

²²On the following day you are to present a he-goat without blemish as a purification-offering, and with it they are to purify the altar as they did with the bull.

²³When you have completed the purifying of the altar, you are to present a young bull without blemish and a ram without blemish.

²⁴Present them before the LORD, and have the priests throw salt on them and sacrifice them as a whole-offering to the LORD.

²⁵For seven days you are to offer a goat as a daily purification-offering, as well as a young bull, and a ram without blemish from the flock.

²⁶For seven days they are to make expiation for the altar, and, having pronounced it ritually clean, they are to consecrate it.

²⁷At the end of that time, on the eighth day and onwards, the priests will sacrifice on the altar your whole-offerings and your shared-offerings, and I shall accept you. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

44¹The man again brought me round to the outer gate of the sanctuary facing east. It was shut, and ²he said to me, This gate is to be kept closed and is not to be opened. No one may enter by it, for the LORD the God of

Israel has entered by it. It must be kept shut.

³Only the ruling prince himself may sit there to eat the sacrificial meal in the presence of the LORD. He is to come in and go out by the vestibule of the gate.

⁴The man brought me round by the north gate to the front of the temple, and I saw the glory of the LORD filling the LORD's house, and I prostrated myself.

⁵He said to me, Note carefully, O man, look closely, and listen attentively to all I say to you, to all the rules and the regulations for the LORD's house. Take note of the entrance to the house and all the exits from the sanctuary.

⁶Say to Israel: The Lord GOD says: Enough of all those abominations of yours, you Israelites!

⁷You admit foreigners, uncircumcised in mind and body, into my sanctuary, so defiling my house, when you present to me the fat and blood which are my food. They have made my covenant void with your abominations.

⁸Instead of keeping charge of my holy things yourselves, you have put these men in charge of my sanctuary.

⁹The Lord GOD says: No foreigner, uncircumcised in mind and body, who may be living among the Israelites is to enter my sanctuary.

¹⁰But the Levites, though they deserted me when the Israelites went astray after their idols and had to bear the punishment of their iniquity,

¹¹may yet be servants in my sanctuary, having charge of the gates of the temple and serving in it. They are to slaughter the whole-offering and the sacrifice for the people and be in attendance to serve them.

¹²Because they served the Israelites in the presence of their idols and caused the people to fall into sin, I have sworn with uplifted hand, says the Lord GOD, that they shall bear the punishment of their iniquity.

¹³They shall not have access to me, to serve me as priests; nor shall they approach any of my holy or most holy things. They shall bear the shame of the abominable deeds they have committed.

¹⁴I shall put them in charge of all the work which has to be done in the temple.

¹⁵But the levitical priests of the family of Zadok who remained in charge of my sanctuary when the Israelites went astray from me, they shall approach and serve me. They shall stand before me, to present the fat and the blood, says the Lord GOD.

¹⁶It is they who are to enter my sanctuary and approach my table to serve me and keep my charge.

¹⁷When they come to the gates of the inner court they must put on linen garments; they must wear no wool when serving me at the gates of the inner court and inside it.

¹⁸They are to wear linen turbans, and have linen drawers on their loins; they must not fasten their clothes with a belt, which might cause sweating.

¹⁹Before going out to the people in the outer court, they are to remove the clothes they have worn while serving; leaving them in the sacred rooms, they are to put on other clothes, so that they do not by means of their clothing transmit holiness to the people.

²⁰They must neither shave their heads nor let their hair grow long; they must keep their hair trimmed.

²¹No priest may drink wine when he is to enter the inner court.

²²He may not marry a widow or a divorced woman, but only a virgin of Israelite birth. He may, however, marry the widow of a priest.

²³They are to teach my people to distinguish the sacred from the profane, and show them the difference between unclean and clean.

²⁴When disputes arise, let them take their place in court and decide each case according to my laws. At all my appointed seasons they must observe my rules and statutes, and they are to keep my sabbaths holy.

²⁵They must not defile themselves by contact with any dead person, except father or mother, son or daughter, brother or unmarried sister.

²⁶After purification, they are to count off seven days and then they will be clean,

²⁷and when they re-enter the inner court to serve in the Holy Place, they

are to present their purification-offering, says the Lord GOD.

²⁸They are to own no holding in Israel; I am their holding. No possession is to be granted them in Israel; I am their possession.

²⁹The grain-offering, the purification-offering, and the reparation-offering are to be eaten by them. Everything in Israel devoted to God will be theirs.

³⁰The first of all the firstfruits and all your contributions of every kind are to belong wholly to the priests. You must give the first lump of your dough to the priests, so that a blessing may rest on your house.

³¹The priests must eat nothing, whether bird or beast, which has died a natural death or been killed by a wild animal.

45¹When you divide the land by lot among the tribes, you are to set apart for the LORD a sacred reserve, twenty-five thousand cubits in length and twenty thousand in width; the whole area is to be sacred.

²Of this a square plot, five hundred cubits each way, must be devoted to the

sanctuary, with fifty cubits of open land round it.

³From the area set apart, measure off a space twenty-five thousand cubits by ten thousand cubits, within which the sanctuary, the holiest place of all, will stand.

⁴This part is sacred and is for the priests who serve in the sanctuary and who come near to serve the LORD. It will include room for their houses and a sacred plot for the sanctuary.

⁵An area of twenty-five thousand by ten thousand cubits is to be for the Levites, the temple servants, and on it will stand the places in which they live.

⁶You are to allot to the city an area of five thousand by twenty-five thousand cubits alongside the sacred reserve; this will belong to all Israel.

⁷On either side of the sacred reserve and of the city's share the ruler is to have land facing the sacred reserve and the city's share, running westwards and eastwards. It is to run alongside one of the tribal portions, and extend from the western to the eastern borders

⁸of the land; it will be his share in Israel. The rulers of Israel will never oppress my people again, but they will assign the land to Israel, tribe by tribe.

⁹THE Lord GOD says: Enough, you rulers of Israel! Have done with lawlessness and robbery; do what is right and just. Give up evicting my people from their land, says the Lord GOD.

¹⁰Your scales must be honest, as must your ephah and your bath.

¹¹There must be one standard for each, taking each as the tenth of a homer, and the homer must have its fixed standard.

¹²Your shekel weight must contain twenty gerahs, and your mina be the sum of twenty and twenty-five and fifteen shekels.

¹³These are the contributions you are to set aside: out of every homer of wheat or of barley, one sixth of an ephah.

¹⁴For oil the rule is one tenth of a bath from every kor, at ten bath to the kor;

¹⁵one sheep in every flock of two hundred is to be reserved by every Israelite clan. For a grain-offering, a whole-offering, and a shared-offering, to

make expiation for them, says the Lord GOD,

¹⁶all the people of the land must bring this contribution to the ruler in Israel.

¹⁷He is to be responsible for the whole-offering, the grain-offering, and the drink-offering, at pilgrim-feasts, new moons, sabbaths, and every sacred season observed by Israel. He himself is to provide the purification-offering and the grain-offering, the whole-offering and the shared-offering, needed to make expiation for Israel.

¹⁸The Lord GOD says: On the first day of the first month you are to take a young bull without blemish and purify the sanctuary.

¹⁹The priest must take some of the blood from the purification-offering and put it on the doorposts of the temple, on the four corners of the altar pedestal, and on the gateposts of the inner court.

²⁰You are to do the same on the seventh day of the month for the man who has sinned through inadvertence or ignorance. So you are to purify the temple.

²¹ On the fourteenth day of the first month you are to celebrate the pilgrim-feast of Passover, and for the seven days of the feast you must eat bread made without yeast.

²² On that day the ruler is to provide a bull as a purification-offering for himself and for all the people.

²³ During the seven days of the feast he is to offer daily as a whole-offering to the LORD seven bulls and seven rams, all without blemish, and one he-goat daily as a purification-offering.

²⁴ With every bull and ram he is to provide a grain-offering of one ephah, together with a hin of oil for each ephah.

²⁵ He is to do the same thing also for the pilgrim-feast which falls on the fifteenth day of the seventh month; this also will last seven days, and he must provide the same purification-offering and whole-offering and the same quantity of grain and oil.

46 ¹ The Lord GOD says: The east gate of the inner court must remain closed during the six working days; it is to be opened only on the sabbath and at new moon.

²When the ruler comes through the porch of the gate from the outside, he is to take his stand by the gatepost, while the priests sacrifice his whole-offering and shared-offerings. At the threshold of the gate he is to bow down in worship and then go out, but the gate is not to be closed until evening.

³On sabbaths and at new moons the people also must bow down before the LORD at the entrance to that gate.

⁴On the sabbath the whole-offering which the prince brings to the LORD is to be six lambs without blemish and a ram without blemish.

⁵The grain-offering is to be an ephah with the ram and whatever he can give with the lambs, together with a hin of oil to every ephah.

⁶At the new moon it is to be a young bull without blemish, six lambs and a ram, all without blemish;

⁷he is to provide as the grain-offering one ephah with the bull and one ephah with the ram, with the lambs whatever he can afford, adding a hin of oil for every ephah.

⁸Whenever the ruler comes in, he is to enter through the porch of the gate and go out by the same way.

⁹When the people come to worship before the LORD on festal days, anyone who enters by the north gate to worship must leave by the south gate, and anyone who enters by the south gate must leave by the north gate. He is not to turn back and go out through the gate by which he came in but to continue in the same direction.

¹⁰The ruler will then be among them, going in when they go in and coming out when they come out.

¹¹At pilgrim-feasts and on festal days the grain-offering is to be an ephah with a bull, an ephah with a ram, and as much as he can afford with a lamb, together with a hin of oil for every ephah.

¹²When the ruler provides a whole-offering or shared-offerings as a voluntary sacrifice to the LORD, the east gate is to be opened for him, and he will make his whole-offering and his shared-offerings as he does on the sabbath. When he goes out, the gate must be closed behind him.

¹³You must provide a yearling lamb without blemish daily as a whole-offering to the LORD; you are to provide it every morning.

¹⁴With it every morning you must provide as a grain-offering one sixth of an ephah with a third of a hin of oil to moisten the flour. The LORD's grain-offering is an observance prescribed for all time.

¹⁵Every morning, as a regular whole-offering, a lamb is to be offered with the grain-offering and the oil.

¹⁶The Lord GOD says: If the ruler makes a gift out of his property to any of his sons, it will belong to his sons, since it is part of the family property.

¹⁷But when he makes such a gift to one of his slaves, it will belong to the slave only until the year of manumission, when it will revert to the ruler; it is the property of his sons and will belong to them.

¹⁸The ruler must not oppress the people by taking any part of their holdings of land; he is to endow his sons from his own property, so that my people may not be deprived of their holdings.

¹⁹Then the man brought me through the entrance by the side of the gate to the rooms which face north, the rooms set apart for the priests, and, pointing to a place on their west side,

²⁰he said to me, This is the place where the priests boil the reparation-offering and the purification-offering and bake the grain-offering; they may not take it into the outer court, for fear of transmitting holiness to the people.

²¹The man then brought me out into the outer court and led me across to the four corners of the court, at each of which there was a further court.

²²These four courts were vaulted and were the same size, forty cubits long by thirty cubits wide.

²³Round each of the four was a course of stonework, with fire-places constructed close up against the stones.

²⁴These are the kitchens, he said, where the attendants boil the people's sacrifices.

47 ¹The man brought me back to the entrance of the temple, and I saw a spring of water issuing towards the east from under the threshold of the

temple; for the temple faced east. The water was running down along the south side, to the right of the altar.

²He took me out through the north gate and led me round by an outside path to the east gate of the court, and I saw water was trickling from the south side.

³With a line in his hand the man went out eastwards, and he measured off a thousand cubits and made me walk through the water; it came up to my ankles.

⁴Again he measured a thousand cubits and made me walk through the water; it came up to my knees. He measured another thousand and made me walk through the water; it was up to my waist.

⁵He measured another thousand, and it was a torrent I could not cross; the water had risen and was deep enough to swim in, a torrent impossible to cross.

⁶Take note of this, O man, he said, and led me back to the bank.

⁷When I got to the bank I saw a great number of trees on each side.

⁸He said to me, This water flows out to the region lying east, and down to the

Arabah; it will run into the sea whose waters are noxious, and they will be made fresh.

⁹When any one of the living creatures that swarm upon the earth comes where the torrent flows, it will draw life from it. Fish will be plentiful, for wherever these waters come the sea will be made fresh, and where the torrent flows everything will live.

¹⁰From En-gedi as far as En-eglaim fishermen will stand on its shores and spread their nets. All kinds of fish will be there in shoals, like the fish of the Great Sea.

¹¹Its swamps and pools will not have their waters made fresh; they will be left to serve as salt-pans.

¹²Beside the torrent on either bank fruitful trees of every kind will grow. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail; they will bear fruit early every month, for the water for them flows from the sanctuary; their fruit is for food and their leaves for healing.

¹³THE Lord GOD says: Here are the boundaries within which the twelve tribes

of Israel will enter into possession of the land, Joseph receiving two portions.

¹⁴The land which I swore with hand uplifted to give to your forefathers you are to divide with each other; it must be assigned to you by lot as your holding.

¹⁵This is the frontier: on its northern side, from the Great Sea through Hethlon, Lebo-hamath,

¹⁶Zedad, Berothah, and Sibraim, located between the frontiers of Damascus and Hamath, to Hazar-enan, near the frontier of Hauran.

¹⁷The frontier will extend from the sea to Hazar-enan on the frontier of Damascus and northwards; this is its northern side.

¹⁸The eastern side runs alongside the territories of Hauran, Damascus, and Gilead, and alongside the territory of Israel; Jordan forms the boundary to the eastern sea, to Tamar. This is the eastern boundary.

¹⁹The southern side runs from Tamar to the waters of Meribah-by-Kadesh; the region assigned to you reaches the Great Sea. This is the southern side towards the Negeb.

²⁰The western side is the Great Sea, which forms a boundary as far as a point opposite Lebo-hamath. This is the western side.

²¹You are to distribute this land among the tribes of Israel

²²and assign it by lot as a share for yourselves and for any aliens who are living in your midst and have children among you. They are to be treated like native-born Israelites and receive with you a share by lot among the tribes of Israel.

²³You are to give the alien his share in whatever tribe he is resident. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

48¹These are the names of the tribes: In the extreme north, in the direction of Hethlon, to Lebo-hamath and Hazar-enan, with Damascus on the northern frontier in the direction of Hamath, and so from the eastern boundary to the western, will be Dan: one portion.

²Bordering on Dan, from the eastern boundary to the western, will be Asher: one portion.

³Bordering on Asher, from the eastern boundary to the western, will be Naphtali: one portion.

⁴Bordering on Naphtali, from the eastern boundary to the western, will be Manasseh: one portion.

⁵Bordering on Manasseh, from the eastern boundary to the western, will be Ephraim: one portion.

⁶Bordering on Ephraim, from the eastern boundary to the western, will be Reuben: one portion.

⁷Bordering on Reuben, from the eastern boundary to the western, will be Judah: one portion.

⁸Bordering on Judah, from the eastern boundary to the western, will be the sacred reserve which you must set apart. Its breadth will be twenty-five thousand cubits and its length the same as that of the tribal portions, from the eastern boundary to the western, and the sanctuary is to be in the centre of it.

⁹The reserve which you must set apart for the LORD is to measure twenty-five thousand cubits by twenty thousand.

¹⁰The reserve is to be apportioned thus: the priests will have an area

measuring twenty-five thousand cubits on the north side, ten thousand on the west, ten thousand on the east, and twenty-five thousand in length on the south side; the sanctuary of the LORD is to be in the centre of it.

¹¹ It is to be for the consecrated priests of the family of Zadok, who kept my charge and did not follow the Israelites when they went astray, as the Levites did.

¹² The area set apart for the priests from the reserved territory will be most sacred, adjoining the territory of the Levites.

¹³ The Levites are to have a portion running parallel to the border of the priests. It is to be twenty-five thousand cubits long by ten thousand wide; altogether, the length is to be twenty-five thousand cubits and the breadth ten thousand.

¹⁴ They must neither sell nor exchange any part of it; it is the best of the land and must not be alienated, for it is holy to the LORD.

¹⁵ The remaining strip, five thousand cubits in width by twenty-five thousand,

is the city's secular land for dwellings and common land. The city will be in the middle,

¹⁶and these are to be its dimensions: on the northern side four thousand five hundred cubits, on the southern side four thousand five hundred cubits, on the eastern side four thousand five hundred cubits, on the western side four thousand five hundred cubits.

¹⁷The common land belonging to the city is to be two hundred and fifty cubits to the north, two hundred and fifty to the south, two hundred and fifty to the east, and two hundred and fifty to the west.

¹⁸What is left parallel to the reserve, ten thousand cubits to the east and ten thousand to the west, will provide food for those who work in the city.

¹⁹Those who work in the city are to cultivate it; they may be drawn from any of the tribes of Israel.

²⁰You are to set apart as sacred the whole reserve, twenty-five thousand cubits square, as far as the holding of the city.

²¹What is left over on either side of the sacred reserve and the city holding is

to be assigned to the ruler. Eastwards, what lies over against the reserved twenty-five thousand cubits, as far as the eastern side, and westwards, what lies over against the twenty-five thousand cubits to the western side, parallel to the tribal portions, is to be assigned to the ruler; the sacred reserve and the sanctuary itself will be in the centre.

²²The holding of the Levites and the holding of the city will be in the middle of that which is assigned to the ruler; it will be between the frontiers of Judah and Benjamin.

²³The rest of the tribes: from the eastern boundary to the western will be Benjamin: one portion.

²⁴Bordering on Benjamin, from the eastern boundary to the western, will be Simeon: one portion.

²⁵Bordering on Simeon, from the eastern boundary to the western, will be Issachar: one portion.

²⁶Bordering on Issachar, from the eastern boundary to the western, will be Zebulun: one portion.

²⁷ Bordering on Zebulun, from the eastern boundary to the western, will be Gad: one portion.

²⁸ Bordering on Gad, on the side of the Negeb, the frontier on the south stretches from Tamar to the waters of Meribah-by-Kadesh, to the wadi of Egypt as far as the Great Sea.

²⁹ That is the land which you are to allot as a holding to the tribes of Israel, and those will be their allotted portions. This is the word of the Lord GOD.

³⁰ These are to be the ways out of the city, the gates being named after the tribes of Israel. The northern side, four thousand five hundred cubits long, is to have three gates, those of Reuben, Judah, and Levi;

³¹ (48: 30)

³² the eastern side, four thousand five hundred cubits long, three gates, those of Joseph, Benjamin, and Dan;

³³ the southern side, four thousand five hundred cubits long, three gates, those of Simeon, Issachar, and Zebulun;

³⁴ the western side, four thousand five hundred cubits long, three gates, those of Gad, Asher, and Naphtali.

³⁵The perimeter of the city will be eighteen thousand cubits, and for all time to come the city's name will be The LORD is there.

Daniel

1 ¹IN the third year of the reign of King Jehoiakim of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar, the Babylonian king, came and laid siege to Jerusalem.

²The Lord handed King Jehoiakim over to him, together with all that was left of the vessels from the house of God; and he carried them off to the land of Shinar, to the temple of his god, where he placed the vessels in the temple treasury.

³The king ordered Ashpenaz, his chief eunuch, to bring into the palace some of the Israelite exiles, members of their royal house and of the nobility.

⁴They were to be young men free from physical defect, handsome in appearance, at home in all branches of knowledge, well-informed, intelligent, and so fitted for service in the royal court; and he was to instruct them in the writings and language of the Chaldeans.

⁵The king assigned them a daily allowance of fine food and wine from the royal table, and their training was to last

for three years; at the end of that time they would enter his service.

⁶Among them were certain Jews: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah.

⁷To them the master of the eunuchs gave new names: Daniel he called Belteshazzar, Hananiah Shadrach, Mishael Meshach, and Azariah Abed-nego.

⁸Daniel determined not to become contaminated with the food and wine from the royal table, and begged the master of the eunuchs to excuse him from touching it.

⁹God caused the master to look on Daniel with kindness and goodwill,

¹⁰and to Daniel's request he replied, I am afraid of my lord the king: he has assigned you food and drink, and if he were to see you and your companions looking miserable compared with the other young men of your own age, my head would be forfeit.

¹¹Then Daniel said to the attendant whom the master of the eunuchs had put in charge of Hananiah, Mishael, Azariah, and himself,

¹²Submit us to this test for ten days: give us only vegetables to eat and water to drink;

¹³then compare our appearance with that of the young men who have lived on the king's food, and be guided in your treatment of us by what you see for yourself.

¹⁴He agreed to the proposal and submitted them to this test.

¹⁵At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who had lived on the food from the king.

¹⁶So the attendant took away the food assigned to them and the wine they were to drink, and gave them vegetables only.

¹⁷To all four of these young men God gave knowledge, understanding of books, and learning of every kind, and Daniel had a gift for interpreting visions and dreams of every kind.

¹⁸At the time appointed by the king for introducing the young men to court, the master of the eunuchs brought them into the presence of Nebuchadnezzar.

¹⁹The king talked with them all, but found none of them to compare with

Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; so they entered the royal service.

²⁰Whenever the king consulted them on any matter calling for insight and judgement, he found them ten times superior to all the magicians and exorcists in his whole kingdom.

²¹Daniel remained there until the accession of King Cyrus.

2¹IN the second year of his reign Nebuchadnezzar was troubled by dreams he had, so much so that he could not sleep.

²He gave orders for the magicians, exorcists, sorcerers, and Chaldeans to be summoned to expound to him what he had been dreaming. When they presented themselves before the king,

³he said to them, I have had a dream, and my mind has been troubled to know what the dream was.

⁴The Chaldeans, speaking in Aramaic, said, Long live the king! Relate the dream to us, your servants, and we shall give you the interpretation.

⁵The king answered, This is my firm decision: if you do not make both dream and interpretation known to me, you

will be hacked limb from limb and your houses will be reduced to rubble.

⁶But if you tell me the dream and its interpretation, you will be richly rewarded by me and loaded with honours. Tell me, then, the dream and its interpretation.

⁷They said again, Let the king relate the dream to his servants, and we shall tell him the interpretation.

⁸The king rejoined, It is clear to me that you are trying to gain time, because you see that I have come to this firm decision:

⁹if you do not make the dream known to me, there is but one verdict for you, and one only. What is more, you have conspired to tell me mischievous lies to my face in the hope that with time things may alter. Relate the dream to me, therefore, and then I shall know that you can give me its interpretation.

¹⁰The Chaldaeans answered, No one on earth can tell your majesty what you wish to know. No king, however great and powerful, has ever made such a demand of a magician, exorcist, or Chaldaean.

¹¹ What your majesty asks is too hard; none but the gods can tell you, and they dwell remote from mortals.

¹² At this the king became furious, and in great rage he ordered all the wise men of Babylon to be put to death.

¹³ A decree was issued for the execution of the wise men, and search was made for Daniel and his companions.

¹⁴ As Arioch, captain of the royal bodyguard, set out to execute the wise men of Babylon, Daniel made a discreet and tactful approach to him.

¹⁵ He said, May I ask you, sir, as the king's representative, why his majesty has issued so peremptory a decree? Arioch explained the matter,

¹⁶ and Daniel went to the king and begged to be allowed a certain time by which he would give the king the interpretation.

¹⁷ He then went home and made the matter known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, saying

¹⁸ they should implore the God of heaven to disclose this secret in his mercy, so that they should not be put

to death along with the rest of the wise men of Babylon.

¹⁹The secret was then revealed to Daniel in a vision by night, and he blessed the God of heaven

²⁰in these words: Blessed be God's name from age to age, for to him belong wisdom and power.

²¹He changes seasons and times; he deposes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have discernment;

²²he reveals deep mysteries; he knows what lies in darkness; with him light has its dwelling.

²³God of my fathers, to you I give thanks and praise, for you have given me wisdom and power. Now you have made known to me what we asked; you have given us the answer for the king.

²⁴Daniel therefore went to Arioch, whom the king had charged with the execution of the wise men of Babylon. He approached him and said, Do not put the wise men to death; bring me before the king and I shall tell him the interpretation of his dream.

²⁵ Greatly agitated, Arioch brought Daniel before the king. I have found among the Jewish exiles, he said, a man who will make known to your majesty the interpretation of your dream.

²⁶ The king asked Daniel (who was also called Belteshazzar), Are you able to make known to me what I saw in my dream and to interpret it?

²⁷ Daniel answered: No wise man, exorcist, magician, or diviner can tell your majesty the secret about which you ask.

²⁸ But there is in heaven a God who reveals secrets, and he has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what is to be at the end of this age. This is the dream and these are the visions that came into your head:

²⁹ the thoughts that came to you, your majesty, as you lay on your bed, concerned the future, and he who reveals secrets has made known to you what is to be.

³⁰ This secret has been revealed to me, not because I am wiser than anyone alive, but in order that your majesty may know the interpretation and understand

the thoughts which have entered your mind.

³¹ As you watched, there appeared to your majesty a great image. Huge and dazzling, it stood before you, fearsome to behold.

³² The head of the image was of fine gold, its chest and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of bronze,

³³ its legs of iron, its feet part iron and part clay.

³⁴ While you watched, you saw a stone hewn from a mountain by no human hand; it struck the image on its feet of iron and clay and shattered them.

³⁵ Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold were all shattered into fragments, and as if they were chaff from a summer threshing-floor the wind swept them away until no trace of them remained. But the stone which struck the image grew and became a huge mountain and filled the whole earth.

³⁶ That was the dream; now we shall relate to your majesty its interpretation.

³⁷ Your majesty, the king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the

kingdom with its power, its might, and its honour,

³⁸in whose hands he has placed mankind wherever they live, the wild animals, and the birds of the air, granting you sovereignty over them all: you yourself are that head of gold.

³⁹After you there will arise another kingdom, inferior to yours, then a third kingdom, of bronze, which will have sovereignty over the whole world.

⁴⁰There will be a fourth kingdom, strong as iron; just as iron shatters and breaks all things, it will shatter and crush all the others.

⁴¹As in your vision the feet and toes were part potter's clay and part iron, so it will be a divided kingdom, and just as you saw iron mixed with clay from the ground, so it will have in it something of the strength of iron.

⁴²The toes being part iron and part clay means that the kingdom will be partly strong and partly brittle.

⁴³As in your vision the iron was mixed with the clay, so there will be a mixing of families by intermarriage, but such

alliances will not be stable: iron does not mix with clay.

⁴⁴In the times of those kings the God of heaven will establish a kingdom which will never be destroyed, nor will it ever pass to another people; it will shatter all these kingdoms and make an end of them, while it will itself endure for ever.

⁴⁵This is the meaning of your vision of the stone being hewn from a mountain by no human hand, and then shattering the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver, and the gold. A mighty God has made known to your majesty what is to be hereafter. The dream and its interpretation are true and trustworthy.

⁴⁶At this King Nebuchadnezzar prostrated himself and did homage to Daniel, and he gave orders that there should be presented to him a tribute of grain and soothing offerings.

⁴⁷Truly, he said, your God is indeed God of gods and Lord over kings, and a revealer of secrets, since you have been able to reveal this secret.

⁴⁸The king then promoted Daniel to high position and bestowed on him many rich gifts. He gave him authority over

the whole province of Babylon and put him in charge of all Babylon's wise men.

⁴⁹At Daniel's request the king appointed Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego to administer the province of Babylon, while Daniel himself remained at court.

3¹ KING Nebuchadnezzar made a gold image, ninety feet high and nine feet broad, and had it set up on the plain of Dura in the province of Babylon.

²The king then summoned the satraps, prefects, governors, counsellors, treasurers, judges, magistrates, and all the provincial officials to assemble and attend the dedication of the image he had set up.

³The satraps, prefects, governors, counsellors, treasurers, judges, magistrates, and all governors of provinces assembled for the dedication of the image King Nebuchadnezzar had set up, and they took their places in front of the image.

⁴A herald proclaimed in a loud voice, Peoples and nations of every language, you are commanded,

⁵when you hear the sound of horn, pipe, zither, triangle, dulcimer, a full

consort of music, to prostrate yourselves and worship the gold image which King Nebuchadnezzar has set up.

⁶Whosoever does not prostrate himself and worship will be thrown forthwith into a blazing furnace.

⁷Accordingly, no sooner did the sound of horn, pipe, zither, triangle, dulcimer, a full consort of music, reach them than all the peoples and nations of every language prostrated themselves and worshipped the gold image set up by King Nebuchadnezzar.

⁸Some Chaldeans seized the opportunity to approach the king with a malicious accusation against the Jews.

⁹They said, Long live the king!

¹⁰Your majesty has issued a decree that everyone who hears the sound of horn, pipe, zither, triangle, dulcimer, a full consort of music, must fall down and worship the gold image;

¹¹and whoever does not do so will be thrown into a blazing furnace.

¹²There are certain Jews whom you have put in charge of the administration of the province of Babylon. These men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego,

have disregarded your royal command; they do not serve your gods, nor do they worship the gold image you set up.

¹³In furious rage Nebuchadnezzar ordered Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego to be fetched, and when they were brought into his presence,

¹⁴he asked them, Is it true, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, that you do not serve my gods or worship the gold image which I have set up?

¹⁵Now if you are ready to prostrate yourselves as soon as you hear the sound of horn, pipe, zither, triangle, dulcimer, a full consort of music, and to worship the image that I have made, well and good. But if you do not worship it, you will be thrown forthwith into the blazing furnace; and what god is there that can deliver you from my power?

¹⁶Their reply to the king was: Your majesty, we have no need to answer you on this matter.

¹⁷If there is a god who is able to save us from the blazing furnace, it is our God whom we serve; he will deliver us from your majesty's power.

¹⁸But if not, be it known to your majesty that we shall neither serve your gods nor worship the gold image you have set up.

¹⁹At this Nebuchadnezzar was furious with them, and his face became distorted with anger. He ordered that the furnace should be heated to seven times its usual heat,

²⁰and commanded some of the strongest men in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego and throw them into the blazing furnace.

²¹Then, just as they were, in trousers, shirts, headdresses, and their other clothes, they were bound and thrown into the furnace.

²²Because the king's order was peremptory and the furnace exceedingly hot, those who were carrying the three men were killed by the flames;

²³and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego fell bound into the blazing furnace.

²⁴Then King Nebuchadnezzar, greatly agitated, sprang to his feet, saying to his courtiers, Was it not three men whom

we threw bound into the fire? They answered, Yes, certainly, your majesty.

²⁵ Yet, he insisted, I can see four men walking about in the fire, free and unharmed; and the fourth looks like a god.

²⁶ Nebuchadnezzar approached the furnace door and called, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, servants of the Most High God, come out! When Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego emerged from the fire,

²⁷ the satraps, prefects, governors, and the king's courtiers gathered round them and saw how the fire had had no power to harm their bodies. The hair of their heads had not been singed, their trousers were untouched, and no smell of fire lingered about them.

²⁸ Nebuchadnezzar declared: Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego! He has sent his angel to save his servants who, trusting in him, disobeyed the royal command; they were willing to submit themselves to the fire rather than to serve or worship any god other than their own God.

²⁹I therefore issue this decree: anyone, whatever his people, nation, or language, if he speaks blasphemy against the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, is to be hacked limb from limb and his house is to be reduced to rubble; for there is no other god who can save in such a manner.

³⁰Then the king advanced the fortunes of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego in the province of Babylon.

4¹KING Nebuchadnezzar to all peoples and nations of every language throughout the whole world: May your prosperity increase!

²It is my pleasure to recount the signs and wonders which the Most High God has worked for me:

³How great are his signs, how mighty his wonders! His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, his sovereignty endures through all generations.

⁴I, Nebuchadnezzar, was living contentedly at home in the luxury of my palace,

⁵but as I lay on my bed, I had a dream which filled me with fear, and the

fantasies and visions which came into my head caused me dismay.

⁶I issued an order summoning to my presence all the wise men of Babylon to make known to me the interpretation of the dream.

⁷When the magicians, exorcists, Chaldeans, and diviners came in, I related my dream to them, but they were unable to interpret it for me.

⁸Finally there came before me Daniel, who is called Belteshazzar after the name of my god, a man in whom resides the spirit of the holy gods. To him also I related the dream:

⁹Belteshazzar, chief of the magicians, you have in you, as I know, the spirit of the holy gods, and no secret baffles you; listen to what I saw in my dream, and tell me its interpretation.

¹⁰This is the vision which came to me while I lay on my bed: As I was looking, there appeared a very lofty tree at the centre of the earth;

¹¹the tree grew great and became strong; its top reached to the sky, and it was visible to earth's farthest bounds.

¹²Its foliage was beautiful and its fruit abundant, and it yielded food for all. Beneath it the wild beasts found shelter, the birds lodged in the branches, and from it all living creatures fed.

¹³This is what I saw in the vision which came to me while I lay on my bed: There appeared a watcher, a holy one coming down from heaven.

¹⁴In a mighty voice he cried, Hew down the tree, lop off the branches, strip away its foliage and scatter the fruit; let the wild beasts flee from beneath it and the birds from its branches;

¹⁵but leave the stump with its roots in the ground. So, bound with iron and bronze among the lush grass, let him be drenched with the dew of heaven and share the lot of the beasts in their pasture --

¹⁶his mind will cease to be human, and he will be given the mind of a beast. Seven times will pass over him.

¹⁷The issue has been determined by the watchers and the sentence pronounced by the holy ones. Thereby the living will know that the Most High is sovereign in the kingdom of men: he gives the

kingdom to whom he wills, and may appoint over it the lowliest of mankind.

¹⁸This is the dream which I, King Nebuchadnezzar, dreamt; now, Belteshazzar, tell me its interpretation, for, though not one of the wise men in all my kingdom is able to make its meaning known to me, you can do it, because in you is the spirit of the holy gods.

¹⁹Daniel, who was called Belteshazzar, was dumbfounded for a moment, dismayed by his thoughts; but the king said, Do not let the dream and its interpretation dismay you. Belteshazzar answered, My lord, if only the dream applied to those who hate you and its interpretation to your enemies!

²⁰The tree which you saw grow great and become strong, reaching with its top to the sky and visible to earth's farthest bounds,

²¹its foliage beautiful and its fruit abundant, a tree which yielded food for all, beneath which the wild beasts dwelt and in whose branches the birds lodged:

²²that tree, your majesty, is you. You have become great and strong; your power has grown and reaches the sky;

your sovereignty extends to the ends of the earth.

²³Also, your majesty, you saw a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying, Hew down the tree and destroy it, but leave the stump with its roots in the ground. So, bound with iron and bronze among the lush grass, let him be drenched with the dew of heaven and share the lot of the beasts until seven times pass over him.

²⁴This is the interpretation, your majesty: it is a decree of the Most High which affects my lord the king.

²⁵You will be banished from human society; you will be made to live with the wild beasts; like oxen you will feed on grass, and you will be drenched with the dew of heaven. Seven times will pass over you until you have acknowledged that the Most High is sovereign over the realm of humanity and gives it to whom he wills.

²⁶As the command was given to leave the stump of the tree with its roots, by this you may know that from the time you acknowledge the sovereignty of Heaven your rule will endure.

²⁷Your majesty, be advised by me: let charitable deeds replace your sins, generosity to the poor your wrongdoing. It may be that you will long enjoy contentment.

²⁸All this befell King Nebuchadnezzar.

²⁹At the end of twelve months the king was walking on the roof of the royal palace at Babylon,

³⁰and he exclaimed, Is not this Babylon the great which I have built as a royal residence by my mighty power and for the honour of my own majesty?

³¹The words were still on his lips, when there came a voice from heaven: To you, King Nebuchadnezzar, the word is spoken: the kingdom has passed from you.

³²You are banished from human society; you are to live with the wild beasts and feed on grass like oxen. Seven times will pass over you until you have acknowledged that the Most High is sovereign over the realm of humanity and gives it to whom he will.

³³At that very moment this judgement came upon Nebuchadnezzar: he was banished from human society to eat

grass like oxen, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven, until his hair became shaggy like an eagle and his nails grew like birds' claws.

³⁴At the end of the appointed time, I, Nebuchadnezzar, looked up towards heaven and I was restored to my right mind. I blessed the Most High, praising and glorifying the Ever-living One: His sovereignty is everlasting and his kingdom endures through all generations.

³⁵All who dwell on earth count for nothing; he does as he pleases with the host of heaven and with those who dwell on earth. No one can oppose his power or question what he does.

³⁶At that very time I was restored to my right mind and, for the glory of my kingdom, my majesty and royal splendour returned to me. My courtiers and my nobles sought audience of me, and I was re-established in my kingdom and my power was greatly increased.

³⁷Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and exalt and glorify the King of heaven; for all his acts are right and his ways are

just, and he can bring low those whose conduct is arrogant.

5¹ KING Belshazzar gave a grand banquet for a thousand of his nobles and he was drinking wine in their presence.

² Under the influence of the wine, Belshazzar gave orders for the vessels of gold and silver which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple at Jerusalem to be fetched, so that he and his nobles, along with his concubines and courtesans, might drink from them.

³ So those vessels belonging to the house of God, the temple at Jerusalem, were brought, and the king, the nobles, and the concubines and courtesans drank from them.

⁴ They drank their wine and they praised their gods of gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, and stone.

⁵ Suddenly there appeared the fingers of a human hand writing on the plaster of the palace wall opposite the lamp, and the king saw the palm of the hand as it wrote.

⁶At this the king turned pale; dismay filled his mind, the strength went from his legs, and his knees knocked together.

⁷He called in a loud voice for the exorcists, Chaldeans, and diviners to be brought in; then, addressing Babylon's wise men, he said, Whoever reads this writing and tells me its interpretation shall be robed in purple and have a gold chain hung round his neck, and he shall rank third in the kingdom.

⁸All the king's wise men came, but they could neither read the writing nor make known to the king its interpretation.

⁹Then his deep dismay drove all colour from King Belshazzar's cheeks, and his nobles were in a state of confusion.

¹⁰Drawn by what the king and his nobles were saying, the queen entered the banqueting hall: Long live the king! she said. Why this dismay, and why do you look so pale?

¹¹There is a man in your kingdom who has the spirit of the holy gods in him; he was known in your father's time to possess clear insight and godlike wisdom, so that King Nebuchadnezzar, your father, appointed him chief of the

magicians, exorcists, Chaldeans, and diviners.

¹²This Daniel, whom the king named Belteshazzar, is known to have exceptional ability, with knowledge and insight, and the gift of interpreting dreams, explaining riddles, and unravelling problems; let him be summoned now and he will give the interpretation.

¹³Daniel was then brought into the royal presence, and the king addressed him: So you are Daniel, one of the Jewish exiles whom my royal father brought from Judah.

¹⁴I am informed that the spirit of the gods resides in you and that you are known as a man of clear insight and exceptional wisdom.

¹⁵The wise men, the exorcists, have just been brought before me to read this writing and make known its interpretation to me, but they have been unable to give its meaning.

¹⁶I am told that you are able to furnish interpretations and unravel problems. Now, if you can read the writing and make known the interpretation, you shall

be robed in purple and have a gold chain hung round your neck, and you shall rank third in the kingdom.

¹⁷ Daniel replied, Your majesty, I do not look for gifts from you; give your rewards to another. Nevertheless I shall read your majesty the writing and make known to you its interpretation.

¹⁸ My lord king, the Most High God gave a kingdom with power, glory, and majesty to your father Nebuchadnezzar;

¹⁹ and, because of the power he bestowed on him, all peoples and nations of every language trembled with fear before him. He put to death whom he would and spared whom he would, he promoted them at will and at will abased them.

²⁰ But, when he became haughty and stubborn and presumptuous, he was deposed from his royal throne and stripped of his glory.

²¹ He was banished from human society, and his mind became like that of an animal; he had to live with the wild asses and to feed on grass like oxen, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven, until he came to acknowledge

that the Most High God is sovereign over the realm of humanity and appoints over it whom he will.

²²But although you knew all this, you, his son Belshazzar, did not humble your heart.

²³You have set yourself up against the Lord of heaven; his temple vessels have been fetched for you and your nobles, your concubines and courtesans to drink from them. You have praised gods fashioned from silver, gold, bronze, iron, wood, and stone, which cannot see or hear or know, and you have not given glory to God, from whom comes your every breath, and in whose charge are all your ways.

²⁴That is why he sent the hand and why it wrote this inscription.

²⁵The words inscribed were: Mene mene tekel u-pharsin.

²⁶Their interpretation is this: mene, God has numbered the days of your kingdom and brought it to an end;

²⁷tekel, you have been weighed in the balance and found wanting;

²⁸u-pharsin, your kingdom has been divided and given to the Medes and Persians.

²⁹Then at Belshazzar's command Daniel was robed in purple and a gold chain was hung round his neck, and proclamation was made that he should rank third in the kingdom.

³⁰That very night Belshazzar king of the Chaldeans was slain,

³¹and Darius the Mede took the kingdom, being then about sixty-two years old.

6¹IT pleased Darius to appoint a hundred and twenty satraps to be in charge throughout his kingdom,

²and over them three chief ministers, to whom the satraps were to submit their reports so that the king's interests might not suffer; of these three ministers, Daniel was one.

³Daniel outshone the other ministers and the satraps because of his exceptional ability, and it was the king's intention to appoint him over the whole kingdom.

⁴Then the ministers and satraps began to look round for some pretext to attack

Daniel's administration of the kingdom, but they failed to find any malpractice on his part, for he was faithful to his trust. Since they could discover neither negligence nor malpractice,

⁵ they said, We shall not find any ground for bringing a charge against this Daniel unless it is connected with his religion.

⁶ These ministers and satraps, having watched for an opportunity to approach the king, said to him, Long live King Darius!

⁷ We, the ministers of the kingdom, prefects, satraps, courtiers, and governors, have taken counsel and all are agreed that the king should issue a decree and bring into force a binding edict to the effect that whoever presents a petition to any god or human being other than the king during the next thirty days is to be thrown into the lion-pit.

⁸ Now let your majesty issue the edict and have it put in writing so that it becomes unalterable, for the law of the Medes and Persians may never be revoked.

⁹ Accordingly the edict was signed by King Darius.

¹⁰When Daniel learnt that this decree had been issued, he went into his house. It had in the roof-chamber windows open towards Jerusalem; and there he knelt down three times a day and offered prayers and praises to his God as was his custom.

¹¹His enemies, on the watch for an opportunity to catch him, found Daniel at his prayers making supplication to his God.

¹²They then went into the king's presence and reminded him of the edict. Your majesty, they said, have you not issued an edict that any person who, within the next thirty days, presents a petition to any god or human being other than your majesty is to be thrown into the lion-pit? The king answered, The matter has been determined in accordance with the law of the Medes and Persians, which may not be revoked.

¹³So they said to the king, Daniel, one of the Jewish exiles, has disregarded both your majesty and the edict, and is making petition to his God three times a day.

¹⁴When the king heard this, he was greatly distressed; he tried to think of a way to save Daniel, and continued his efforts till sunset.

¹⁵The men watched for an opportunity to approach the king, and said to him, Your majesty must know that by the law of the Medes and Persians no edict or decree issued by the king may be altered.

¹⁶Then the king gave the order for Daniel to be brought and thrown into the lion-pit; but he said to Daniel, Your God whom you serve at all times, may he save you.

¹⁷A stone was brought and put over the mouth of the pit, and the king sealed it with his signet and with the signets of his nobles, so that no attempt could be made to rescue Daniel.

¹⁸The king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; no woman was brought to him, and sleep eluded him.

¹⁹He was greatly agitated and, at the first light of dawn, he rose and went to the lion-pit.

²⁰When he came near he called anxiously, Daniel, servant of the living

God, has your God whom you serve continually been able to save you from the lions?

²¹ Daniel answered, Long live the king!

²² My God sent his angel to shut the lions mouths and they have not injured me; he judged me innocent, and moreover I had done your majesty no injury.'

²³ The king was overjoyed and gave orders that Daniel should be taken up out of the pit. When this was done no trace of injury was found on him, because he had put his faith in his God.

²⁴ By order of the king those who out of malice had accused Daniel were brought and flung into the lion-pit along with their children and their wives, and before they reached the bottom the lions were upon them and devoured them, bones and all.

²⁵ King Darius wrote to all peoples and nations of every language throughout the whole world: May your prosperity increase!

²⁶ I have issued a decree that in all my royal domains everyone is to fear and reverence the God of Daniel, for he is

the living God, the everlasting, whose kingly power will never be destroyed; whose sovereignty will have no end --

²⁷ a saviour, a deliverer, a worker of signs and wonders in heaven and on earth, who has delivered Daniel from the power of the lions.

²⁸ Prosperity attended Daniel during the reigns of Darius and Cyrus the Persian.

7¹ IN the first year that Belshazzar was king of Babylon, a dream and visions came to Daniel as he lay on his bed. Then he wrote down the dream, and here his account begins.

² In my vision during the night while I, Daniel, was gazing intently I saw the Great Sea churned up by the four winds of heaven,

³ and four great beasts rising out of the sea, each one different from the others.

⁴ The first was like a lion, but it had an eagle's wings. I watched until its wings were plucked off and it was lifted from the ground and made to stand on two feet as if it were a human being; it was also given the mind of a human being.

⁵ Then I saw another, a second beast, like a bear. It had raised itself on one

side, and it had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. The command was given to it: Get up and gorge yourself with flesh.

⁶After this as I gazed I saw another, a beast like a leopard with four wings like those of a bird on its back; this creature had four heads, and it was invested with sovereign power.

⁷Next in the night visions I saw a fourth beast, fearsome and grisly and exceedingly strong, with great iron teeth. It devoured and crunched, and it trampled underfoot what was left. It was different from all the beasts which went before it, and had ten horns.

⁸While I was considering the horns there appeared another horn, a little one, springing up among them, and three of the first horns were uprooted to make room for it. In this horn were eyes like human eyes, and a mouth that uttered bombast.

⁹As I was looking, thrones were set in place and the Ancient in Years took his seat; his robe was white as snow, his hair like lamb's wool. His throne was

flames of fire and its wheels were blazing fire;

¹⁰a river of fire flowed from his presence. Thousands upon thousands served him and myriads upon myriads were in attendance. The court sat, and the books were opened.

¹¹Then because of the bombast the horn was mouthing, I went on watching until the beast was killed; its carcass was destroyed and consigned to the flames.

¹²The rest of the beasts, though deprived of their sovereignty, were allowed to remain alive until an appointed time and season.

¹³I was still watching in visions of the night and I saw one like a human being coming with the clouds of heaven; he approached the Ancient in Years and was presented to him.

¹⁴Sovereignty and glory and kingly power were given to him, so that all peoples and nations of every language should serve him; his sovereignty was to be an everlasting sovereignty which was not to pass away, and his kingly power was never to be destroyed.

¹⁵My spirit within me was troubled; and, dismayed by the visions which came into my head, I, Daniel,

¹⁶approached one of those who were standing there and enquired what all this really signified; and he made known to me its interpretation.

¹⁷These great beasts, four in number, he said, are four kingdoms which will arise from the earth.

¹⁸But the holy ones of the Most High will receive the kingly power and retain possession of it always, for ever and ever.

¹⁹Then I wished to know what the fourth beast really signified, the beast that was different from all the others, exceedingly fearsome with its iron teeth and bronze claws, devouring and crunching, then trampling underfoot what was left.

²⁰I wished also to know about the ten horns on its head and about the other horn which sprang up and at whose coming three of them fell, the horn which had eyes and a mouth uttering bombast and which in its appearance was more imposing than the others.

²¹ As I still watched, this horn was waging war on the holy ones and proving too strong for them

²² until the Ancient in Years came. Then judgement was pronounced in favour of the holy ones of the Most High, and the time came when the holy ones gained possession of the kingly power.

²³ The explanation he gave was this: The fourth beast signifies a fourth kingdom which will appear on earth. It will differ from the other kingdoms; it will devour the whole earth, treading it down and crushing it.

²⁴ The ten horns signify ten kings who will rise from this kingdom; after them will arise another king, who will be different from his predecessors; and he will bring low three kings.

²⁵ He will hurl defiance at the Most High and wear down the holy ones of the Most High. He will have it in mind to alter the festival seasons and religious laws; and the holy ones will be delivered into his power for a time, and times, and half a time.

²⁶But when the court sits, he will be deprived of his sovereignty, so that it may be destroyed and abolished for ever.

²⁷The kingly power, sovereignty, and greatness of all the kingdoms under heaven will be given to the holy people of the Most High. Their kingly power will last for ever, and every realm will serve and obey them.

²⁸Here the account ends. As for me, Daniel, my thoughts dismayed me greatly and I turned pale; but I kept these things to myself.

8¹In the third year of the reign of King Belshazzar, a vision appeared to me, Daniel, following my earlier vision.

²In this vision I was in Susa, the capital of the province of Elam, watching beside the Ulai canal.

³I looked up and saw a ram with two horns standing by the canal. The two horns were long, with the longer of the two coming up after the other.

⁴I watched the ram butting towards the west, the north, and the south. No beast could stand against it, and from its power there was no escape. It did as

it pleased, and made a great display of strength.

⁵While I pondered this, suddenly a he-goat came from the west skimming over the whole earth without touching the ground; it had a prominent horn between its eyes.

⁶It approached the two-horned ram which I had seen standing by the canal, and charged it with impetuous force.

⁷I saw it advance on the ram, working itself into a fury against it. Then it struck the ram and shattered both its horns; the ram was powerless to resist. The he-goat threw it to the ground and stamped on it, and there was no one to rescue the ram.

⁸The he-goat in turn made a great display of its strength, but when it was at the height of its power its great horn broke, and in place of this there came up four prominent horns pointing towards the four quarters of heaven.

⁹Out of one of them there emerged a little horn, which as it grew put forth its strength towards the south and the east and towards the fairest of all lands.

¹⁰It aspired to be as great as the host of heaven, and it flung down to the earth some of the host, even some of the stars, and stamped on them.

¹¹It aspired to be as great as the Prince of the host, suppressed his regular offering, and even threw down his sanctuary.

¹²The heavenly host was delivered up, and the little horn raised itself impiously against the regular offering and cast true religion to the ground; it succeeded in all that it did.

¹³I heard a holy one speaking and another holy one answering. The one speaker said, How long will the period of this vision last? How long will the regular offering be suppressed and impiety cause desolation? How long will the Holy Place and the fairest of all lands be given over to be trodden down?

¹⁴The answer came, For two thousand three hundred evenings and mornings; then the Holy Place will be restored.

¹⁵All the while that I, Daniel, was seeing the vision, I was trying to understand it. Suddenly I saw standing before me one with the appearance of a man;

¹⁶at the same time I heard a human voice calling to him across the bend of the Ulai, Gabriel, explain the vision to this man.

¹⁷He came to where I was standing; and at his approach I prostrated myself in terror. But he said to me, Understand, O man: the vision points to the time of the end.

¹⁸While he spoke to me, I lay face downwards in a trance, but at his touch I was made to stand up where I was.

¹⁹I shall make known to you, he said, what is to happen at the end of the period of wrath; for there is an end at the appointed time.

²⁰The two-horned ram which you saw signifies the kings of Media and Persia,

²¹the he-goat is the king of Greece, the great horn on its forehead being its first king.

²²As for the horn which was broken off and replaced by four other horns: four kingdoms will rise out of that nation, but they will lack its power.

²³In the last days of those kingdoms, when their sin is at its height, a king

of grim aspect will appear, a master of stratagem.

²⁴His power will be great, and he will work havoc untold; he will succeed in whatever he does. He will work havoc on the mighty nations and the holy people.

²⁵By cunning and deceit he will succeed in his designs; he will devise great schemes and wreak havoc on many when they least expect it. He will challenge even the Prince of princes and be broken, but by no human hand.

²⁶This revelation which has been given of the evenings and the mornings is true; but you must keep the vision secret, for it points to days far ahead.

²⁷As for me, Daniel, my strength failed and I lay sick for some days. Then I rose and attended to the king's business. But I was perplexed by the revelation and no one could explain it.

9¹IN the first year of the reign of Darius son of Ahasuerus (a Mede by birth, who was appointed ruler over the kingdom of the Chaldeans)

²I, Daniel, was reading the scriptures and reflecting on the seventy years which, according to the word of the

LORD to the prophet Jeremiah, were to pass while Jerusalem lay in ruins.

³Then I turned to the Lord God in earnest prayer and supplication with fasting and with sackcloth and ashes.

⁴I prayed and made this confession to the LORD my God: Lord, great and terrible God, keeping covenant and faith with those who love you and observe your commandments,

⁵we have sinned, doing what was wrong and wicked; we have rebelled and rejected your commandments and your decrees.

⁶We have turned a deaf ear to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings and princes, to our forefathers, and to all the people of the land.

⁷Lord, the right is on your side; the shame, now as ever, belongs to us, the people of Judah and the citizens of Jerusalem, and to all the Israelites near and far in every land to which you have banished them for their disloyal behaviour towards you.

⁸LORD, the shame falls on us, on our kings, our princes, and our forefathers. We have sinned against you.

⁹Compassion and forgiveness belong to the Lord our God, because we have rebelled against him.

¹⁰We have not obeyed the LORD our God, in that we have not conformed to the laws which he laid down for our guidance through his servants the prophets.

¹¹All Israel has broken your law and refused to obey your command, so that the oath and curses recorded in the law of Moses, the servant of God, have rained down upon us; for we have sinned against God.

¹²He has made good the warning he gave about us and our rulers, by bringing on us and on Jerusalem a disaster greater than has ever happened in all the world;

¹³and this whole disaster which has come upon us was foretold in the law of Moses. Yet we have done nothing to appease the LORD our God; we have neither repented of our wrongful deeds,

nor remembered that you are true to your word.

¹⁴The LORD has kept strict watch and has now brought the disaster upon us. In all that he has done the LORD our God has been just; yet we have not obeyed him.

¹⁵Now, Lord our God who brought your people out of Egypt by a strong hand, winning for yourself a name that lives on to this day, we have sinned, we have done wrong.

¹⁶Lord, by all your saving deeds we beg that your wrath and anger may depart from Jerusalem, your own city, your holy hill; on account of our sins and our fathers crimes, Jerusalem and your people have become a byword among all our neighbours.

¹⁷Listen, our God, to your servant's prayer and supplication; for your own sake, Lord, look favourably on your sanctuary which lies desolate.

¹⁸God, incline your ear to us and hear; open your eyes and look upon our desolation and upon the city that bears your name. It is not because of any righteous deeds of ours, but because

of your great mercy that we lay our supplications before you.

¹⁹Lord, hear; Lord, forgive; Lord, listen and act; God, for your own sake do not delay, because your city and your people bear your name.'

²⁰I was speaking and praying, confessing my own sin and the sin of my people Israel, and laying my supplication before the LORD my God on behalf of his holy hill;

²¹indeed I was still praying, when the man Gabriel, whom I had already seen in the vision, flew close to me at the hour of the evening offering.

²²He explained to me: Daniel, I have now come to enlighten your understanding.

²³As you began your supplications a decree went forth, and I have come to make it known, for you are greatly beloved. Consider well the word, consider the vision:

²⁴seventy times seven years are marked out for your people and your holy city; then rebellion will be stopped, sin brought to an end, iniquity expiated, everlasting right ushered in, vision and

prophecy ratified, and the Most Holy Place anointed.

²⁵ Know, then, and understand: from the time that the decree went forth that Jerusalem should be restored and rebuilt, seven of those seventy will pass till the appearance of one anointed, a prince; then for sixty-two it will remain restored, rebuilt with streets and conduits. At the critical time,

²⁶ after the sixty-two have passed, the anointed prince will be removed, and no one will take his part. The horde of an invading prince will work havoc on city and sanctuary. The end of it will be a cataclysm, inevitable war with all its horrors.

²⁷ The prince will make a firm league with the many for one of the seventy; and, with that one half spent, he will put a stop to sacrifice and offering. And in the train of these abominations will come the perpetrator of desolation; then, in the end, what has been decreed concerning the desolation will be poured out.

10¹ IN the third year that Cyrus was king of Persia a revelation

came to Daniel, who had been given the name Belteshazzar. The word was true, yet only after much struggle did understanding come to him in the course of the vision.

²At that time I, Daniel, mourned for three whole weeks.

³I refrained from all choice food; no meat or wine passed my lips, and I did not anoint myself until the three weeks had passed.

⁴On the twenty-fourth day of the first month, I found myself on the bank of the great river, the Tigris,

⁵and when I looked up I saw a man robed in linen with a belt of Ophir gold round his waist.

⁶His body glowed like topaz, his face shone like lightning, his eyes flamed like torches, his arms and feet glittered like burnished bronze, and when he spoke his voice sounded like the voice of a multitude.

⁷I, Daniel, alone saw the vision; those who were near me did not see it, but such great trepidation fell upon them that they crept away into hiding.

⁸I was left by myself gazing at this great vision, and my strength drained away; and sapped of all strength I became a sorry figure of a man.

⁹I heard the sound of his words and, as I did so, I lay prone on the ground in a trance.

¹⁰Suddenly, at the touch of a hand, I was set, all trembling, on my hands and knees.

¹¹Daniel, man greatly beloved, he said to me, attend to the words I am about to speak to you and stand upright where you are, for I am now sent to you. When he spoke to me, I stood up trembling with apprehension.

¹²He went on, Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the very first day that you applied your mind to understanding, and to mortify yourself before your God, your prayers have been heard, and I have come in answer to them.

¹³But the guardian angel of the kingdom of Persia resisted me for twenty-one days, and then, seeing that I had held out there, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me against the prince of the kingdom of Persia.

¹⁴I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people at the end of this age; for this too is a vision for those days.

¹⁵While he spoke in this fashion to me, I fixed my eyes on the ground and was unable to speak.

¹⁶Suddenly one with a human appearance touched my lips; then I broke my silence and addressed him as he stood before me: Sir, I said, at this vision anguish has gripped me, and I am sapped of all my strength.

¹⁷How can I, my lord's servant, presume to talk with such as my lord, since my strength has now failed me and there is no more spirit left in me?

¹⁸Again the figure touched me and put strength into me,

¹⁹saying, Do not be afraid, man greatly beloved; all will be well with you. Take heart, and be strong. As he spoke, my strength returned, and I said, Speak, sir, for you have given me strength.

²⁰He said, Do you know why I have come to you? I am first going back to fight with the prince of Persia, and, as

soon as I have left, the prince of Greece will appear:

²¹ I have no ally on my side for support and help, except Michael your prince. However I shall expound to you

11 ¹ what is written in the Book of Truth;

² here and now I shall tell you what is true. Three more kings will appear in Persia, followed by a fourth who will far surpass all the others in wealth; and when by his wealth he has extended his power, he will mobilize the whole empire against the kingdom of Greece.

³ Then there will appear a warrior king, who will rule a vast kingdom and do whatever he pleases.

⁴ But once he is established, his kingdom will be broken up and divided to the four quarters of heaven. It will not pass to his descendants; nor will its power be comparable to his, for his kingdom will be uprooted and given to others besides his posterity.

⁵ The king of the south will become strong; but one of his generals will surpass him in strength and win a greater dominion.

⁶In the course of time the two will enter into an alliance, and to seal the agreement the daughter of the king of the south will be given in marriage to the king of the north, but she will not maintain her influence and their line will not last. She and those who escorted her, along with her child, and also her lord and master, will all be the victims of foul play.

⁷Then another shoot from the same stock as hers will appear in his father's place. He will penetrate the defences of the king of the north, invade his fortress, and win a decisive victory.

⁸He will carry away as booty to Egypt even the images of their gods cast in metal and their valuable vessels of silver and gold. Then for some years he will refrain from attacking the king of the north.

⁹After that the king of the north will invade the southern kingdom and then retire to his own land.

¹⁰His sons will press on with the assembling of a large force of armed men. One of them will sweep on like an irresistible flood. In a second campaign

he will press as far as the enemy stronghold.

¹¹The king of the south, working himself up into a fury, will set out to do battle with the king of the north. He in turn will muster a large army, but it will be delivered into the hands of his enemy.

¹²At the capture of this force, the victor will be elated and will slaughter tens of thousands; yet he will not maintain his advantage.

¹³The king of the north will once more raise an army, one even greater than the last, and after a number of years he will advance with his huge force and a great baggage train.

¹⁴During these times many will resist the king of the south, but some renegades among your own people will rashly attempt to give substance to a vision and will be brought to disaster.

¹⁵The king of the north will then come and cast up siege-ramps and capture a well-fortified city. The forces of the south will not stand up to him; even the flower of the army will not be able to hold their ground.

¹⁶The invader will do as he pleases and meet with no opposition. He will establish himself in the fairest of all lands, and it will come wholly into his power.

¹⁷He will resolve to advance with the full might of his kingdom; and, when he has agreed terms with the king of the south, he will give his young daughter in marriage to him, with a view to the destruction of the kingdom; but the treaty will not last nor will it be his purpose which is served.

¹⁸Then he will turn to the coasts and islands and take many prisoners, but a foreign commander will wear him down and put an end to his challenge; thus he will throw his challenge back at him.

¹⁹He will retreat to strongholds in his own country; there he will meet with disaster and be overthrown, and he will be seen no more.

²⁰His successor will be one who will send out an officer with a royal escort to exact tribute; after but a brief time this king too will meet his end, yet neither openly nor in battle.

²¹ His place will be taken by a despicable creature, one who had not been given recognition as king; he will come when he is least expected and seize the kingdom by smooth dissimulation.

²² As he advances, he will sweep away all forces of opposition, and even the Prince of the Covenant will be broken.

²³ He will enter into alliances but dishonour them and, although only a few people are behind him, he will rise to power and establish himself

²⁴ against all expectation. He will overrun the richest districts of the province, and succeed where all his ancestors failed, and distribute spoil, booty, and goods among his followers. He will frame stratagems against fortresses, but only for a time.

²⁵ He will rouse himself in all his strength and courage to lead a great army against the king of the south, who will fight back with a very large and powerful army; yet, hampered by treachery, the king of the south will not persist.

²⁶Those who eat at his board will be his undoing; his army will be swept away, and many will fall slain in battle.

²⁷The two kings, bent on mischief though seated at the same table, will lie to each other but with advantage to neither, for an end is yet to be at the appointed time.

²⁸Then the king of the north will return home with spoils in plenty, and with hostility in his heart against the Holy Covenant; he will work his will and return to his own country.

²⁹At the appointed time he will once again invade the south, but he will have less success than he had before.

³⁰Ships of Kittim will sail against him, and he will suffer a rebuff. As he retreats he will vent his fury against the Holy Covenant, and on his return home will single out those who have forsaken it.

³¹Soldiers in his command will desecrate the sanctuary and citadel; they will abolish the regular offering, and will set up the abominable thing that causes desolation.

³²By plausible promises he will win over those who are ready to violate the

covenant, but the people who are faithful to their God will be resolute and take action.

³³ Wise leaders of the nation will give guidance to the people at large, who for a while will fall victims to sword and fire, to captivity and pillage.

³⁴ But these victims will have some help, though only a little, even if many who join them are insincere.

³⁵ Some of these leaders will themselves fall victims for a time, so that they may be tested, refined, and made shining white; for an end is yet to be at the appointed time.

³⁶ The king will do as he pleases; he will exalt and magnify himself above every god, and against the God of gods he will utter monstrous blasphemies. Things will go well for him until the divine wrath is spent, for what is determined must be done.

³⁷ Heedless of his ancestral gods and the god beloved of women, indeed heedless of all gods, for he will magnify himself above them all,

³⁸ he will honour the god of fortresses, a god unknown to his ancestors, with gold and silver, gems and costly gifts.

³⁹ He will garrison his strongest fortresses with aliens, the people of a foreign god. Those whom he favours he will load with honour, putting them into authority over the people and distributing land as a reward.

⁴⁰ At the time of the end, the king of the south will make a feint at the king of the north, but the king of the north will come storming against him with chariots and cavalry and a fleet of ships. He will pass through country after country, sweeping over them like a flood,

⁴¹ among them the fairest of all lands, and tens of thousands will fall victim; but these lands, Edom and Moab and the chief part of the Ammonites, will escape his clutches.

⁴² As he gets country after country into his grasp, not even Egypt will escape;

⁴³ he will seize control of her hidden stores of gold and silver and of all her treasures; Libyans and Cushites will follow in subjection to him.

⁴⁴ Then, alarmed by rumours from east and north, he will depart in a great rage to destroy and to exterminate many.

⁴⁵ He will pitch his royal pavilion between the sea and the holy hill, the fairest of all hills; and he will meet his end with no one to help him.

12 ¹ AT that time there will appear Michael the great captain, who stands guarding your fellow-countrymen; and there will be a period of anguish such as has never been known ever since they became a nation till that moment. But at that time your people will be delivered, everyone whose name is entered in the book:

² many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake, some to everlasting life and some to the reproach of eternal abhorrence.

³ The wise leaders will shine like the bright vault of heaven, and those who have guided the people in the true path will be like the stars for ever and ever.

⁴ But you, Daniel, keep the words secret and seal the book until the time of the end. Many will rush to and fro, trying to gain such knowledge.

⁵I, Daniel, looked and saw two others standing, one on this bank of the river and the other on the farther bank.

⁶To the man robed in linen who was above the waters of the river I said, How long will it be until the end of these portents?

⁷The man robed in linen who was above the waters raised his right hand and his left heavenwards, and I heard him swear by him who lives for ever: It shall be for a time and times and half a time. When the power of the holy people is no longer being shattered, all these things will cease.

⁸I heard, but I did not understand; so I said, Sir, what will be the outcome of these things?

⁹He replied, Go your way, Daniel, for the words are to be kept secret and sealed till the time of the end.

¹⁰Many will purify themselves and be refined, making themselves shining white, but the wicked will continue in wickedness and none of them will understand; only the wise leaders will understand.

¹¹ From the time when the regular offering is abolished and the abomination of desolation is set up, one thousand two hundred and ninety days will elapse.

¹² Happy are those who wait and live to see the completion of one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days!

¹³ But you, Daniel, go your way till the end; you will rest, and then, at the end of the age, you will arise to your destiny.

Hosea

1 ¹THE word of the LORD which came to Hosea son of Beeri during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and during the reign of Jeroboam son of Joash king of Israel.

²THIS is the beginning of the LORD's message given by Hosea. He said, Go and take an unchaste woman as your wife, and with this woman have children; for like an unchaste woman this land is guilty of unfaithfulness to the LORD.

³So he married Gomer daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son.

⁴The LORD said to Hosea, Call him Jezreel, for in a little while I am going to punish the dynasty of Jehu for the blood shed in the valley of Jezreel, and bring the kingdom of Israel to an end.

⁵On that day I shall break Israel's bow in the vale of Jezreel.

⁶Gomer conceived again and bore a daughter, and the LORD said to Hosea,

Call her Lo-ruhamah; for I shall never again show love to Israel, never again forgive them.

⁷But Judah I shall love and save. I shall save them not by bow or sword or weapon of war, not by horses and horsemen, but I shall save them by the LORD their God.

⁸After weaning Lo-ruhamah, Gomer conceived and bore a son;

⁹and the LORD said, Call him Lo-ammi; for you are not my people, and I shall not be your God.

¹⁰The Israelites will be as countless as the sands of the sea, which can neither be measured nor numbered; it will no longer be said to them, You are not my people; they will be called Children of the Living God.

¹¹The people of Judah and of Israel will be reunited and will choose for themselves one leader; they will spring up from the land, for great will be the day of Jezreel.

2¹You are to say to your brothers, You are my people, and to your sisters, You are loved.

²Call your mother to account, for she is no longer my wife nor am I her husband. Let her put an end to her infidelity and banish the lovers from her bosom,

³or else I shall strip her bare and parade her naked as the day she was born. I shall make her bare as the wilderness, parched as the desert, and leave her to die of thirst.

⁴I shall show no love towards her children, for they are the offspring of adultery.

⁵Their mother has been promiscuous; she who conceived them is shameless. She says, I will go after my lovers, who supply me with food and drink, with my wool and flax, my oil and perfumes.

⁶That is why I shall close her road with thorn bushes and obstruct her path with a wall, so that she can no longer find a way through.

⁷Though she pursues her lovers she will not overtake them, though she looks for them she will not find them. At last she will say, I shall go back to my husband again, for I was better off then than I am now.

⁸She does not know that it was I who gave her the grain, the new wine, and fresh oil, I who lavished on her silver and gold which they used for the Baal.

⁹That is why I am going to take back my grain at the harvest and my new wine at the vintage, take away the wool and the flax which I provided to cover her naked body.

¹⁰Now I shall reveal her shame to her lovers, and no one will rescue her from me.

¹¹I shall put a stop to all her merrymaking, her pilgrimages, new moons, and sabbaths, all her festivals.

¹²I shall ravage the vines and the fig trees, of which she says, These are the fees which my lovers have paid me, and I shall leave them to grow wild so that beasts may eat them.

¹³I shall punish her for the holy days when she burnt sacrifices to the baalim, when she decked herself with her rings and necklaces, when, forgetful of me, she ran after her lovers. This is the word of the LORD.

¹⁴But now I shall woo her, lead her into the wilderness, and speak words of encouragement to her.

¹⁵There I shall restore her vineyards to her, turning the valley of Achor into a gate of hope; there she will respond as in her youth, as when she came up from Egypt.

¹⁶On that day she will call me My husband and will no more call me My Baal; I shall banish from her lips the very names of the baalim; never again will their names be invoked. This is the word of the LORD.

¹⁷(2:16)

¹⁸Then I shall make a covenant on Israel's behalf with the wild beasts, the birds of the air, and the creatures that creep on the ground, and I shall break bow and sword and weapon of war and sweep them off the earth, so that my people may lie down without fear.

¹⁹I shall betroth you to myself for ever, bestowing righteousness and justice, loyalty and love;

²⁰I shall betroth you to myself, making you faithful, and you will know the LORD.

²¹ At that time I shall answer, says the LORD; I shall answer the heavens and they will answer the earth,

²² and the earth will answer the grain, the new wine, and fresh oil, and they will answer Jezreel.

²³ Israel will be my new sowing in the land, and I shall show love to Lo-ruhamah and say to Lo-ammi, You are my people, and he will say, You are my God.

3¹ The LORD said to me, Go again and bestow your love on a woman loved by another man, an adulteress; love her as I, the LORD, love the Israelites, although they resort to other gods and love the cakes of raisins offered to idols.

² So I bought her for fifteen pieces of silver, a homer of barley, and a measure of wine;

³ and I said to her, You will live in my house for a long time and you will not lead an immoral life. You must have relations with no one else, indeed not even with me.

⁴ So the Israelites will live for a long time without king or leader, without

sacrifice or sacred pillar, without ephod or teraphim.

⁵After that they will again seek the LORD their God and David their king, and turn with reverence to the LORD and seek his bounty for the days to come.

4¹ ISRAEL, hear the word of the LORD; for the LORD has a charge to bring against the inhabitants of the land: There is no good faith or loyalty, no acknowledgement of God in the land.

²People swear oaths and break them; they kill and rob and commit adultery; there is violence, one deed of blood after another.

³Therefore the land will be desolate and all who live in it will languish, with the wild beasts and the birds of the air; even the fish will vanish from the sea.

⁴But it is not for mankind to bring charges, not for them to prove a case; it is my quarrel, and it is with you, the priest.

⁵By day and by night you blunder on, you and the prophet with you. Your nation is brought to ruin;

⁶want of knowledge has been the ruin of my people. As you have rejected

knowledge, so will I reject you as a priest to me. As you have forsaken the teaching of God, so will I, your God, forsake your children.

⁷The more priests there are, the more they sin against me; their dignity I shall turn into dishonour.

⁸They feed on the sin of my people and batten on their iniquity.

⁹But people and priest will fare alike. I shall punish them for their conduct and repay them for their deeds.

¹⁰They will eat but never be satisfied, resort to prostitutes and never have children, for they have abandoned the LORD

¹¹to give themselves to immorality. Wine, old and new, steals my people's wits;

¹²they ask advice from a piece of wood and accept the guidance of the diviner's wand; for a spirit of promiscuity has led them astray and they are unfaithful to their God.

¹³They sacrifice on mountaintops and burn offerings on the hills, under oak and poplar and the terebinth's pleasant shade. That is why your daughters turn

to prostitution and your sons' brides commit adultery.

¹⁴I shall not punish your daughters for becoming prostitutes or your sons' brides for their adultery, because your men resort to whores and sacrifice with temple-prostitutes. A people so devoid of understanding comes to grief.

¹⁵Israel, though you are adulterous, let not Judah incur such guilt; let her not come to Gilgal or go up to Beth-aven to swear by the life of the LORD.

¹⁶Like a heifer, Israel has turned stubborn; will the LORD now feed them like lambs in a broad meadow?

¹⁷Ephraim has associated with idols; a drunken rabble, they have devoted their lives to immorality, preferring dishonour to glory.

¹⁸(4:17)

¹⁹The wind with its wings will carry them off, and they will find their sacrifices a delusion.

5¹Hear this, you priests, and listen, Israel; let the royal house mark my words. Sentence is passed on you, for you have been a snare at Mizpah, a net spread out on Tabor,

²and a deep pit at Shittim. I shall punish them all.

³I have cared for Ephraim and not neglected Israel; but now Ephraim has become promiscuous and Israel has brought defilement on himself.

⁴Their misdeeds have barred the way back to their God, for the spirit of immorality which is in them prevents them from knowing the LORD.

⁵Israel's arrogance cries out against him; Ephraim's guilt is his downfall, and Judah in turn is brought down.

⁶They go with sacrifices of sheep and cattle to seek the LORD, but do not find him, for he has withdrawn from them.

⁷They have deceived the LORD, for their children are bastards. Now an invader is set to devour their fields.

⁸Blow the trumpet in Gibeah, the horn in Ramah, raise the battle cry in Beth-aven: We are with you, Benjamin!

⁹On the day of punishment Ephraim will be laid waste. This is the certain doom I have decreed for Israel's tribes.

¹⁰Judah's rulers act like men who move their neighbour's boundary; on them I shall pour out my wrath like a flood.

¹¹ Ephraim is an oppressor trampling on justice, obstinately pursuing what is worthless.

¹² But I am going to be a festering sore to Ephraim, a canker to the house of Judah.

¹³ When Ephraim found that he was sick, and Judah found that he was covered with sores, Ephraim turned to Assyria and sent envoys to the Great King. But he had no power to cure you or heal your sores.

¹⁴ I shall be fierce as a panther to Ephraim, fierce as a lion to Judah; I shall maul the prey and go, carry it off beyond hope of rescue.

¹⁵ I shall return to my dwelling-place, until in remorse they seek me and search diligently for me in their distress.

6¹ Come, let us return to the LORD.

He has torn us, but he will heal us, he has wounded us, but he will bind up our wounds;

² after two days he will revive us, on the third day he will raise us to live in his presence.

³ Let us strive to know the LORD, whose coming is as sure as the sunrise. He will

come to us like the rain, like spring rains that water the earth.

⁴How shall I deal with you, Ephraim? How shall I deal with you, Judah? Your loyalty to me is like the morning mist, like dew that vanishes early.

⁵That is why I have cut them to pieces by the prophets and slaughtered them with my words: my judgement goes forth like light.

⁶For I require loyalty, not sacrifice, acknowledgement of God rather than whole-offerings.

⁷At Admah they violated my covenant, there they played me false.

⁸Gilead is a haunt of evildoers, marked by a trail of blood.

⁹Like marauders lying in wait, priests are banded together to do murder on the road to Shechem; their behaviour is an outrage.

¹⁰At Bethel I have seen a horrible thing: there Ephraim became promiscuous and Israel brought defilement on himself.

¹¹And for you, too, Judah, a harvest of reckoning will come. When I am minded to restore the fortunes of my people,

7¹ when I am minded to heal Israel,
the guilt of Ephraim stands revealed,
the wickedness of Samaria. They have
not kept faith; they are thieves breaking
into houses, bandits raiding in the
countryside,

²unaware that I have their wickedness
ever in mind. Now their misdeeds
encircle them; they are ever before my
eyes.

³They divert the king with their
wickedness and princes with their
treachery.

⁴All of them are adulterers; they are
like an oven fire which the baker does
not have to stir from the kneading of the
dough until it has risen.

⁵On their king's festal day the courtiers
become inflamed with wine, and he
himself joins with arrogant men;

⁶their hearts are heated like an oven
by their intrigues. During the night their
passion slumbers, but in the morning it
flares up like a blazing fire;

⁷they are all as heated as an oven and
devour their rulers. King after king falls
from power, but not one of them calls to
me.

⁸Ephraim is mixed up with aliens; he is like a cake half done.

⁹Foreigners feed on his strength, but he is unaware; grey hairs may come on him, but he is unaware.

¹⁰Israel's arrogance openly indicts them; but they do not return to the LORD their God nor, in spite of everything, do they seek him.

¹¹Ephraim is like a silly, senseless pigeon, now calling to Egypt, now turning to Assyria for help.

¹²Wherever they turn, I shall cast my net over them and bring them down like birds; I shall take them captive when I hear them gathering.

¹³Woe betide them, for they have strayed from me! May disaster befall them for rebelling against me! I long to deliver them, but they tell lies about me.

¹⁴There is no sincerity in their cry to me; for all their wailing on their beds and gashing of themselves over grain and new wine, they are turning away from me.

¹⁵Though I support and strengthen them, they plot evil against me.

¹⁶Like a bow gone slack, they relapse into useless worship; their leaders will fall by the sword because of their angry talk. There will be derision at them in Egypt.

8¹Put the trumpets to your lips! An eagle circles over the sanctuary of the LORD; they have violated my covenant and rebelled against my instruction.

²Israel cries to me for help: We acknowledge you as our God.

³But Israel rejects what is good, and an enemy pursues him.

⁴They make kings, but not on my authority; they set up rulers, but without my knowledge; from their silver and gold they have made for themselves idols for their own destruction.

⁵Samaria, your calf-god is loathsome! My anger burns against them! How long must they remain guilty?

⁶The calf was made in Israel; a craftsman fashioned it and it is no god; it will be reduced to splinters.

⁷Israel sows the wind and reaps the whirlwind; there are no heads on the standing grain, it yields no flour; and, if

it did yield any, strangers would swallow it up.

⁸Israel is swallowed up; now among the nations they are like a thing of no value.

⁹Like a wild ass that goes its own way, they have gone up to Assyria. Ephraim has bargained for lovers;

¹⁰because they have so bargained among the nations I will now round them up. Soon they will have to abandon the setting up of kings and rulers.

¹¹Ephraim has built altars everywhere and they have become occasions for sin.

¹²Though I give him many written laws, they are treated as irrelevant;

¹³though they sacrifice offerings of flesh and eat them, the LORD will not accept them. Their guilt will be remembered and their sins punished. Let them go back to Egypt!

¹⁴Israel has forgotten his Maker and built palaces; Judah has many walled cities, but I shall burn his cities, and fire will devour his citadels.

9¹Do not rejoice, Israel, or exult like other peoples; for you have been unfaithful to your God, you have been

attracted by a prostitute's fee on every threshing-floor heaped with grain.

²Threshing-floor and winepress will see them no more, there will be no new wine for them.

³They will not dwell in the LORD's land: Ephraim will go back to Egypt, or eat unclean food in Assyria.

⁴They are not to pour out wine to the LORD; their sacrifices will not be pleasing to him; it would be like mourners' fare for them, and all who ate it would be polluted. Their food must serve only to stay their hunger; it must not be offered in the house of the LORD.

⁵What will you do on the festal day, the day of the LORD's pilgrim-feast?

⁶For look, the people have fled from a scene of devastation: Egypt will receive them, Memphis will be their grave. Weeds will engulf their silver treasures, and thorns their dwellings.

⁷The days of punishment have come, the days of vengeance are here and Israel knows it. The prophet has become a fool, the inspired seer a madman, because of your great guilt and enmity.

⁸God appointed the prophet as a watchman for Ephraim, but he has become a fowler's trap on all their ways. There is enmity in the very temple of God.

⁹They are deep in sin as at the time of Gibeah. Their guilt will be remembered and their sins punished.

¹⁰I came upon Israel like grapes in the wilderness; as at the first ripe figs I looked on their forefathers with joy, but they resorted to Baal-peor and consecrated themselves to a thing of shame. Ephraim became as loathsome as the thing they loved.

¹¹Their honour will fly away like a bird: no childbirth, no fruitful womb, no conceiving!

¹²Even if they rear their children, I will make them childless, without posterity. Woe betide them when I turn away from them!

¹³As lions lead out their cubs, just to be hunted, so must Ephraim bring out his children for slaughter.

¹⁴Give them whatever you, LORD, are going to give. Give them wombs that miscarry and dry breasts.

¹⁵All their wickedness at Gilgal aroused my hatred. I shall drive them from my house because of their evil deeds, I shall love them no more, for all their rulers are in revolt.

¹⁶Ephraim is struck down: their root is withered, and they yield no fruit; if ever they give birth, I shall slay the cherished offspring of their womb.

¹⁷My God will reject them, because they have not listened to him, and they will become wanderers among the nations.

10¹ ISRAEL is like a spreading vine with ripening fruit: the more his fruit, the more his altars; the more beautiful his land, the more beautiful his pillars.

²They are false at heart; now they must pay the penalty. God himself will break down their altars and demolish their sacred pillars.

³Well may they say, We have no king, because we do not fear the LORD; and what could the king do for us?

⁴There is nothing but talk; they swear false oaths and draw up treaties, and

litigation spreads like a poisonous weed along the furrows of the fields.

⁵The inhabitants of Samaria tremble for the calf-god of Beth-aven; the people mourn over it and its priests lament, distressed for the image of their god which is carried away into exile.

⁶It will be carried to Assyria as tribute to the Great King; disgrace will overtake Ephraim, and Israel, lacking counsel, will be put to shame.

⁷Samaria and her king are swept away like flotsam on the water;

⁸the shrines of Aven are destroyed, the shrines where Israel sinned; the altars are overgrown with thorns and thistles. They will say to the mountains, Cover us, and to the hills, Fall upon us.

⁹Since the time of Gibeah Israel has sinned; there they took their stand in rebellion. Will not war overtake them in Gibeah?

¹⁰I have come against the rebels to chastise them, and the peoples will mass against them to chastise them for their two shameful deeds.

¹¹Ephraim is like a heifer broken in, which loves to thresh grain; across that

fair neck of hers I have laid a yoke. I have harnessed Ephraim to the pole to plough, that Jacob may harrow the land.

¹²Sow justice, and reap loyalty. Break up your fallow ground; it is time to seek the LORD, till he comes and rains justice on you.

¹³You have ploughed wickedness and reaped depravity; you have eaten the fruit of treachery. Because you have trusted in your chariots, in the number of your warriors,

¹⁴the tumult of war will arise against your people, and all your fortresses will be overthrown as Shalman overthrew Beth-arbel in the day of battle, dashing mothers and babes to the ground.

¹⁵So it is to be done to you, Bethel, because of your great wickedness; as swiftly as the passing of dawn, the king of Israel will be swept away.

11 ¹When Israel was a youth, I loved him; out of Egypt I called my son; ²but the more I called, the farther they went from me; they must needs sacrifice to the baalim and burn offerings to images.

³It was I who taught Ephraim to walk, I who took them in my arms; but they did not know that

⁴I secured them with reins and led them with bonds of love, that I lifted them like a little child to my cheek, that I bent down to feed them.

⁵Back they will go to Egypt, the Assyrian will be their king; for they have refused to return to me.

⁶The sword will be brandished in their cities and it will make an end of their priests and devour them because of their scheming.

⁷My people are bent on rebellion, but though they call in unison to Baal he will not lift them up.

⁸How can I hand you over, Ephraim, how can I surrender you, Israel? How can I make you like Admah or treat you as Zeboyim? A change of heart moves me, tenderness kindles within me.

⁹I am not going to let loose my fury, I shall not turn and destroy Ephraim, for I am God, not a mortal; I am the Holy One in your midst. I shall not come with threats.

¹⁰They will follow the LORD who roars like a lion, and when he roars, his sons will speed out of the west.

¹¹They will come speedily like birds out of Egypt, like pigeons from Assyria, and I shall settle them in their own homes. This is the word of the LORD.

¹²The treachery of Ephraim encompasses me, as does the deceit of the house of Israel; and Judah is still restive under God, still loyal to the idols he counts holy.

12¹Ephraim feeds on wind, he pursues the east wind all day, he piles up treachery and havoc; he makes a treaty with Assyria and carries tribute of oil to Egypt.

²The LORD has a charge to bring against Judah and is resolved to punish Jacob for his conduct; he will requite him for his misdeeds.

³Even in the womb Jacob supplanted his brother, and in manhood he strove with God.

⁴He strove with the angel and prevailed; he wept and entreated his favour. God met him at Bethel and spoke with him there.

⁵The LORD the God of Hosts, the LORD is his name!

⁶Turn back by God's help; maintain loyalty and justice and wait continually for your God.

⁷False scales are in merchants' hands, and they love to cheat.

⁸Ephraim says, Surely I have become rich, I have made my fortune, but despite all my gains the guilt of sin will not be found in me.

⁹Yet I have been the LORD your God since your days in Egypt; I shall make you live in tents yet again, as in the days of the Tent of Meeting.

¹⁰I spoke to the prophets; it was I who gave vision after vision: I declared my mind through them.

¹¹In Gilead there was idolatry, the people were worthless and sacrificed to bull-gods in Gilgal; their altars were like heaps of stones beside a ploughed field.

¹²Jacob fled to the land of Aram; Israel did service to win a wife, to win her he tended sheep.

¹³By a prophet the LORD brought Israel up from Egypt and by a prophet Israel was tended.

¹⁴Ephraim gave bitter provocation; he will be left to suffer for the blood he has shed; his Lord will punish him for all his blasphemy.

13¹Ephraim was a prince and a leader and he was exalted in Israel, but, guilty of Baal-worship, he suffered death.

²Yet now they sin more and more; they cast for themselves images, they use their silver to make idols, all fashioned by craftsmen. It is said of Ephraim: They offer human sacrifice and kiss calf-images.

³Therefore they will be like the morning mist, like dew that vanishes early, like chaff blown from the threshing-floor or smoke from a chimney.

⁴But since your days in Egypt I have been the LORD your God; you do not know any god but me, any saviour other than me.

⁵I cared for you in the wilderness, in a land of burning heat.

⁶They were fed and satisfied, and, once satisfied, they grew proud, and so they deserted me.

⁷ Now I shall be like a panther to them, I shall prowl like a leopard by the wayside;

⁸ I shall come on them like a she-bear robbed of her cubs and tear their ribs apart, like a lioness I shall devour them on the spot, like a wild beast I shall rip them up.

⁹ I have destroyed you, Israel; who is there to help you?

¹⁰ Where now is your king that he may save you, in all your cities where are your rulers? Give me a king and princes, you said.

¹¹ I gave you a king in my anger, and in my wrath I took him away.

¹² Ephraim's guilt is tied up in a scroll, his sins are kept on record.

¹³ When the pangs of his birth came over his mother, he showed himself a senseless child; for at the proper time he could not present himself at the mouth of the womb.

¹⁴ Shall I deliver him from the grave? Shall I redeem him from death? Where are your plagues, death? Grave, where is your sting? I shall put compassion out of my sight.

¹⁵ Though he flourishes among his brothers, an east wind will come, a blast from the LORD rising over the desert, causing springs to fail and fountains to run dry. The enemy will plunder his wealth, all his costly treasures.

¹⁶ Samaria will become desolate because she has rebelled against her God; her babes will fall by the sword and be dashed to the ground, and pregnant women will be ripped up.

14 ¹ RETURN, Israel, to the LORD your God; for your iniquity has been your downfall.

² Come back to the LORD with your words of confession; say to him, You will surely take away iniquity. Accept our wealth; we shall pay our vows with cattle from our pens.

³ Assyria will not save us, nor shall we rely on horses; what we have made with our own hands we shall never again call gods; for in you the fatherless find compassion.

⁴ I shall heal my people's apostasy; I shall love them freely, for my anger is turned away from them.

⁵I shall be as dew to Israel that they may flower like the lily, strike root like the poplar,

⁶and put out fresh shoots, that they may be as fair as the olive and fragrant as Lebanon.

⁷Israel will again dwell in my shadow; they will grow vigorously like grain, they will flourish like a vine, and be as famous as the wine of Lebanon.

⁸What further dealings has Ephraim with idols? I declare it and affirm it: I am the pine tree that shelters you; your prosperity comes from me.

⁹Let the wise consider these things and let the prudent acknowledge them: the LORD's ways are straight and the righteous walk in them, while sinners stumble.

Joel

1 ¹ THE word of the LORD which came to Joel son of Pethuel.

² HEAR this, you elders; listen to me, all you inhabitants of the land! Has the like of this happened in your days or in the days of your forefathers?

³ Tell it to your children and let them tell it to theirs; let one generation pass it on to another.

⁴ What the locust has left, the swarmer devours; what the swarmer has left, the hopper devours; and what the hopper has left, the grub devours.

⁵ Wake up, you drunkards, and weep! Mourn for the new wine, all you wine-drinkers, for it is denied to you.

⁶ A horde, vast and past counting, has invaded my land; they have teeth like a lion's teeth; they have the fangs of a lioness.

⁷ They have laid waste my vines and left my fig trees broken; they have plucked them bare and stripped them of their bark, leaving the branches white.

⁸Wail like a virgin in sackcloth, wailing over the betrothed of her youth:

⁹the grain-offering and drink-offering are cut off from the house of the LORD. Mourn, you priests, who minister to the LORD!

¹⁰The fields are ruined, the ground mourns; for the grain is ruined, the new wine has come to naught, the oil has failed.

¹¹Despair, you farmers, and lament, you vine-dressers, over the wheat and the barley; the harvest of the fields is lost.

¹²The vines have come to naught, and the fig trees have failed; pomegranate, palm, and apple, every tree of the countryside is dried up, and all the people's joy has come to an end.

¹³Put on sackcloth, you priests, and mourn; lament, you ministers of the altar; come, lie in sackcloth all night long, you ministers of my God; for grain-offerings and drink-offerings are withheld from the house of your God.

¹⁴Appoint a solemn fast, proclaim a day of abstinence. You elders, gather all who

live in the land to the house of the LORD your God, and cry out to him:

¹⁵The day is near, the day of the LORD: it comes as a mighty destruction from the Almighty.

¹⁶It is already before our eyes: food is cut off from the house of our God and there is neither joy nor gladness.

¹⁷Under the clods the seeds have shrivelled, the water-channels are dry, the barns lie in ruins; for the harvests have come to naught.

¹⁸How the cattle moan! The herds of oxen are distraught because they have no pasture; even the flocks of sheep waste away.

¹⁹To you, LORD, I cry out; for fire has consumed the open pastures, flames have burnt up every tree in the countryside.

²⁰Even the beasts in the field look to you; for the streams are dried up, and fire has consumed the open pastures.

2¹ Blow the trumpet in Zion, sound the alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming, a day of darkness and gloom is at hand, a day

of cloud and dense fog. Like blackness spread over the mountains a vast and countless host appears; their like has never been known, nor will be in all the ages to come.

² (2: 1)

³ Their vanguard is a devouring fire, their rearguard a leaping flame; before them the land is a garden of Eden, but behind them it is a desolate waste; nothing survives their passing.

⁴ In appearance like horses, like cavalry they charge;

⁵ they bound over the peaks with a din like chariots, like crackling flames burning up stubble, like a vast host in battle array.

⁶ Nations tremble at their onset, every face is drained of colour.

⁷ Like warriors they charge, like soldiers they scale the walls; each keeps in line with no confusion in the ranks,

⁸ none jostling his neighbour; each keeps to his course. Weapons cannot halt their attack;

⁹ they burst into the city, race along the wall, climb into the houses, entering like thieves through the windows.

¹⁰At their onset the earth shakes, the heavens shudder, sun and moon are darkened, and the stars withhold their light.

¹¹The LORD thunders as he leads his host; his is a mighty army, countless are those who do his bidding. Great is the day of the LORD and most terrible; who can endure it?

¹²Yet even now, says the LORD, turn back to me wholeheartedly with fasting, weeping, and mourning.

¹³Rend your hearts and not your garments, and turn back to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, long-suffering and ever constant, ready always to relent when he threatens disaster.

¹⁴It may be he will turn back and relent and leave a blessing behind him, blessing enough for grain-offerings and drink-offerings to be presented to the LORD your God.

¹⁵Blow the trumpet in Zion, appoint a solemn fast, proclaim a day of abstinence.

¹⁶Gather the people together, appoint a solemn assembly; summon the elders,

gather the children, even babes at the breast; bid the bridegroom leave his wedding-chamber and the bride her bower.

¹⁷Let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, stand weeping between the porch and the altar and say, Spare your people, LORD; do not expose your own people to insult, to be made a byword by other nations. Why should the peoples say, Where is their God?

¹⁸THEN the LORD showed his ardent love for his land, and was moved with compassion for his people.

¹⁹He answered their appeal and said: I shall send you corn, new wine, and oil, and you will have them in plenty. I shall expose you no longer to the reproach of other nations.

²⁰I shall remove the northern peril far from you and banish it into a land arid and waste, the vanguard into the eastern sea, the rearguard into the western sea; the stench and foul smell of it will go up. He has done great things!

²¹Earth, fear not, but rejoice and be glad; for the LORD has done great things.

²²Fear not, you beasts in the field; for the open pastures will be green, the trees will bear fruit, the fig and the vine yield their harvest.

²³People of Zion, rejoice, be glad in the LORD your God, who gives you food in due measure by sending you rain, the autumn and spring rains as of old.

²⁴The threshing-floors will be heaped with grain, the vats will overflow with new wine and oil.

²⁵I shall recompense you for the years that the swarmer has eaten, hopper and grub and locust, my great army which I sent against you.

²⁶You will eat until you are satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God who has done wonderful things for you, and my people will never again be put to shame.

²⁷You will know that I am present in Israel, that I and no other am the LORD your God; and my people will never again be put to shame.

²⁸After this I shall pour out my spirit on all mankind; your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams and your young men see visions;

²⁹I shall pour out my spirit in those days even on slaves and slave-girls.

³⁰I shall set portents in the sky and on earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke.

³¹The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD.

³²Then everyone who invokes the LORD's name will be saved: on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be a remnant as the LORD has promised, survivors whom the LORD calls.

3¹When that time comes, on that day when I reverse the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem,

²I shall gather all the nations together and lead them down to the valley of Jehoshaphat. There I shall bring them to judgement on behalf of Israel, my own people, whom they have scattered among the nations; they have shared out my land

³and divided my people by lot, bartering a boy for a whore and selling a girl for a drink of wine.

⁴What are you to me, Tyre and Sidon and all the districts of Philistia? Are you

bent on taking vengeance on me? If you were to take vengeance, I should make your deeds recoil swiftly and speedily on your own heads.

⁵You have taken my silver and gold and carried off my costly treasures to your temples;

⁶you have sold the people of Judah and Jerusalem to the Greeks, and removed them far beyond their own frontiers.

⁷But I shall rouse them to leave the places to which they have been sold. I shall make your deeds recoil on your own heads,

⁸by selling your sons and your daughters to the people of Judah, who will then sell them to the Sabaeans, a distant nation. Those are the LORD's words.

⁹Proclaim this amongst the nations: Declare war, call your troops to arms! Let all the fighting men advance to the attack.

¹⁰Beat your mattocks into swords and your pruning-knives into spears. Let even the weakling say, I am strong.

¹¹ Muster, all you nations round about; let them gather together there. LORD, send down your champions!

¹² Let the nations hear the call to arms and march up to the valley of Jehoshaphat. There I shall sit in judgement on all the nations round about.

¹³ Wield the knife, for the harvest is ripe; come, tread the grapes, for the winepress is full; empty the vats, for they are full to the brim.

¹⁴ A noisy throng in the valley of Decision! The day of the LORD is at hand in the valley of Decision:

¹⁵ sun and moon are darkened and the stars withhold their light.

¹⁶ The LORD roars from Zion and thunders from Jerusalem so that heaven and earth shudder; but the LORD is a refuge for his people, a defence for Israel.

¹⁷ Thus you will know that I am the LORD your God, dwelling in Zion, my holy mountain; Jerusalem will be holy, and foreigners will never again set foot in it.

¹⁸When that day comes, the mountains will run with the new wine and the hills flow with milk. Every channel in Judah will be full of water; a fountain will spring from the LORD's house and water the wadi of Shittim.

¹⁹Egypt will become a desolation and Edom a desolate waste, because of the violence done to Judah and the innocent blood shed in her land.

²⁰But Judah will be inhabited for ever, Jerusalem for generation after generation.

²¹I shall avenge their blood, the blood I have not yet avenged, and the LORD will dwell in Zion.

Amos

1 ¹THE words of Amos, one of the sheep-farmers of Tekoa. He received these words in visions about Israel during the reigns of Uzziah king of Judah and Jeroboam son of Jehoash king of Israel, two years before the earthquake.

²He said, The LORD roars from Zion and thunders from Jerusalem; the shepherds' pastures are dried up and the choicest farmland is parched.

³THESE are the words of the LORD: For crime after crime of Damascus I shall grant them no reprieve, because they threshed Gilead under threshing-sledges spiked with basalt.

⁴Therefore I shall send fire on Hazael's house, fire to consume Ben-hadad's palaces;

⁵I shall crush the nobles of Damascus and wipe out those who live in the vale of Aven and the sceptred ruler of Beth-eden; the people of Aram will be carried to exile in Kir. It is the word of the LORD.

⁶These are the words of the LORD: For crime after crime of Gaza I shall grant them no reprieve, because they deported a whole community into exile and delivered them to Edom.

⁷Therefore I shall send fire on the walls of Gaza, fire to consume its palaces.

⁸I shall wipe out those who live in Ashdod and the sceptred ruler of Ashkelon; I shall turn my hand against Ekron, and the Philistines who are left will perish. It is the word of the Lord GOD.

⁹These are the words of the LORD: For crime after crime of Tyre I shall grant them no reprieve, because, ignoring the brotherly alliance, they handed over a whole community to exile in Edom.

¹⁰Therefore I shall send fire on the walls of Tyre, fire to consume its palaces.

¹¹These are the words of the LORD: For crime after crime of Edom I shall grant them no reprieve, because, sword in hand and stifling their natural affections, they hunted down their kinsmen. Their anger raged unceasingly, their fury stormed unchecked.

¹²Therefore I shall send fire on Teman, fire to consume the palaces of Bozrah.

¹³These are the words of the LORD: For crime after crime of the Ammonites I shall grant them no reprieve, because in their greed for land they ripped open the pregnant women in Gilead.

¹⁴Therefore I shall set fire to the walls of Rabbah, fire to consume its palaces amid war cries on the day of battle, with a whirlwind on the day of sweeping tempest;

¹⁵then their king will go into exile, he and his officers with him. It is the word of the LORD.

2¹These are the words of the LORD: For crime after crime of Moab I shall grant them no reprieve, because they burnt to lime the bones of the king of Edom.

²Therefore I shall send fire on Moab, fire to consume the palaces of Kerioth; Moab will perish in uproar, amid war cries and the sound of trumpets,

³and I shall make away with its ruler and with him slay all the officers. It is the word of the LORD.

⁴These are the words of the LORD: For crime after crime of Judah I shall grant them no reprieve, because they have spurned the law of the LORD and have not observed his decrees; they have been led astray by the same false gods their fathers followed.

⁵Therefore I shall send fire on Judah, fire to consume the palaces of Jerusalem.

⁶These are the words of the LORD: For crime after crime of Israel I shall grant them no reprieve, because they sell honest folk for silver and the poor for a pair of sandals.

⁷They grind the heads of the helpless into the dust and push the humble out of their way. Father and son resort to the temple girls, so profaning my holy name.

⁸Men lie down beside every altar on garments held in pledge, and in the house of their God they drink wine on the proceeds of fines.

⁹It was I who destroyed the Amorite before them; he was as tall as the cedars, as sturdy as the oak; I destroyed his fruit above and his root below.

¹⁰It was I who brought you up out of Egypt, and for forty years led you in the

wilderness, to take possession of the country of the Amorite;

¹¹ I raised up prophets from among your sons, Nazirites from among your young men. Israelites, is this not true? says the LORD.

¹² But you have made the Nazirites drink wine, and said to the prophets, You are not to prophesy.

¹³ Listen, I groan under the burden of you, as a wagon creaks under a full load.

¹⁴ Flight will be cut off for the swift, the strong will not recover strength. The warrior will not save himself,

¹⁵ the archer will not stand his ground; the swift of foot will not escape, nor the horseman save himself.

¹⁶ On that day the bravest of warriors will throw away his weapons and flee. It is the word of the LORD.

3¹ LISTEN, Israelites, to these words that the LORD addresses to you, to the whole nation which he brought up from Egypt:

² You alone I have cared for among all the nations of the world; that is why I shall punish you for all your wrongdoing.

³ Do two people travel together unless they have so agreed?

⁴ Does a lion roar in the thicket if he has no prey? Does a young lion growl in his den unless he has caught something?

⁵ Does a bird fall into a trap on the ground if no bait is set for it? Does a trap spring from the ground and take nothing?

⁶ If a trumpet sounds in the city, are not the people alarmed? If disaster strikes a city, is it not the work of the LORD?

⁷ Indeed, the Lord GOD does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants the prophets.

⁸ The lion has roared; who is not frightened? The Lord GOD has spoken; who will not prophesy?

⁹ Upon the palaces of Ashdod and upon the palaces of Egypt, make this proclamation: Assemble on the hills of Samaria, look at the tumult seething among her people, at the oppression in her midst;

¹⁰ what do they care for straight dealing who hoard in their palaces the gains of violence and plundering? This is the word of the LORD.

¹¹ Therefore these are the words of the Lord GOD: An enemy will encompass the land; your stronghold will be thrown down and your palaces sacked.

¹² These are the words of the LORD: As a shepherd rescues from the jaws of a lion a pair of shin-bones or the tip of an ear, so will the Israelites who live in Samaria be rescued, who repose on the finest beds and on divans from Damascus.

¹³ Listen and testify against the descendants of Jacob. This is the word of the Lord GOD, the God of Hosts.

¹⁴ On the day when I deal with Israel for their crimes, I shall deal with the altars of Bethel: the horns of the altar will be hacked off and fall to the ground.

¹⁵ I shall break down both winter houses and summer residences; the houses adorned with ivory will perish, and great houses will be no more. This is the word of the LORD.

4¹ Listen to this word, you Bashan cows on the hill of Samaria, who oppress the helpless and grind down the poor, who say to your lords, Bring us drink:

² the Lord GOD has sworn by his holiness that your time is coming when men will carry you away on shields and your children in fish-baskets.

³ You will each be carried straight out through the breaches in the wall and thrown on a dunghill. This is the word of the LORD.

⁴ Come to Bethel -- and infringe my law! Come to Gilgal -- and infringe it yet more! Bring your sacrifices for the morning, your tithes within three days.

⁵ Burn your thank-offering without leaven; announce publicly your freewill-offerings; for that is what you Israelites love to do! This is the word of the Lord GOD.

⁶ It was I who brought starvation to all your towns, who spread famine through all your settlements; yet you did not come back to me. This is the word of the LORD.

⁷ It was I who withheld the heavy showers from you while there were still three months to the harvest. I would send rain on one town and no rain on another; rain would fall on one field, another would be parched for lack of it.

⁸From this town and that, people would stagger to another for water to drink, but would not find enough; yet you did not come back to me. This is the word of the LORD.

⁹I struck you with black blight and red; I dried up your gardens and vineyards; the locust devoured your fig trees and your olives; yet you did not come back to me. This is the word of the LORD.

¹⁰I sent plague among you like the plagues of Egypt; with the sword I slew your young men and your troops of horses. I made your camps stink in your nostrils; yet you did not come back to me. This is the word of the LORD.

¹¹I brought destruction among you like the terrible destruction that befell Sodom and Gomorrah; you were like a brand snatched from the burning; yet you did not come back to me. This is the word of the LORD.

¹²Therefore, Israel, this is what I shall do to you; and, because this is what I shall do, Israel, prepare to meet your God.

¹³It is he who fashions the mountains, who creates the wind, and declares

his thoughts to mankind; it is he who darkens the dawn with thick clouds and marches over the heights of the earth -- his name is the LORD, the God of Hosts.

5¹ Listen, Israel, to these words, the dirge I raise over you:

² She has fallen, to rise no more, the virgin Israel, prostrate on her own soil, with no one to lift her up.

³ These are the words of the Lord GOD: The city that marched out to war a thousand strong will have but a hundred left, and that which marched out a hundred strong will have but ten left for Israel.

⁴ These are the words of the LORD to the people of Israel: If you would live, make your way to me,

⁵ not to Bethel; do not go to Gilgal or pass on to Beersheba; for Gilgal will surely go into exile and Bethel come to nothing.

⁶ If you would live, make your way to the LORD, or he will break out against Joseph's descendants like fire, fire which will devour Bethel with no one to quench it.

⁷You that turn justice to poison and thrust righteousness to the ground,

⁸He who made the Pleiades and Orion, who turns deep darkness into dawn and darkens day into night, who summons the waters of the sea and pours them over the earth -- the LORD is his name --

⁹who makes destruction flash forth against the mighty so that destruction comes upon the stronghold.

¹⁰you that hate a man who brings the wrongdoer to court and abominate him who speaks nothing less than truth:

¹¹for all this, because you levy taxes on the poor and extort a tribute of grain from them, though you have built houses of hewn stone, you will not live in them; though you have planted pleasant vineyards, you will not drink wine from them.

¹²For I know how many are your crimes, how monstrous your sins: you bully the innocent, extort ransoms, and in court push the destitute out of the way.

¹³In such a time, therefore, it is prudent to stay quiet, for it is an evil time.

¹⁴ Seek good, and not evil, that you may live, that the LORD, the God of Hosts, may be with you, as you claim he is.

¹⁵ Hate evil, and love good; establish justice in the courts; it may be that the LORD, the God of Hosts, will show favour to the survivors of Joseph.

¹⁶ Therefore these are the words of the LORD, the God of Hosts. In all the public squares, there will be wailing, the sound of grief in every street. The farmer will be called to mourning, and wailing proclaimed to those skilled in the dirge;

¹⁷ there will be wailing in every vineyard; for I shall pass through your midst, says the LORD.

¹⁸ Woe betide those who long for the day of the LORD! What will the day of the LORD mean for you? It will be darkness, not light;

¹⁹ it will be as when someone runs from a lion, only to be confronted by a bear, or as when he enters his house and leans with his hand on the wall, only to be bitten by a snake.

²⁰The day of the LORD is indeed darkness, not light, a day of gloom without a ray of brightness.

²¹I spurn with loathing your pilgrim-feasts; I take no pleasure in your sacred ceremonies.

²²When you bring me your whole-offerings and your grain-offerings I shall not accept them, nor pay heed to your shared-offerings of stall-fed beasts.

²³Spare me the sound of your songs; I shall not listen to the strumming of your lutes.

²⁴Instead let justice flow on like a river and righteousness like a never-failing torrent.

²⁵Did you, people of Israel, bring me sacrifices and offerings those forty years in the wilderness?

²⁶No! But now you will take up the shrine of your idol-king and the pedestals of your images, which you have made for yourselves,

²⁷and I shall drive you into exile beyond Damascus. So says the LORD; the God of Hosts is his name.

6¹Woe betide those living at ease in Zion, and those complacent on the

hill of Samaria, men of mark in the first of nations, those to whom the people of Israel have recourse!

²Go over and look at Calneh, travel on to great Hamath, then go down to Gath of the Philistines -- are they better than these kingdoms, or is their territory greater than yours?

³You thrust aside all thought of the evil day and hasten the reign of violence.

⁴You loll on beds inlaid with ivory and lounge on your couches; you feast on lambs from the flock and stall-fed calves;

⁵you improvise on the lute and like David invent musical instruments,

⁶you drink wine by the bowlful and anoint yourselves with the richest of oils; but at the ruin of Joseph you feel no grief.

⁷Now, therefore, you will head the column of exiles; lounging and laughter will be at an end.

⁸The Lord GOD has sworn by himself: I abhor the arrogance of Jacob, I detest his palaces; I shall abandon the city and its people to their fate.

⁹If ten are left in one house, they will die.

¹⁰If a relative and an embalmer take up a body to carry it out of the house for burial, they will call to someone in a corner of the house, Any more there? and he will answer, No; then he will add, Hush! -- for the name of the LORD must not be mentioned.

¹¹When the LORD commands, great houses will be reduced to rubble and the small houses shattered.

¹²Can horses gallop over rocks? Can the sea be ploughed with oxen? Yet you have turned into venom the process of law, justice itself you have turned into poison.

¹³Jubilant over a nothing, you boast, Have we not won power by our own strength?

¹⁴Israel, I am raising a nation against you, and they will harry your land from Lebo-hamath to the wadi of the Arabah. This is the word of the LORD the God of Hosts.

7¹THIS was what the Lord GOD showed me: it was a swarm of locusts hatching when the later corn, which comes after the king's early crop, was beginning to sprout.

²As they devoured every trace of vegetation in the land, I said, Lord GOD, forgive, I pray you. How can Jacob survive? He is so small.

³The LORD relented. This will not happen, he said.

⁴This was what the Lord GOD showed me: the Lord GOD was summoning a flame of fire to devour the great abyss, and to devour the land.

⁵I said, Lord GOD, cease, I pray you. How can Jacob survive? He is so small.

⁶The LORD relented. This also will not happen, he said.

⁷This was what the Lord showed me: there he was standing by a wall built with the aid of a plumb-line, and he had a plumb-line in his hand.

⁸The LORD asked me, What do you see, Amos? A plumb-line, I answered. Then the LORD said, I am setting a plumb-line in the midst of my people Israel; never again shall I pardon them.

⁹The shrines of Isaac will be desolated and the sanctuaries of Israel laid waste; and sword in hand I shall rise against the house of Jeroboam.

¹⁰AMAZIAH, the priest of Bethel, reported to King Jeroboam of Israel: Amos has conspired against you here in the heart of Israel; the country cannot tolerate all his words.

¹¹This is what he is saying: Jeroboam will die by the sword, and the Israelites will assuredly be deported from their native land.

¹²To Amos himself Amaziah said, Seer, go away! Off with you to Judah! Earn your living and do your prophesying there.

¹³But never prophesy again at Bethel, for this is the king's sanctuary, a royal shrine.

¹⁴I was no prophet, Amos replied to Amaziah, nor was I a prophet's son; I was a herdsman and fig-grower.

¹⁵But the LORD took me as I followed the flock and it was the LORD who said to me, Go and prophesy to my people Israel.

¹⁶So now listen to the word of the LORD. You tell me I am not to prophesy against Israel or speak out against the people of Isaac.

¹⁷ Now these are the words of the LORD: Your wife will become a prostitute in the city, and your sons and daughters will fall by the sword. Your land will be parcelled out with a measuring line, you yourself will die in a heathen country, and Israel will be deported from their native land.

8¹ THIS was what the Lord GOD showed me: it was a basket of summer fruit.

² What is that you are looking at, Amos? he said. I answered, A basket of ripe summer fruit. Then the LORD said to me, The time is ripe for my people Israel. Never again shall I pardon them.

³ On that day, says the Lord GOD, the palace songs will give way to lamentation: So many corpses, flung out everywhere! Silence!

⁴ Listen to this, you that grind the poor and suppress the humble in the land

⁵ while you say, When will the new moon be over so that we may sell grain? When will the sabbath be past so that we may expose our wheat for sale, giving short measure in the bushel and taking

overweight in the silver, tilting the scales fraudulently,

⁶and selling the refuse of the wheat; that we may buy the weak for silver and the poor for a pair of sandals?

⁷The LORD has sworn by the arrogance of Jacob: I shall never forget any of those activities of theirs.

⁸Will not the earth quake on account of this? Will not all who live on it mourn? The whole earth will surge and seethe like the Nile and subside like the river of Egypt.

⁹On that day, says the Lord GOD, I shall make the sun go down at noon and darken the earth in broad daylight.

¹⁰I shall turn your pilgrim-feasts into mourning and all your songs into lamentation. I shall make you all put sackcloth round your waists and have everyone's head shaved. I shall make it like mourning for an only son and the end of it like a bitter day.

¹¹The time is coming, says the Lord GOD, when I shall send famine on the land, not hunger for bread or thirst for water, but for hearing the word of the LORD.

¹² People will stagger from sea to sea, they will range from north to east, in search of the word of the LORD, but they will not find it.

¹³ On that day fair maidens and young men will faint from thirst;

¹⁴ all who take their oath by Ashimah, goddess of Samaria, all who swear, As your god lives, Dan, and, By the sacred way to Beersheba, they all will fall to rise no more.

9¹ I saw the Lord standing by the altar, and he said: Strike the capitals so that the whole porch is shaken; smash them down on the heads of the people, and those who are left I shall put to the sword. No fugitive will escape, no survivor find safety.

² Though they dig down to Sheol, from there my hand will take them; though they climb up to the heavens, from there I shall bring them down.

³ If they hide on the summit of Carmel, there I shall hunt them out and take them; if they conceal themselves from my sight in the depths of the sea, there at my command the sea serpent will bite them.

⁴If they are herded off into captivity by their enemies, there I shall command the sword to slay them; I shall fix my eye on them for evil, and not for good.

⁵The LORD the God of Hosts -- at his touch the earth heaves, and all who live on it mourn, while the whole earth surges like the Nile and subsides like the river of Egypt;

⁶he builds his upper chambers in the heavens and arches the vault of the sky over the earth; he summons the waters of the sea and pours them over the earth -- his name is the LORD.

⁷Are not you Israelites like the Cushites to me? says the LORD. Did I not bring Israel up from Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor, the Aramaeans from Kir?

⁸Behold, I, the Lord GOD, have my eyes on this sinful kingdom, and I shall destroy it from the face of the earth. YET I shall not totally destroy Jacob's posterity, says the LORD.

⁹No; I shall give the command, and shake Israel among all the nations, as a sieve is shaken to and fro without one pebble falling to the ground.

¹⁰They will die by the sword, all the sinners of my people, who say, You will not let disaster approach or overtake us.

¹¹On that day I shall restore David's fallen house; I shall repair its gaping walls and restore its ruins; I shall rebuild it as it was long ago,

¹²so that Israel may possess what is left of Edom and of all the nations who were once named as mine. This is the word of the LORD, who will do this.

¹³A time is coming, says the LORD, when the ploughman will follow hard on the reaper, and he who treads the grapes after him who sows the seed. The mountains will run with fresh wine, and every hill will flow with it.

¹⁴I shall restore the fortunes of my people Israel; they will rebuild their devastated cities and live in them, plant vineyards and drink the wine, cultivate gardens and eat the fruit.

¹⁵Once more I shall plant them on their own soil, and never again will they be uprooted from the soil I have given them. It is the word of the LORD your God.

Obadiah

1 ¹ THE vision of Obadiah: the words of the Lord GOD about Edom. While envoys were being dispatched among the nations, saying, Up! Let us attack Edom, I heard this message from the LORD:

² I shall make you the least of all nations, an object of utter contempt.

³ The pride in your heart has led you astray, you that haunt the crannies among the rocks and make your home on the heights, saying to yourself, Who can bring me to the ground?

⁴ Though you soar as high as an eagle and your nest is set among the stars, even from there I shall bring you down. This is the word of the LORD.

⁵ If thieves or robbers were to come to you by night, though your loss might be heavy, they would take only enough for their needs; if vintagers were to come to you, would they not leave gleanings?

⁶ But see how Esau is ransacked, their secret wealth hunted out!

⁷All your former allies have pushed you to the frontier, your confederates have misled and subjugated you, those who eat at your table lay a snare for your feet. Where is his wisdom now?

⁸This is the word of the LORD: On that day I shall destroy all the wise men of Edom and leave no wisdom on the mountains of Esau.

⁹Then your warriors, Teman, will be so terror-stricken that no survivors will be left on the mountains of Esau.

¹⁰For the violence done to your brother Jacob you will be covered with shame and cut off for ever.

¹¹On the day when you stood aloof, while strangers carried off his wealth, while foreigners passed through his gates and shared out Jerusalem by lot, you were at one with them.

¹²Do not gloat over your brother when disaster strikes him, or rejoice over Judah on the day of his ruin. Do not boast when he suffers distress,

¹³or enter my people's gates on the day of their calamity. Do not join in the gloating when calamity overtakes them,

or seize their treasure on the day of their calamity.

¹⁴Do not stand at the crossroads to cut down his fugitives, or betray the survivors on the day of distress.

¹⁵The day of the LORD is at hand for all the nations. You will be treated as you have treated others: your deeds will recoil on your own head.

¹⁶The draught you, my people, have drunk on my holy mountain all the nations will drink in turn; they will drink and gulp it down and be as though they had never been.

¹⁷But on Mount Zion there will be a remnant which will be holy, and Jacob will dispossess those that dispossessed them.

¹⁸Then the house of Jacob will be a fire, the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau will be stubble; they will set it alight and burn it up, and the house of Esau will have no survivors. Those are the LORD's words.

¹⁹My people will possess the Negeb, the mountains of Esau, and the Shephelah of the Philistines; they will possess the

countryside of Ephraim and Samaria, and Benjamin will possess Gilead.

²⁰Exiles from Israel will possess Canaan as far as Zarephath, while exiles from Jerusalem who are in Sepharad will possess the towns of the Negeb.

²¹Those who wield authority on Mount Zion will go up to hold sway over the mountains of Esau, and dominion will belong to the LORD.

Jonah

1 ¹THE word of the LORD came to Jonah son of Amittai:

²Go to the great city of Nineveh; go and denounce it, for I am confronted by its wickedness.

³But to escape from the LORD Jonah set out for Tarshish. He went down to Joppa, where he found a ship bound for Tarshish. He paid the fare and went on board to travel with it to Tarshish out of the reach of the LORD.

⁴The LORD let loose a hurricane on the sea, which rose so high that the ship threatened to break up in the storm.

⁵The sailors were terror-stricken; everyone cried out to his own god for help, and they threw things overboard to lighten the ship. Meanwhile Jonah, who had gone below deck, was lying there fast asleep.

⁶When the captain came upon him he said, What, fast asleep? Get up and call to your god! Perhaps he will spare a thought for us, and we shall not perish.

⁷The sailors said among themselves, Let us cast lots to find who is to blame for our misfortune. They cast lots, and when Jonah was singled out

⁸they wanted to be told how he was to blame. They questioned him: What is your business? Where do you come from? Which is your country? What is your nationality?

⁹I am a Hebrew, he answered, and I worship the LORD the God of heaven, who made both sea and dry land.

¹⁰At this the sailors were even more afraid. What is this you have done? they said, because they knew he was trying to escape from the LORD, for he had told them.

¹¹What must we do with you to make the sea calm for us? they asked; for it was getting worse.

¹²Pick me up and throw me overboard, he replied; then the sea will go down. I know it is my fault that this great storm has struck you.

¹³Though the crew rowed hard to put back to land it was no use, for the sea was running higher and higher.

¹⁴At last they called to the LORD, Do not let us perish, LORD, for this man's life; do not hold us responsible for the death of an innocent man, for all this, LORD, is what you yourself have brought about.

¹⁵Then they took Jonah and threw him overboard, and the raging of the sea subsided.

¹⁶Seized by a great fear of the LORD, the men offered a sacrifice and made vows to him.

¹⁷The LORD ordained that a great fish should swallow Jonah, and he remained in its belly for three days and three nights.

2¹From the fish's belly Jonah offered this prayer to the LORD his God:

²In my distress I called to the LORD, and he answered me; from deep within Sheol I cried for help, and you heard my voice.

³You cast me into the depths, into the heart of the ocean, and the flood closed around me; all your surging waves swept over me.

⁴I thought I was banished from your sight and should never again look towards your holy temple.

⁵The water about me rose to my neck, for the deep was closing over me; seaweed twined about my head

⁶at the roots of the mountains; I was sinking into a world whose bars would hold me fast for ever. But you brought me up, LORD my God, alive from the pit.

⁷As my senses failed I remembered the LORD, and my prayer reached you in your holy temple.

⁸Those who cling to false gods may abandon their loyalty,

⁹but I with hymns of praise shall offer sacrifice to you; what I have vowed I shall fulfil. Victory is the LORD's!

¹⁰The LORD commanded the fish, and it spewed Jonah out on the dry land.

3¹ A second time the word of the LORD came to Jonah:

²Go to the great city of Nineveh; go and denounce it in the words I give you.

³Jonah obeyed and went at once to Nineveh. It was a vast city, three days' journey across,

⁴ and Jonah began by going a day's journey into it. Then he proclaimed: In forty days Nineveh will be overthrown!

⁵ The people of Nineveh took to heart this warning from God; they declared a public fast, and high and low alike put on sackcloth.

⁶ When the news reached the king of Nineveh he rose from his throne, laid aside his robes of state, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.

⁷ He had this proclamation made in Nineveh: By decree of the king and his nobles, neither man nor beast is to touch any food; neither herd nor flock may eat or drink.

⁸ Every person and every animal is to be covered with sackcloth. Let all pray with fervour to God, and let them abandon their wicked ways and the injustice they practise.

⁹ It may be that God will relent and turn from his fierce anger: and so we shall not perish.

¹⁰ When God saw what they did and how they gave up their wicked ways, he relented and did not inflict on them the punishment he had threatened.

4¹ This greatly displeased Jonah. In anger

² he prayed to the LORD: It is just as I feared, LORD, when I was still in my own country, and it was to forestall this that I tried to escape to Tarshish. I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, long-suffering, ever constant, always ready to relent and not inflict punishment.

³ Now take away my life, LORD: I should be better dead than alive.

⁴ Are you right to be angry? said the LORD.

⁵ Jonah went out and sat down to the east of Nineveh, where he made himself a shelter and sat in its shade, waiting to see what would happen in the city.

⁶ The LORD God ordained that a climbing gourd should grow up above Jonah's head to throw its shade over him and relieve his discomfort, and he was very glad of it.

⁷ But at dawn the next day God ordained that a worm should attack the gourd, and it withered;

⁸ and when the sun came up God ordained that a scorching wind should

blow from the east. The sun beat down on Jonah's head till he grew faint, and he prayed for death; I should be better dead than alive, he said.

⁹At this God asked, Are you right to be angry over the gourd? Yes, Jonah replied, mortally angry!

¹⁰But the LORD said, You are sorry about the gourd, though you did not have the trouble of growing it, a plant which came up one night and died the next.

¹¹And should not I be sorry about the great city of Nineveh, with its hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left, as well as cattle without number?

Micah

1 ¹ THE word of the LORD which came to Micah of Moresheth during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah; he received it in visions about Samaria and Jerusalem.

² LISTEN, all you peoples; let the earth and all who are in it give heed, so that the Lord GOD, the Lord from his holy temple, may bear witness among you.

³ Even now, the LORD is leaving his dwelling-place; he comes down and walks on the heights of the earth.

⁴ At his touch mountains dissolve like wax before fire; valleys are torn open as when torrents pour down a hillside:

⁵ all this for Jacob's crime and Israel's sin. What is the crime of Jacob? Is it not Samaria? What is the sin of Judah? Is it not Jerusalem?

⁶ I shall reduce Samaria to a ruin in the open country, a place for planting vines; I shall hurl her stones into the valley and lay bare her foundations.

⁷All her carved figures will be smashed, all her images burnt with fire; I shall reduce all her idols to rubble. She amassed them out of earnings for prostitution, and a prostitute's hire will they become once more.

⁸That is why I lament and wail, despoiled and naked; I howl like a wolf, mourn like a desert-owl.

⁹Israel has suffered a deadly blow, and now it has fallen on Judah; it has reached the very gate of my people, even Jerusalem itself.

¹⁰Will you not tell it in Gath? Will you not weep bitterly? In Beth-aphrah sprinkle yourselves with dust.

¹¹Take to the road, you that dwell in Shaphir! Have not the people of Zaanan gone out in shame from their city? Beth-ezel is a place of lamentation; she can lend you support no longer.

¹²The people of Maroth are in the depths of despair, for disaster from the LORD has come down to the very gate of Jerusalem.

¹³You people of Lachish, who first led the daughter of Zion into sin, harness

the steeds to the chariots; in you the crimes of Israel are to be found.

¹⁴Therefore you must give parting gifts to Moresheth-gath. Beth-achzib has betrayed the kings of Israel.

¹⁵And you too, people of Mareshah, I shall send others to take your place; and the glory of Israel will be hidden in Adullam.

¹⁶Shave the hair from your head in mourning for the children who were your delight; make yourself bald as a vulture, for they have gone away from you into exile.

2¹Woe betide those who lie in bed planning evil and wicked deeds, and rise at daybreak to do them, knowing that they have the power to do evil!

²They covet fields and take them by force; if they want a house they seize it; they lay hands on both householder and house, on a man and all he possesses.

³Therefore these are the words of the LORD: I am planning disaster for this nation, a yoke which you cannot remove from your necks; you will not walk haughtily, for the hour of disaster will have come.

⁴On that day there will be heard this verse about you, this sorrowful lamentation: We are utterly despoiled, for our people's land changes hands. It is taken away from us; our fields are parcelled out to renegades.

⁵Therefore there will be no one to allot you any share in the LORD's assembly.

⁶Do not hold forth, they say, holding forth themselves. But do not they hold forth about these things? Do not they spin words?

⁷House of Jacob, can one ask, Is the LORD's patience truly at an end? Are these his deeds? Does good not come of his words? Is he not with those who are upright?

⁸But you are not my people; you rise up as my enemy to my face, to strip the cloaks from travellers who felt safe or from men returning from the battle,

⁹to drive the women of my people from their pleasant homes, and rob their children of my glory for ever.

¹⁰Up and be gone! This is no resting-place for you; to defile yourselves you would commit any mischief however cruel.

¹¹ If anyone had gone about uttering falsehood and lies, saying: I shall hold forth to you about wine and strong drink, his holding forth would be just what this people likes.

¹² I shall assemble you, the whole house of Jacob; I shall gather together those that are left in Israel. I shall herd them like sheep into a fold, like a flock in the pasture, moved away by men.

¹³ Their leader breaks out before them, and they all break through the gate and go out with their King going before them, the LORD leading the way.

3¹ I said: Listen, you leaders of Jacob, rulers of Israel, surely it is for you to know what is right,

² and yet you hate good and love evil; you flay the skin of my people and tear the flesh from their bones.

³ They devour the flesh of my people, strip off their skin, lay bare their bones; they cut them up like flesh for the pot, like meat for the cauldron.

⁴ Then they will call to the LORD, but he will not answer. When that time comes he will hide his face from them, so wicked are their deeds.

⁵These are the words of the LORD about the prophets who lead my people astray, who promise prosperity in return for food, but declare open war against those who give them nothing to eat:

⁶For you night will bring no vision, darkness no divination; the sun will go down on the prophets, daytime will be blackness over them.

⁷Seers and diviners alike will be overcome with shame; they will all put their hands over their mouths, for there is no answer from God.

⁸But I am full of strength, of justice and power, to declare to Jacob his crime, to Israel his sin.

⁹Listen to this, leaders of Jacob, you rulers of Israel, who abhor what is right and pervert what is straight,

¹⁰building Zion with bloodshed, Jerusalem with iniquity.

¹¹Her leaders sell verdicts for a bribe, her priests give rulings for payment, her prophets practise divination for money, yet claim the LORD's authority. Is not the LORD in our midst? they say. No disaster can befall us.

¹²Therefore, because of you Zion will become a ploughed field, Jerusalem a heap of ruins, and the temple mount rough moorland.

4¹IN days to come the mountain of the LORD's house will be established higher than all other mountains, towering above other hills. Peoples will stream towards it;

²many nations will go, saying, Let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of Jacob's God, that he may teach us his ways and we may walk in his paths. For instruction issues from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

³He will be judge between many peoples and arbiter among great and distant nations. They will hammer their swords into mattocks and their spears into pruning-knives. Nation will not take up sword against nation; they will never again be trained for war.

⁴Each man will sit under his own vine or his own fig tree, with none to cause alarm. The LORD of Hosts himself has spoken.

⁵Other peoples may be loyal to their own deities, but our loyalty will be for ever to the LORD our God.

⁶On that day, says the LORD, I shall gather those who are lost; I shall assemble the dispersed and those I have afflicted.

⁷I shall restore the lost as a remnant and turn the outcasts into a mighty nation. The LORD will be their king on Mount Zion for ever from that time forward.

⁸And you, watch-tower of the flock, hill of Zion, the promises made to you will be fulfilled, and your former sovereignty will come again, the dominion of Jerusalem.

⁹Why are you now crying out in distress? Have you no king, no counsellor left, that you are seized with writhing like a woman in labour?

¹⁰Zion, writhe and shout like a woman in childbirth, for now you must leave the city and camp in the open country. You must go to Babylon; there you will be saved; there the LORD will deliver you from your enemies.

¹¹ But now many nations are massed against you; they say, Let her suffer outrage; let us gloat over Zion.

¹² They do not know the LORD's thoughts or understand his purpose; for he has gathered them like sheaves to the threshing-floor.

¹³ Start your threshing, you people of Zion; for I shall make your horns iron, your hoofs bronze, and you will crush many peoples. You are to devote their ill-gotten gain to the LORD, their wealth to the LORD of all the earth.

5¹ Now withdraw behind your walls, you people of a walled city; the siege is pressed home against you: Israel's ruler is struck on the cheek with a rod.

² But from you, Bethlehem in Ephrathah, small as you are among Judah's clans, from you will come a king for me over Israel, one whose origins are far back in the past, in ancient times.

³ Therefore only until she who is pregnant has given birth will he give up Israel; and then those of the people that survive will rejoin their brethren.

⁴ He will rise up to lead them in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of

the name of the LORD his God. They will enjoy security, for then his greatness will reach to the ends of the earth.

⁵Then there will be peace. Should the Assyrians invade our land, should they overrun our strongholds, we shall raise against them some seven or eight men to be rulers and princes.

⁶They will rule Assyria with the sword and the land of Nimrod with drawn blades. They will deliver us from the Assyrians, should they invade our land, should they encroach on our frontiers.

⁷All that are left of Jacob, dispersed among many peoples, will be like dew from the LORD, like copious rain on the grass, which does not wait for mortal command or linger for any mortal's bidding.

⁸All that are left of Jacob among the nations, dispersed among many peoples, will be like a lion among the beasts of the forest, like a young lion at large in a flock of sheep; running through he will trample and tear, with no rescuer in sight.

⁹Your hand will be raised high over your foes, and all your enemies will be destroyed!

¹⁰On that day, says the LORD, I shall slaughter your horses and destroy your chariots.

¹¹I shall devastate the cities of your land and raze your fortresses to the ground.

¹²I shall destroy your sorcerers, and there will be no more soothsayers among you.

¹³I shall cut down your images and your sacred pillars; you will no longer bow before things your hands have made.

¹⁴I shall pull up your sacred poles and demolish your blood-spattered altars.

¹⁵In anger and fury I shall wreak vengeance on the nations who disobey me.

6¹ HEAR what the LORD is saying:
Stand up and state your case before the mountains; let the hills hear your plea.

²Hear the LORD's case, you mountains; listen, you pillars that support the earth,

for the LORD has a case against his people, and will argue it with Israel.

³My people, what have I done to you? How have I wearied you? Bring your charges!

⁴I brought you up from Egypt, I set you free from the land of slavery, I sent Moses, Aaron, and Miriam to lead you.

⁵My people, remember the plans devised by King Balak of Moab, and how Balaam son of Beor answered him; consider the crossing from Shittim to Gilgal, so that you may know the victories of the LORD.

⁶What shall I bring when I come before the LORD, when I bow before God on high? Am I to come before him with whole-offerings, with yearling calves?

⁷Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams or ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I offer my eldest son for my wrongdoing, my child for the sin I have committed?

⁸The LORD has told you mortals what is good, and what it is that the LORD requires of you: only to act justly, to love loyalty, to walk humbly with your God.

⁹The LORD calls to the city (the fear of his name brings success): Listen, you tribe and assembled citizens,

¹⁰can I forgive the false measure, the accursed short bushel?

¹¹Can I connive at misleading scales or a bag of fraudulent weights?

¹²The rich men of the city are steeped in violence; her citizens are all liars, their tongues utter deceit.

¹³But now I inflict severe punishment on you, bringing you to ruin for your sins:

¹⁴you will eat, but not be satisfied; your food will lie heavy in your stomach; you will come to labour, but not bring forth; even if you bear a child I shall give it to the sword;

¹⁵you will sow, but not reap; you will press the olives, but not use the oil; you will tread the grapes, but not drink the wine.

¹⁶You have kept the precepts of Omri and all the practices of Ahab; you have adopted all their policies. So I shall lay you utterly waste; your citizens will be an object of horror, and you will endure the insults aimed at my people.

7¹ ALAS! I am now like the last gatherings of summer fruit, the last gleanings of the vintage, when there are no grapes left to eat, none of those early figs I love so much.

²The faithful have vanished from the land; not one honest person is to be found. All who remain lie in wait to do murder; each one hunts his kinsman with a net.

³They are bent on devising wrong -- the grasping officer, the venal judge, and the powerful man who follows his own desires.

⁴Their goodness is twisted like rank weeds and their honesty like briars. The day of their punishment has come; now confusion seizes them.

⁵Put no trust in a neighbour, no confidence in a close friend. Seal your lips even from your wife whom you love.

⁶Son maligns father, daughter rebels against mother, daughter-in-law against mother-in-law, and a person's enemies are found under his own roof.

⁷But I shall watch for the LORD, I shall wait for God my saviour; my God will hear me.

⁸My enemies, do not exult over me. Though I have fallen, I shall rise again; though I live in darkness, the LORD is my light.

⁹Because I have sinned against the LORD, I must bear his anger, until he champions my cause and gives judgement for me, until he brings me into the light, and with gladness I see his justice.

¹⁰When my enemies see it, they are confounded, those who said to me, Where is the LORD your God? I shall gloat over them; let them be trampled like mud in the streets.

¹¹That will be a day for rebuilding your walls, a day when your boundaries will be extended,

¹²a day when your people will return to you, from Assyria to Egypt, from Egypt to the Euphrates, from every sea and every mountain.

¹³The earth will be a waste because of its inhabitants; this will be as their deeds deserve.

¹⁴Shepherd your people with your crook, the flock that is your own, that lives apart on a moor with meadows all

around; let them graze in Bashan and Gilead, as in days gone by.

¹⁵Show us miracles as in the days when you came out of Egypt.

¹⁶Let nations see and be confounded by their impotence, let them keep their mouths shut tight, let their ears be stopped.

¹⁷May they lick the dust like snakes, like creatures that crawl on the ground. Let them come trembling from their strongholds to the LORD our God; let them approach with awe and fear.

¹⁸Who is a god like you? You take away guilt, you forgive the sins of the remnant of your people. You do not let your anger rage for ever, for to be merciful is your true delight.

¹⁹Once more you will show us compassion and wash away our guilt, casting all our sins into the depths of the sea.

²⁰You will show faithfulness to Jacob, unfailing mercy to Abraham, as you swore to our forefathers in days gone by.

Nahum

1 ¹AN oracle about Nineveh: the book of the vision of Nahum from Elkosh.

²THE LORD is a jealous God, a God of vengeance; the LORD takes vengeance and is quick to anger. The LORD takes vengeance on his adversaries and directs his wrath against his enemies.

³The LORD is long-suffering and of great might, but he will not let the guilty escape punishment. His path is in the whirlwind and storm, and the clouds are the fine dust beneath his feet.

⁴He rebukes the sea and dries it up and makes all the rivers fail. Bashan and Carmel languish, and on Lebanon the young shoots wither.

⁵The mountains quake before him, and the hills dissolve; the earth is in tumult at his presence, the world and all who live in it.

⁶Who can stand before his wrath? Who can resist the fury of his anger? His rage is poured out like fire, and the rocks are dislodged before him.

⁷The LORD is a sure protection in time of trouble, and cares for all who make him their refuge.

⁸With a raging flood he makes an end of those who oppose him, and pursues his enemies into darkness.

⁹Why do you make plots against the LORD? He will make an end of you, and you will suffer affliction once and for all.

¹⁰Like a thicket of tangled briars, like dry stubble, they are utterly consumed.

¹¹From you, Nineveh, has come forth a wicked counsellor, one who plots evil against the LORD.

¹²THESE are the words of the LORD: Judah, though your punishment has been great, yet it will pass away and be gone. I have afflicted you, but I shall not afflict you again.

¹³Now I shall break his yoke from your necks and snap the cords that bind you.

¹⁴Nineveh, this is what the LORD has ordained for you: No more children will be born to you; I shall hew down image and idol in the temples of your gods; I shall prepare your grave, for you are of no account.

¹⁵ There on the mountains are the feet of the herald who proclaims good news! Keep your pilgrim-feasts, Judah, and fulfil your vows. The wicked will never again overrun you; they are totally destroyed.

2¹ THE aggressor is coming against you. Man the ramparts, keep a watch on the road, brace yourselves, exert your strength!

² The LORD will restore the pride of Jacob and Israel alike, for pillagers have despoiled them and ravaged their vines.

³ The shields of their warriors are gleaming red, their fighting men are all in scarlet; their chariots in battle line flash like fire. The squadrons of horse advance;

⁴ they charge madly on the city, they storm through the outskirts, like torches, like the zigzag of lightning.

⁵ The leaders display their prowess, rushing in headlong career; they dash to the city wall, and mantelets are set in position.

⁶ The floodgates of the rivers are opened, the palace topples down;

⁷ the train of captives goes into exile, their slave-girls are carried off, moaning like doves and beating their breasts.

⁸ Nineveh is like a pool of water ebbing away. The cry goes up, Stop! Stop! but none turn back.

⁹ Spoil is taken, spoil of silver and gold; there is no end to its store, treasure costly beyond all desire.

¹⁰ Plundered, pillaged, despoiled! Courage failing and knees giving way, limbs in turmoil, and every face drained of colour!

¹¹ Where now is the lion's den, the cave in which the lion cubs lived, to which lion, lioness, and cubs made their way with none to scare them?

¹² The lion tore prey for its cubs, for its lionesses it broke its victim's neck; it filled its lairs with prey, its dens with flesh it had torn.

¹³ As you see, I am against you, says the LORD of Hosts; I shall smoke out your den, and the sword will devour your young lions. I shall cut off the prey you have taken on the earth, and the voices of your envoys will no more be heard.

3¹ Woe betide the blood-stained city,
steeped in deceit, full of pillage,
never empty of prey!

²The crack of the whip, the rattle of
wheels, the stamping of horses, swaying
chariots,

³rearing chargers, the gleam of swords,
the flash of spears! Myriads of slain,
heaps of corpses, bodies innumerable,
and men stumbling over them --

⁴all for the persistent harlotry of a
harlot, the alluring mistress of sorcery,
who by her harlotry and sorceries
beguiled nations and peoples.

⁵I am against you, says the LORD of
Hosts, I shall tear off your skirts to your
disgrace and expose your naked body
to every nation, your shame to every
kingdom.

⁶I shall pelt you with loathsome filth; I
shall hold you in contempt and make a
spectacle of you.

⁷Then all who see you will shrink from
you and say, Nineveh is laid waste! Who
will console her? Where shall I look for
anyone to comfort you?

⁸Will you fare better than No-amon,
situated by the streams of the Nile and

encompassed by water, whose rampart was the Nile, whose wall was water?

⁹Cush and Egypt were a source of endless strength to her, Put and the Libyans were her allies.

¹⁰Even she became an exile and went into captivity, even her infants were dashed to the ground at every street corner, her nobles were shared out by lot, all her great men were thrown into chains.

¹¹You also will drink the cup of wrath until you are overcome; you also will flee for refuge from the enemy.

¹²All your fortifications are like the first ripe figs: shaken, they fall into the mouth of the eater.

¹³Your troops behave like women. The gates of your country stand open to the enemy; fire has consumed the barred gates.

¹⁴Draw yourselves water for the siege, strengthen your fortifications; go down into the clay, trample the mortar, repair the brickwork of the fort.

¹⁵Even there the fire will consume you, and the sword will cut you off. Make

yourselves as many as the locusts, make yourselves as many as the hoppers.

¹⁶You have spies as numerous as the stars in the sky, like hoppers which raid and then fly away.

¹⁷Your agents are like locusts, your commanders like the hoppers which lie dormant in the walls on a cold day; but when the sun rises, they make off, no one knows where.

¹⁸Your rulers slumber, king of Assyria, your leaders are asleep; your people are scattered over the mountains, with no one to round them up.

¹⁹Your wounds cannot be relieved, your injury is mortal; all who hear of your fate clap their hands in joy. Who has not suffered your relentless cruelty?

Habakkuk

1 ¹AN oracle which the prophet Habakkuk received in a vision.

²HOW LONG, LORD, will you be deaf to my plea? Violence! I cry out to you, but you do not come to the rescue.

³Why do you let me look on such wickedness, why let me see such wrongdoing? Havoc and violence confront me, strife breaks out, discord arises.

⁴Therefore law becomes ineffective, and justice is defeated; the wicked hem in the righteous, so that justice is perverted.

⁵Look around among the nations; see there a sight which will utterly astound you; you will not believe it when you are told what is being done in your days:

⁶I am raising up the Chaldeans, that savage and impetuous nation, who march far and wide over the earth to seize and occupy what is not theirs.

⁷Fear and terror go with them; they impose their own justice and judgements.

⁸Their horses are swifter than leopards, keener than the wolves of the plain; their cavalry prance and gallop, swooping from afar like vultures to devour the prey.

⁹Bent on violence, their whole army advances, a horde moving onward like an east wind; they round up captives countless as the sand.

¹⁰They hold kings in derision, they make light of rulers; they laugh at every fortress and raise siege-works to capture them.

¹¹Then they sweep on like the wind and are gone; they ascribe their strength to their gods.

¹²LORD, are you not from ancient times my God and Holy One, who is immortal? LORD, you have appointed them to execute judgement; my Rock, you have commissioned them to punish.

¹³Your eyes are too pure to look on evil; you cannot countenance wrongdoing. Why then do you countenance the treachery of the wicked? Why keep silent

when they devour those who are more righteous?

¹⁴You have made people like the fish of the sea, like creeping creatures with no ruler over them.

¹⁵The wicked haul them up with hooks or catch them in their nets or drag them in their trawls. So they make merry and rejoice,

¹⁶offering sacrifices to their nets and burning offerings to their trawls, for it is thanks to them that they live sumptuously and enjoy rich fare.

¹⁷Are they to draw the sword every day to slaughter the nations pitilessly?

2¹I shall stand at my post, I shall take up my position on the watch-tower, keeping a look-out to learn what he says to me, how he responds to my complaint.

²The LORD gives me this answer: Write down a vision, inscribe it clearly on tablets, so that it may be read at a glance.

³There is still a vision for the appointed time; it will testify to the destined hour and will not prove false. Though it

delays, wait for it, for it will surely come before too long.

⁴The reckless will lack an assured future, while the righteous will live by being faithful.

⁵As for one who is conceited, treacherous, and arrogant, still less will he reach his goal; his throat gapes as wide as Sheol and he is insatiable as Death, rounding up every nation, gathering in all peoples to himself.

⁶Surely with veiled taunts and insults they will all turn on him and say, Woe betide the person who amasses wealth that is not his and enriches himself with goods taken in pledge!

⁷Will not your debtors suddenly start up? Will not those be roused who will shake you till you are empty? Will you not fall a victim to them?

⁸Because you yourself have plundered many nations, because of the bloodshed and violence you inflicted on cities and all their inhabitants over the earth, now the rest of the world will plunder you.

⁹Woe betide the person who seeks unjust gain for his house, building his

nest on a height to save himself from the onset of disaster!

¹⁰Your schemes to overthrow many nations will bring dishonour to your house and put your own life in jeopardy.

¹¹The stones will cry out from the wall, and from the timbers a beam will answer them.

¹²Woe betide the person who has built a city with bloodshed and founded a town on injustice,

¹³so that nations toil for a pittance, peoples weary themselves for a mere nothing! Is not all this the doing of the LORD of Hosts?

¹⁴The earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD's glory as the waters fill the sea.

¹⁵Woe betide the person who makes his companions drink the outpouring of God's wrath, making them drunk to watch their naked orgies!

¹⁶You will drink deep draughts, not of glory but of shame, drinking in your turn until you stagger. The cup in the LORD's right hand is passed to you, and your shame will exceed your glory.

¹⁷The violence done to Lebanon will overwhelm you, the havoc wrought on its beasts will shatter you, because of the bloodshed and violence you inflicted on cities and all their inhabitants over the earth.

¹⁸What use is an idol after its maker has shaped it? It is only an image, a source of lies! What use is it when the maker trusts what he has made? He is only making dumb idols!

¹⁹Woe betide the person who says to a block of wood, Wake up, to a lifeless stone, Bestir yourself! Overlaid with gold and silver it may be, but there is no breath in it.

²⁰The LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth be silent in his presence.

3¹ A prayer of the prophet Habakkuk:
according to shigionoth

²LORD, I have heard of your fame; LORD, I am in awe of what you have done. Through all generations you have made yourself known, and in your wrath you did not forget mercy.

³God comes from Teman, the Holy One from Mount Paran; [Selah] his radiance

covers the sky, and his splendour fills the earth.

⁴His brightness is like the dawn, rays of light flash from his hand, and thereby his might is veiled.

⁵Pestilence stalks before him, and plague follows close behind.

⁶When he stands, the earth shakes; at his glance the nations panic; the everlasting mountains are riven, the ancient hills sink down. He journeys as he did of old.

⁷The tents of Cushan are wrecked, the tent curtains of Midian flutter.

⁸LORD, are you angry with the streams? Is your rage against the rivers, your wrath against the sea, that your steeds are mounted and you ride your chariots to victory?

⁹You draw your bow from its case and charge your quiver with arrows. [Selah] You cleave the earth with streams;

¹⁰the mountains see you and writhe with fear. The torrent of water rushes by and the deep thunders aloud.

¹¹At the gleam of your speeding arrows and the glint of your flashing spear, the

sun forgets to turn in its course and the moon stands still at its zenith.

¹²Furiously you traverse the earth; in anger you trample down the nations.

¹³You go forth to save your people, to save your anointed one. You shatter the house of the wicked, laying bare its foundations to the bedrock. [Selah]

¹⁴You pierce their chiefs with your arrows; their leaders are swept away by a whirlwind, as they open their jaws to devour their wretched victims in secret.

¹⁵When you tread the sea with your steeds the mighty waters foam.

¹⁶I hear, and my body quakes; my lips quiver at the sound; weakness overcomes my limbs, and my feet totter in their tracks; I long for the day of disaster to dawn over our assailants.

¹⁷The fig tree has no buds, the vines bear no harvest, the olive crop fails, the orchards yield no food, the fold is bereft of its flock, and there are no cattle in the stalls.

¹⁸Even so I shall exult in the LORD and rejoice in the God who saves me.

¹⁹The LORD God is my strength; he makes me as sure-footed as a hind and

sets my feet on the heights. For the
leader: with stringed instruments

Zephaniah

1 ¹ THIS is the word of the LORD which came to Zephaniah son of Cushi, son of Gedaliah, son of Amariah, son of Hezekiah, when Josiah son of Amon was king of Judah.

² I SHALL utterly destroy everything from the face of the earth, says the LORD.

³ I shall destroy human beings and animals, the birds of the air and the fish in the sea. I shall bring the wicked to their knees and wipe out all people from the earth. This is the word of the LORD.

⁴ I shall stretch my hand over Judah, over all who live in Jerusalem. I shall wipe out from that place the last remnant of Baal, every memory of the heathen priests,

⁵ those who bow down on the housetops to the host of heaven, those who swear by Milcom,

⁶ who have turned their backs on the LORD, who have neither sought the LORD nor consulted him.

⁷ Keep silent in the presence of the Lord GOD, for the day of the LORD is near. The LORD has prepared a sacrifice and set apart those he has invited.

⁸ On the day of the LORD's sacrifice I shall punish the royal house and its chief officers and all who appear in foreign apparel.

⁹ On that day I shall punish all who dance on the temple terrace, who fill their Lord's house with crimes of violence and fraud.

¹⁰ On that day, says the LORD, a sound of crying will be heard from the Fish Gate, wailing from the Second Quarter of the city; there will be a loud crash from the hills.

¹¹ Those who live in the Lower Town will wail, for all the merchants are destroyed, and the dealers in silver are all wiped out.

¹² At that time I shall search Jerusalem by lantern-light and punish all who are ruined by complacency like wine left on its lees, who say to themselves, The LORD will do nothing, neither good nor bad.

¹³Their wealth will be plundered, their houses laid in ruins; they will build houses but not live in them, they will plant vineyards but not drink the wine.

¹⁴The great day of the LORD is near, near and coming fast; no runner is so swift as that day, no warrior so fleet.

¹⁵That day is a day of wrath, a day of anguish and torment, a day of destruction and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of cloud and dense fog,

¹⁶a day of trumpet-blasts and battle cries against the fortified cities and lofty bastions.

¹⁷I shall bring dire distress on the people; they will walk like the blind because of their sin against the LORD. Their blood will be poured out like dust and their bowels like dung;

¹⁸neither their silver nor their gold will avail to save them. On the day of the LORD's wrath by the fire of his jealousy the whole land will be consumed; for he will make a sudden and terrible end of all who live in the land.

2¹ Humble yourself, unruly nation; be humble,

² before you are driven away to disappear like chaff, before the burning anger of the LORD comes upon you, before the day of the LORD's anger comes upon you.

³ Seek the LORD, all in the land who live humbly, obeying his laws; seek righteousness, seek humility; it may be that you will find shelter on the day of the LORD's anger.

⁴ Gaza will be deserted, Ashkelon left a waste; the people of Ashdod will be driven out at noonday, and Ekron will be uprooted.

⁵ Woe betide you Kerethites who live by the coast! This word of the LORD is spoken against you: Land of the Philistines, I shall crush you, I shall lay you in ruins, bereft of inhabitants.

⁶ Kereth will become pastures and sheepfolds,

⁷ and the coastland will belong to the survivors of Judah. They will pasture their flocks by the sea and lie down at evening in the houses at Ashkelon, for the LORD their God will turn to them and restore their fortunes.

⁸I have heard the insults of Moab, the taunts of the Ammonites, how they reviled my people and encroached on their frontiers.

⁹For this, by my life, says the LORD of Hosts, the God of Israel, Moab shall become like Sodom, Ammon like Gomorrah, a mass of weeds, a heap of saltwort, waste land for evermore. Those of my people who survive will plunder them, the remnant of my nation will dispossess them.

¹⁰This will be retribution for their pride, because they have insulted the people of the LORD of Hosts and encroached upon their land.

¹¹The LORD will bring terror on them; he will reduce to beggary all the gods of the earth. Then the nations in all the coasts and islands will worship him, each in its own land.

¹²You Cushites also will be slain by the sword of the LORD.

¹³He will stretch out his hand against the north and destroy Assyria, making Nineveh a waste, arid as the desert.

¹⁴Flocks will couch there, and every kind of wild animal. The horned owl and

the bustard will roost on her capitals; the tawny owl will screech in the window, and the raven in the doorway.

¹⁵This is the city that exulted in her security, saying to herself, I and I alone am supreme. And what is she now? A waste, a haunt of wild animals, at which every passer-by may jeer and gesture!

3¹ Woe betide the tyrant city, filthy and foul!

²She heeded no warning voice, took no rebuke to heart; she did not put her trust in the LORD, nor did she draw near to her God.

³The leaders within her were roaring lions, her rulers wolves of the plain that left nothing over till morning.

⁴Her prophets were reckless and perfidious; her priests profaned the sanctuary and did violence to the law.

⁵But the LORD in her midst is just; he does no wrong; morning after morning he gives his judgement, every day without fail; yet the wrongdoer knows no shame.

⁶I have wiped out this arrogant people; their bastions are demolished. I have destroyed their streets; no one walks

along them. Their cities are laid waste, abandoned and unpeopled.

⁷ I said, Surely she will fear me; she will take my instruction to heart, all the commands I laid on her that her dwelling-place might escape destruction. But they hastened all the more to perform their evil deeds.

⁸ Therefore wait for me, says the LORD, wait for the day when I stand up to accuse you; I have decided to gather nations and assemble kingdoms, in order to pour my wrath on them, all my burning anger; the whole earth will be consumed by the fire of my jealousy.

⁹ Then I shall restore pure lips to all peoples, that they may invoke the LORD by name and serve him with one accord.

¹⁰ My worshippers, dispersed beyond the rivers of Cush, will bring offerings to me.

¹¹ ON that day, Jerusalem, you will not be put to shame for any of the deeds by which you have rebelled against me, because I shall rid you then of your proud and arrogant citizens, and never again will you flaunt your pride on my holy mountain.

¹²I shall leave a remnant in you, lowly and poor people. The survivors in Israel will find refuge in the LORD's name.

¹³They will do no wrong, nor speak lies; no words of deceit will pass their lips; they will feed and lie down with no one to terrify them.

¹⁴Zion, cry out for joy; raise the shout of triumph, Israel; be glad, rejoice with all your heart, daughter of Jerusalem!

¹⁵The LORD has averted your punishment, he has swept away your foes. Israel, the LORD is among you as king; never again need you fear disaster.

¹⁶On that day this must be the message to Jerusalem: Fear not, Zion, let not your hands hang limp.

¹⁷The LORD your God is in your midst, a warrior who will keep you safe. He will rejoice over you and be glad; he will show you his love once more; he will exult over you with a shout of joy

¹⁸as on a festal day. I shall take away your cries of woe and you will no longer endure reproach.

¹⁹When that time comes; I shall deal with all who oppress you; I shall rescue the lost and gather the dispersed. I shall

win for my people praise and renown throughout the whole world.

²⁰When that time comes I shall gather you and bring you home. I shall win you renown and praise among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes. It is the LORD who speaks.

Haggai

1 ¹IN the second year of King Darius, on the first day of the sixth month, the word of the LORD, spoken through the prophet Haggai, came to the governor of Judah Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, and to the high priest Joshua son of Jehozadak.

²These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: This nation says that the time has not yet come for the house of the LORD to be rebuilt.

³Then this word came through Haggai the prophet:

⁴Is it a time for you yourselves to live in your well-roofed houses, while this house lies in ruins?

⁵Now these are the words of the LORD of Hosts: Consider your way of life;

⁶you have sown much but reaped little, you eat but never enough to satisfy, you drink but never enough to cheer you, you are clothed but never warm, and he who earns wages puts them into a purse with a hole in it.

⁷These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: Consider your way of life.

⁸Go up into the hill-country, fetch timber, and build a house acceptable to me, where I can reveal my glory, says the LORD.

⁹You look for much and get little and when you bring home the harvest I blast it away. And why? says the LORD of Hosts. Because my house lies in ruins, while each of you has a house he can hurry to.

¹⁰It is your fault that the heavens withhold their moisture and the earth its produce.

¹¹So I have proclaimed a drought against land and mountain, against grain, new wine, and oil, and everything that the ground yields, against human beings and cattle and all the products of your labour.

¹²Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and all the rest of the people listened to the words of the LORD their God and to what the prophet Haggai said when the LORD their God sent him, and they were filled with fear because of the LORD.

¹³ So Haggai the LORD's messenger, as the LORD had commissioned him, said to the people: I am with you, says the LORD.

¹⁴ Then the LORD stirred up the spirit of the governor of Judah Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, of the high priest Joshua son of Jehozadak, and of the rest of the people, so that they went and set to work on the house of the LORD of Hosts their God

¹⁵ on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month. In the second year of King Darius,

2¹ on the twenty-first day of the seventh month, these words came from the LORD through the prophet Haggai:

² Say to the governor of Judah Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, to the high priest Joshua son of Jehozadak, and to the rest of the people:

³ Is there anyone still among you who saw this house in its former glory? How does it appear to you now? To you does it not seem as if it were not there?

⁴ But now, Zerubbabel, take heart, says the LORD; take heart, Joshua son of Jehozadak, high priest; take heart, all

you people, says the LORD. Begin the work, for I am with you, says the LORD of Hosts,

⁵and my spirit remains among you. Do not be afraid.

⁶For these are the words of the LORD of Hosts: In a little while from now I shall shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land.

⁷I shall shake all the nations, and the treasure of all nations will come here; and I shall fill this house with splendour, says the LORD of Hosts.

⁸Mine is the silver and mine the gold, says the LORD of Hosts,

⁹and the splendour of this latter house will surpass the splendour of the former, says the LORD of Hosts. In this place I shall grant prosperity and peace. This is the word of the LORD of Hosts.

¹⁰In the second year of Darius, on the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, this word came from the LORD to the prophet Haggai:

¹¹These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: Ask the priests to give a ruling on this.

¹²If someone who is carrying consecrated flesh in a fold of his robe lets the fold touch bread or broth or wine or oil or any food, will that also become consecrated? The priests answered, No.

¹³Haggai went on, But if a person defiled by contact with a corpse touches any one of these things, will that become defiled? It will, answered the priests.

¹⁴Haggai replied, In my view, so it is with this people and nation and all that they do, says the LORD; whatever offering they make here is defiled.

¹⁵Now look back over recent times down to this day: before one stone was laid on another in the LORD's temple,

¹⁶how were you then? If someone came to a heap of grain expecting twenty measures, he found only ten; if he came to a wine vat to draw fifty measures, he found only twenty.

¹⁷I blasted you and all your harvest with black blight and red and with hail, yet you had no mind to return to me, says the LORD.

¹⁸Consider, from this day onwards, from this twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, the day when the foundations

of the temple of the LORD are laid, consider:

¹⁹will the seed still be diminished in the barn? Will the vine and the fig, the pomegranate and the olive still bear no fruit? Not so; from this day I shall bless you.

²⁰On that day, the twenty-fourth day of the month, the word of the LORD came to Haggai a second time:

²¹Tell Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, I shall shake the heavens and the earth;

²²I shall overthrow the thrones of kings, break the power of heathen realms, overturn chariots and their riders; horses and riders will fall by the sword of their comrades.

²³On that day, says the LORD of Hosts, I shall take you, Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, my servant, and shall wear you as a signet ring; for it is you whom I have chosen. This is the word of the LORD of Hosts.

Zechariah

1 ¹IN the eighth month of the second year of Darius, this word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah son of Berechiah, son of Iddo:

²The LORD was exceedingly angry with your forefathers.

³Say therefore to the people: These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: If you return to me, I shall turn back to you, says the LORD of Hosts.

⁴Do not be like your forefathers, who heard the prophets of old proclaim, These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: Turn back from your evil ways and your evil deeds. They refused to listen and pay heed to me, says the LORD.

⁵Your forefathers, where are they now? And the prophets, do they live for ever?

⁶But did not the warnings and the decrees with which I charged my servants the prophets overtake your forefathers? They repented and said, The LORD of Hosts has fulfilled his intention,

and has dealt with us as our lives and as our deeds deserved.

⁷ON the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, the month of Shebat, in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah son of Berechiah, son of Iddo.

⁸In the night I had a vision in which I saw a man among the myrtles in a hollow; he was on a bay horse and behind him were other horses, bay, sorrel, and white.

⁹What are these, sir? I asked, and the angel who was talking with me answered, I shall show you what they are.

¹⁰Then the man standing among the myrtles said, They are those whom the LORD has sent to range throughout the world.

¹¹They reported to the angel of the LORD who was standing among the myrtles: We have ranged through the world, and the whole world is quiet and at peace.

¹²The angel of the LORD then said, LORD of Hosts, how long will you withhold your compassion from

Jerusalem and the towns of Judah, on which you have vented your wrath these seventy years?

¹³In answer the LORD spoke kind and comforting words to the angel who was talking with me.

¹⁴This angel then said to me: Announce that these are the words of the LORD of Hosts: I am very jealous for Jerusalem and Zion,

¹⁵but I am deeply angry with the nations that are enjoying their ease, because, although my anger was only mild, they aggravated the suffering.

¹⁶Therefore these are the words of the LORD: I have returned to Jerusalem with compassion; my house is to be rebuilt there, says the LORD of Hosts, and the measuring line will be stretched over Jerusalem.

¹⁷Proclaim once more: These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: My cities will again brim with prosperity; once again the LORD will comfort Zion, once again he will make Jerusalem the city of his choice.

¹⁸I looked up and saw four horns.

¹⁹I asked the angel who talked with me what they were, and he answered, These are the horns which scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem.

²⁰The LORD then showed me four smiths.

²¹I asked what they were coming to do, and he said, Those horns scattered Judah so completely that no one could hold up his head; but these smiths have come to rout them, overthrowing the horns which the nations had raised against the land of Judah to scatter its people.

2¹I looked up and saw a man carrying a measuring line.

²I asked him where he was going. To measure Jerusalem and discover its breadth and length, he replied.

³Then, as the angel who talked with me was going away, another angel came out to meet him

⁴and said, Run to the young man there and tell him that Jerusalem will be without walls, so numerous will be the people and cattle in it.

⁵I myself shall be a wall of fire all round it, says the LORD, and a glorious presence within it.

⁶Away, away! Flee from the land of the north, says the LORD, for I have dispersed you to the four winds of heaven, says the LORD.

⁷Away! Escape, you people of Zion who live in Babylon.

⁸These are the words of the LORD of Hosts, spoken when he sent me on a glorious mission to the nations who have plundered you, for whoever touches you touches the apple of his eye:

⁹I shall brandish my hand against them, and they will be plunder for those they enslaved. You will then know that the LORD of Hosts has sent me.

¹⁰Shout aloud and rejoice, daughter of Zion! I am coming, I shall make my dwelling among you, says the LORD.

¹¹Many nations will give their allegiance to the LORD on that day and become his people, and he will dwell in your midst. Then you will know that the LORD of Hosts has sent me to you.

¹²The LORD will claim Judah as his own portion in the holy land, and once again make Jerusalem the city of his choice.

¹³Let all mortals be silent in the presence of the LORD! For he has bestirred himself and come out from his holy dwelling-place.

3¹ Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, with Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him.

²The angel said to Satan, The LORD silence you, Satan! May the LORD, who has chosen Jerusalem, silence you! Is not this man a brand snatched from the fire?

³Joshua was wearing filthy clothes as he stood before the angel,

⁴who now said to those in attendance on him, Take off his filthy clothes. Then to Joshua he said, See how I have taken away your guilt from you; and I shall clothe you in fine vestments.

⁵Let a clean turban be put on his head, he ordered. So while the angel of the LORD stood by, they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him in clean garments.

⁶The angel gave Joshua this solemn charge:

⁷These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: If you conform to my ways and carry out your duties towards me, you are to administer my house and be in control of my courts, and I shall grant you the right to come and go amongst these in attendance here.

⁸Listen, High Priest Joshua, you and your colleagues seated here before you, for they are an omen of good things to come: I shall now bring my servant, the Branch.

⁹In a single day I shall wipe away the guilt of this land. On that day, says the LORD of Hosts, you are to invite each other to come and sit under your vines and fig trees. Here is the stone that I set before Joshua, a stone on which are seven eyes. I shall reveal its meaning to you, says the LORD of Hosts.

¹⁰(3: 9)

4¹The angel who talked with me came back and roused me as someone is roused from sleep.

²He asked me what I saw, and I answered, A lampstand entirely of gold,

with a bowl on it. It holds seven lamps, and there are seven pipes for the lamps on top of it.

³There are also two olive trees standing by it, one on the right and the other on the left.

⁴I asked the angel of the LORD who talked with me, Sir, what are these?

⁵He answered, Do you not know what they are? No, sir, I answered. These seven, he said, are the eyes of the LORD which range over the whole earth.

⁶Then he said to me, This is the word of the LORD concerning Zerubbabel: Neither by force nor by strength, but by my spirit! says the LORD of Hosts.

⁷How does a mountain, the greatest mountain, compare with Zerubbabel? It is no higher than a plain. He will bring out the stone called Foundation while the people shout, All blessing be upon it!

⁸There came this word from the LORD to me:

⁹Zerubbabel with his own hands laid the foundation of this house; with his own hands he will finish it. So you will know that the LORD of Hosts has sent me to you.

¹⁰Who has despised the day of small things? The people will rejoice when they see Zerubbabel holding the stone called Separation.

¹¹What are these two olive trees on the right and on the left of the lampstand?

¹²I put a further question to him, What are the two sprays of olive beside the golden pipes which discharge the golden oil?

¹³He said, Do you not know what they mean? No, sir, I answered.

¹⁴These, he said, are the two consecrated with oil who attend the Lord of all the earth.

5¹I looked up again and saw a flying scroll.

²He asked me what I saw, and I answered, I see a flying scroll, twenty cubits long and ten cubits wide.

³He told me: This is the curse which goes out over the whole land; for according to the writing on one side every thief will be swept away, and according to the writing on the other every perjurer will be swept away.

⁴I have sent it out, says the LORD of Hosts, and it will enter the house of the

thief and the house of the man who has committed perjury in my name; it will stay inside the house and demolish it, both timber and stone.

⁵The angel who talked with me came out and said, Look at this thing that is coming.

⁶I asked what it was, and he said, The thing that is coming is a barrel for measuring; and he added, it is a symbol of the people's guilt throughout the land.

⁷Then its round, leaden cover was raised, and there was a woman sitting inside the barrel.

⁸He said, This is Wickedness, and he thrust her down into the barrel and pressed the leaden weight down on the opening.

⁹I looked up again and saw two women coming forth with the wind in their wings (for they had wings like those of a stork), and they lifted up the barrel midway between earth and sky.

¹⁰I asked the angel who talked with me where they were taking the barrel,

¹¹and he answered, To build a house for it in the land of Shinar; once the house

is ready, the barrel will be set there on the place prepared for it.

6¹ I looked up again and saw four chariots coming out between two mountains, which were mountains of copper.

² The first chariot had bay horses, the second black,

³ the third white, and the fourth dappled.

⁴ I asked the angel who talked with me, Sir, what are these?

⁵ He answered, These are the four winds of heaven; after attending the Lord of the whole earth, they are now going forth.

⁶ The chariot with the black horses is going to the land of the north, that with the white to the far west, that with the dappled to the south,

⁷ and that with the roan to the land of the east. They were eager to set off and range over the whole earth. Go, he said, range over the earth, and they did so.

⁸ Then he called me to look and said, Those going to the land of the north have made my spirit rest on that land.

⁹ THE word of the LORD came to me:

¹⁰Receive the gifts from the exiles Heldai, Tobiah, and Jedaiah who have returned from Babylon, and go the same day to the house of Josiah son of Zephaniah.

¹¹Take the silver and gold and make a crown; place it on the head of the high priest, Joshua son of Jehozadak,

¹²and say to him: These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: Here is a man whose name is Branch; he will branch out from where he is and rebuild the temple of the LORD.

¹³It is he who will rebuild the temple, he who will assume royal dignity, who will sit on his throne as ruler. There will be a priest beside his throne, and there will be harmony between them.

¹⁴The crown will serve as a memorial for Heldai, Tobiah, Jedaiah, and Josiah son of Zephaniah in the temple of the LORD.

¹⁵Men from far away will come and work on the rebuilding of the temple of the LORD; so you will know that the LORD of Hosts has sent me to you. This will come about if you hearken with diligence to the LORD your God!

7¹ THE word of the LORD came to Zechariah in the fourth year of King Darius, on the fourth day of Kislev, the ninth month.

² Bethel-sharezer sent Regem-melech together with his men to entreat the favour of the LORD.

³ They were to say to the priests in the house of the LORD of Hosts and to the prophets, Am I to lament and fast in the fifth month as I have done these many years?

⁴ Then the word of the LORD of Hosts came to me:

⁵ Say to all the people of the land and to the priests: When you fasted and lamented in the fifth and seventh months these past seventy years, was it indeed with me in mind that you fasted?

⁶ And when you ate and drank, was it not to please yourselves?

⁷ Was it not this that the LORD proclaimed through the prophets of old, while Jerusalem was populous and peaceful, as were the towns round about, and there were people settled in the Negeb and the Shephelah?

⁸The word of the LORD came to Zechariah:

⁹These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: Administer true justice, show kindness and compassion to each other,

¹⁰do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the resident alien or the poor, and do not plot evil against one another.

¹¹But they refused to listen; they turned their backs defiantly on me, they stopped their ears so as not to hear.

¹²They were adamant in their refusal to accept the law and the teaching which the LORD of Hosts had sent by his spirit through the prophets of old; and in great anger the LORD of Hosts said:

¹³As they did not listen when I called, so I would not listen when they called.

¹⁴I drove them out among all the nations where they were strangers, leaving their land deserted behind them, so that no one came and went. Thus their pleasant land was turned into a desert.

8¹The word of the LORD of Hosts came to me:

²These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: I have been very jealous for Zion, fiercely jealous for her.

³Now, says the LORD, I shall come back to Zion and dwell in Jerusalem. Jerusalem will be called the City of Faithfulness, and the mountain of the LORD of Hosts will be called the Holy Mountain.

⁴These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: Once again old men and women will sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each leaning on a stick because of great age;

⁵and the streets of the city will be full of boys and girls at play.

⁶These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: Even if this may seem impossible to the remnant of this nation in those days, will it also seem impossible to me? This is the word of the LORD of Hosts.

⁷These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: I am about to rescue my people from the countries in the east and the west,

⁸and bring them back to live in Jerusalem. They will be my people, and I shall be their God, in faithfulness and justice.

⁹These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: Take heart, all who now hear the promise that the temple is to be rebuilt; you hear it from the prophets who were present when foundations for the house of the LORD of Hosts were laid.

¹⁰Before that time there was no hiring of people or animals; because of enemies, no one could go about his business in safety, for I had set everyone at odds with everyone else.

¹¹But I do not feel the same now towards the remnant of this people as I did in former days, says the LORD of Hosts.

¹²For they will sow in safety; the vine will yield its fruit and the soil its produce, and the heavens will give their moisture; with all these things I shall endow the remnant of this people.

¹³To the nations you, house of Judah and house of Israel, have become proverbial as a curse; now I shall save you, and you will become proverbial as a blessing. Courage! Do not lose heart.

¹⁴For these are the words of the LORD of Hosts: Whereas I resolved to bring disaster on you when your forefathers

provoked my wrath, says the LORD of Hosts, and I did not relent,

¹⁵so I have resolved to do good again in these days to Jerusalem and to the house of Judah. Do not be afraid.

¹⁶This is what you must do: speak the truth to each other, administer true and sound justice in your courts.

¹⁷Do not plot evil against one another, and do not love perjury, for all these are things I hate. This is the word of the LORD.

¹⁸The word of the LORD of Hosts came to me:

¹⁹These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: The fasts of the fourth month, and of the fifth, seventh, and tenth months, are to become festivals of joy and gladness for the house of Judah. So love truth and peace.

²⁰These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: Nations and dwellers in many cities will come in the future;

²¹people of one city will approach those of another and say, Let us go to entreat the favour of the LORD; let us resort to the LORD of Hosts; and I too shall go.

²² Many peoples and mighty nations will resort to the LORD of Hosts in Jerusalem and entreat his favour.

²³ These are the words of the LORD of Hosts: In those days, ten people from nations of every language will take hold of the robe of one Jew and say, Let us accompany you, for we have heard that God is with you.

9¹ AN oracle: The word of the LORD is in the land of Hadrach; it alights on Damascus, for, no less than all the tribes of Israel, the capital of Aram belongs to the LORD.

² It alights also on Hamath which borders on Damascus, and for all their wisdom it alights on Tyre and Sidon.

³ Tyre, who built herself a rampart, has amassed silver like dust and gold like the dirt on the streets.

⁴ But the Lord will take from her all she possesses; he will break her power at sea, and the city itself will be destroyed by fire.

⁵ Let Ashkelon see and be afraid; Gaza will writhe in terror, and Ekron's hope will come to naught. Kings will vanish

from Gaza, and Ashkelon will be empty of people.

⁶A mixed race will settle in Ashdod, and I shall cut down the pride of the Philistines.

⁷I shall stop them eating flesh with the blood still in it and feeding on detestable things. Those who survive will belong to our God; they will be like a clan in Judah, and Ekron will become like the Jebusites.

⁸I shall post a garrison for my house so that none may pass to and fro that way, and no oppressor may ever again overrun them, for now I am taking note of their suffering.

⁹Daughter of Zion, rejoice with all your heart; shout in triumph, daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king is coming to you, his cause won, his victory gained, humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

¹⁰He will banish the chariot from Ephraim, the war-horse from Jerusalem; the warrior's bow will be banished, and he will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea, from the River to the ends of the earth.

¹¹ As for you, because of your blood covenant with me I shall release your people imprisoned in a waterless dungeon.

¹² Come back to the Citadel, you captives waiting in hope. Now is the day announced when I shall grant you twofold reparation.

¹³ For my bow is strung, Judah; I have laid the arrow to it, Ephraim; I have roused your sons, Zion, and made you into a warrior's sword against the sons of Javan.

¹⁴ The LORD will appear over them, and his arrow will flash forth like lightning; the Lord GOD will sound the trumpet and advance with the storm-winds of the south.

¹⁵ The LORD of Hosts will protect them; they will prevail, trampling underfoot the sling-stones; they will be roaring drunk as if with wine, brimful as a bowl, drenched like the corners of the altar.

¹⁶ On that day the LORD their God will save them, his own people, like a flock. For they are the precious stones in a crown which sparkle all about his land.

¹⁷What wealth is theirs, what beauty!
Grain to strengthen young men, and new
wine for maidens!

10¹Ask the LORD for rain at the
time of the spring rain, the LORD
who makes the storm-clouds, and he
will give the heavy rains and grass in the
fields for everyone;

²for the household gods utter empty
promises; diviners see false signs, they
produce lies as dreams, and the comfort
they offer is illusory. So the people
are left to wander about like sheep in
distress for lack of a shepherd.

³My anger burns against the shepherds,
and I shall punish the leaders of the
flock. The LORD of Hosts will care for his
flock, the people of Judah, and transform
them into his royal war-horses.

⁴From Judah will come corner-stone
and tent-peg, the bow ready for battle,
and all the commanders.

⁵Together they will be like warriors
trampling the muddy tracks of the
battlefield; they will fight because the
LORD is with them, and they will put to
rout even those on horseback.

⁶I shall give triumph to the house of Judah and victory to the house of Joseph; I shall restore them in my compassion for them, and they will be as though I had never cast them off; for I am the LORD their God and I shall answer them.

⁷So the Ephraimites will be like warriors, with hearts gladdened as if by wine; their children will see and be glad; their hearts will rejoice in the LORD.

⁸I shall whistle to call them in, for I have delivered them, and they will be as many as they used to be.

⁹Though dispersed among the nations, yet in far-off lands they will remember me; they will rear their children and return.

¹⁰I shall bring them home from Egypt and gather them from Assyria; I shall lead them into Gilead and Lebanon until there is no more room for them.

¹¹They will pass through the sea of Egypt and strike its waves; all the depths of the Nile will become dry. The pride of Assyria will be brought down, and the sceptre of Egypt will be no more.

¹²But Israel's strength will be in the LORD; they will march proudly in his name. This is the word of the LORD.

11 ¹Lebanon, throw open your gates so that fire may devour your cedars.

²Wail, every pine tree, for the cedars have fallen, the mighty trees are ravaged. Wail, every oak of Bashan, for the impenetrable forest is laid low.

³Hark to the wailing of the shepherds! Their rich pastures are ravaged. Hark to the roar of the lions! Jordan's dense thickets are ravaged.

⁴These were the words of the LORD my God: Be a shepherd to the flock destined for slaughter.

⁵Those who buy will slaughter them and incur no guilt; those who sell will then say, Praise the LORD, I have become rich! Even their shepherds feel no pity for them.

⁶For I shall no longer have pity on the land's inhabitants, says the LORD. I am about to put everyone into the power of his shepherd and his king, and when the land is crushed I shall not rescue them from their hands.

⁷ So I became a shepherd to the flock destined to be slaughtered by the dealers. I took two staffs: one I called Favour and the other Union, and so I looked after the flock.

⁸ In a single month I got rid of the three shepherds; I had lost patience with the flock and they had come to abhor me.

⁹ Then I said to them, I shall not be a shepherd to you any more. Any that are to die, let them die; any that are missing, let them stay missing; and the rest can devour one another.

¹⁰ I took my staff called Favour and snapped it in two, annulling the covenant which the LORD had made with all nations.

¹¹ So it was annulled that day, and the dealers who were watching me knew that this was a word from the LORD.

¹² I said to them, If it suits you, give me my wages; otherwise keep them. Then they weighed out my wages, thirty silver pieces.

¹³ The LORD said to me, Throw it into the treasury. I took the thirty pieces of silver -- the princely sum at which I was

paid off by them! -- and threw them into the house of the LORD, into the treasury.

¹⁴Then I broke in two my second staff called Union, annulling the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.

¹⁵The LORD said to me, Equip yourself again as a shepherd, a worthless one;

¹⁶for I am about to install a shepherd in the land who will neither care about any that are gone missing, nor search for those that have strayed, nor heal the injured, nor nurse the sickly, but will eat the flesh of the fat beasts and throw away the broken bones.

¹⁷Woe betide the worthless shepherd who abandons the sheep! May a sword fall on his arm and on his right eye! May his arm be all shrivelled, and his right eye be totally blind!

12¹ AN oracle. This is the word of the LORD about Israel, the word of the LORD who spread out the heavens and founded the earth, and who formed the spirit in mortals.

²I am about to make Jerusalem an intoxicating cup for all the nations pressing round her; and Judah will be caught up in the siege of Jerusalem.

³On that day, when all the nations of the earth are gathered to attack her, I shall make Jerusalem a rock too heavy for any people to remove, and all who try to carry it will be torn by it.

⁴On that day, says the LORD, I shall strike all their horses with panic and the riders with madness; I shall keep watch over Judah, while I strike with blindness all the horses of the other nations.

⁵Then the families of Judah will say in their hearts, The inhabitants of Jerusalem find their strength in the LORD of Hosts, their God.

⁶On that day I shall make the families of Judah like a burning brazier in woodland, like a burning torch among the sheaves. They will consume all the surrounding nations, right and left, while the people of Jerusalem remain safe in their city.

⁷The LORD will set free all the families of Judah first, so that the glory of David's line and of the citizens of Jerusalem may not surpass that of Judah.

⁸On that day the LORD will shield the inhabitants of Jerusalem; on that day the weakest of them will be like David,

and the line of David godlike, like the angel of the LORD going before them.

⁹On that day I shall set about the destruction of every nation that attacks Jerusalem,

¹⁰but I shall pour a spirit of pity and compassion on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Then they will look on me, on him whom they have pierced, and will lament over him as over an only child, and will grieve for him bitterly as for a firstborn son.

¹¹On that day the mourning in Jerusalem will be as great as the mourning over Hadad-rimmon in the vale of Megiddo.

¹²The land will mourn, each family by itself: the family of David by itself and its women by themselves; the family of Nathan by itself and its women by themselves;

¹³the family of Levi by itself and its women by themselves; the family of Shimei by itself and its women by themselves;

¹⁴all the remaining families by themselves and their women by themselves.

13¹ On that day a fountain will be opened for the line of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, to remove their sin and impurity.

² On that day, says the LORD of Hosts, I shall expunge the names of the idols from the land, and they shall be remembered no more; I shall also expel the prophets and the spirit of uncleanness from the land.

³ Thereafter, if anyone continues to prophesy, his parents, his own father and mother, will say to him, You are not to remain alive, for you have uttered lies in the LORD's name. His own father and mother will run him through because he has prophesied.

⁴ On that day every prophet will be ashamed of his prophetic vision, and he will not wear a robe of coarse hair in order to deceive.

⁵ He will say, I am not a prophet, I am a worker on the land, for the land has been my possession from my early days.

⁶ If someone asks, What are these scars on your chest? he will answer, I got them in the house of my friends.

⁷This is the word of the LORD of Hosts: Sword, awake against my shepherd, against him who works with me. Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered, and I shall turn my hand against the lambs.

⁸This also is the word of the LORD: It will happen throughout the land that two thirds of the people will be struck down and die, while one third of them will be left there.

⁹Then I shall pass this third through the fire; I shall refine them as silver is refined and assay them as gold is assayed. They will invoke me by my name, and I myself shall answer them; I shall say, These are my people; they will say, The LORD is my God.

14¹ A day is coming for the LORD to act, and the plunder taken from you will be shared out while you stand by.

²I shall gather all the nations to make war on Jerusalem; the city will be taken, the houses ransacked, and the women raped. Half of the city will go into exile, but the rest of the population will not be taken away from the city.

³Then the LORD will go out and fight against the nations, fighting as on a day of battle.

⁴On that day his feet will stand on the mount of Olives, which lies to the east of Jerusalem, and the mount will be cleft in two by an immense valley running east and west; half the mount will move northwards and half southwards.

⁵The valley between the hills will be blocked, for the new valley between them will reach as far as Asal. It will be blocked as it was by the earthquake in the time of King Uzziah of Judah. Then the LORD my God will appear attended by all the holy ones.

⁶On that day there will be neither heat nor cold nor frost.

⁷It will be one continuous day, whose coming is known only to the LORD; there will be no distinction between day and night; even in the evening there will be light.

⁸On that day, whether in summer or in winter, running water will issue from Jerusalem, half flowing to the eastern sea and half to the western sea.

⁹The LORD will become king over all the earth; on that day he will be the only LORD and his name the only name.

¹⁰The whole land will become like the Arabah from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem. But Jerusalem will stand high in her place, and be full of people from the Benjamin Gate to the point where the former gate stood, to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's winepresses.

¹¹Jerusalem will be inhabited, and never again will a ban for her destruction be laid on her; all will live there in security.

¹²The LORD will strike with this plague all the nations who warred against Jerusalem: their flesh will rot while they are still standing on their feet, their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongues will rot in their mouths.

¹³On that day a great panic sent by the LORD will fall on them, with everyone laying hands on his neighbour and attacking him.

¹⁴Judah too will fight at Jerusalem, and the wealth of the surrounding nations

will be gathered up -- gold and silver and clothing in great quantities.

¹⁵Plague will also be the fate of horse and mule, camel and donkey, the fate of every animal in those armies.

¹⁶Any survivors among the nations which fought against Jerusalem are to go up year by year to worship the King, the LORD of Hosts, and to keep the pilgrim-feast of Tabernacles.

¹⁷Should any of the families of the earth not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of Hosts, no rain will fall on them.

¹⁸If any family of Egypt does not go up and enter the city, then the same disaster will overtake it as that which the LORD will inflict on any nation which does not go up to keep the feast.

¹⁹This will be the punishment which befalls Egypt and any nation which does not go up to keep the feast of Tabernacles.

²⁰On that day Holy to the LORD will be inscribed on the horses' bells, and the pots in the house of the LORD will be like the sacred bowls before the altar.

²¹ Every pot in Jerusalem and Judah will be holy to the LORD of Hosts, and all who come to sacrifice will use them for boiling the flesh of the sacrifice. When that time comes, no longer will any trader be seen in the house of the LORD of Hosts.

Malachi

1 ¹AN oracle. The word of the LORD to Israel through Malachi.

²I HAVE shown you love, says the LORD. But you ask, How have you shown love to us? Is not Esau Jacob's brother? the LORD answers. Jacob I love,

³but Esau I hate, and I have reduced his hill-country to a waste, and his ancestral land to desert pastures.

⁴When Edom says, We are beaten down, but let us rebuild our ruined homes, these are the words of the LORD of Hosts: If they rebuild, I shall pull down. They will be called a country of wickedness, a people with whom the LORD is angry for ever.

⁵Your own eyes will see it, and you yourselves will say, The LORD's greatness reaches beyond the confines of Israel.

⁶A son honours his father and a slave his master. If I am a father, where is the honour due to me? If I am a master, where is the fear due to me? So says

the LORD of Hosts to you, priests who despise my name. You ask, How have we despised your name?

⁷By offering defiled food on my altar. You ask, How have we defiled you? By saying that the table of the LORD may be despised,

⁸that if you offer a blind victim, there is nothing wrong, and if you offer a victim which is lame or sickly, there is nothing wrong. If you brought such a gift to your governor, would he receive you or show you favour? says the LORD of Hosts.

⁹But now, if you placate God, he may show you mercy! If you do this, will he withhold his favour from you? So the LORD of Hosts has spoken.

¹⁰Better far that one of you should close the great door altogether, to keep fire from being lit on my altar to no purpose! I have no pleasure in you, says the LORD of Hosts, nor will I accept any offering from you.

¹¹From farthest east to farthest west my name is great among the nations, and everywhere incense and pure offerings are presented to my name; for

my name is great among the nations, says the LORD of Hosts.

¹²But you profane me by thinking that the table of the LORD may be defiled, and you can offer on it food that you hold in no esteem.

¹³You sniff scornfully at it, says the LORD of Hosts, and exclaim, How tiresome! If you bring as your offering victims that are mutilated, lame, or sickly, am I to accept them from you? says the LORD.

¹⁴A curse on the cheat who pays his vows by sacrificing a damaged victim to the Lord, though he has a sound ram in his flock! I am a great king, says the LORD of Hosts, and my name is held in awe among the nations.

2¹ And now, you priests, this decree is for you:

²unless you listen to me and pay heed to the honouring of my name, says the LORD of Hosts, I shall lay a curse on you. I shall turn your blessings into a curse; yes, into a curse, because you pay no heed.

³I shall cut off your arms, fling offal in your faces, the offal from your

pilgrim-feasts, and I shall banish you from my presence.

⁴Then you will know that I have issued this decree against you: my covenant with Levi falls, says the LORD of Hosts.

⁵My covenant was with him: I bestowed life and welfare on him, and laid on him the duty of reverence; he revered me and lived in awe of my name.

⁶The instruction he gave was true, and no word of injustice fell from his lips; he walked in harmony with me and in uprightness, and he turned many back from sin.

⁷For men hang on the words of the priest and seek knowledge and instruction from him, because he is the messenger of the LORD of Hosts.

⁸But you have turned aside from that course; you have caused many to stumble with your instruction; you have set at naught the covenant with the Levites, says the LORD of Hosts.

⁹So I in my turn shall make you despicable and degraded in the eyes of all the people, inasmuch as you disregard my ways and show partiality in your interpretation of the law.

¹⁰Have we not all one father? Did not one God create us? Why then are we faithless to one another by violating the covenant of our forefathers?

¹¹Judah is faithless, and abominable things are done in Israel and in Jerusalem; in marrying the daughter of a foreign god, Judah has violated the sacred place loved by the LORD.

¹²May the LORD banish from the dwellings of Jacob any who do this, whether nomads or settlers, even though they bring offerings to the LORD of Hosts.

¹³Here is another thing you do: you weep and moan, drowning the LORD's altar with tears, but he still refuses to look at the offering or receive favourably a gift from you.

¹⁴You ask why. It is because the LORD has borne witness against you on behalf of the wife of your youth. You have broken faith with her, though she is your partner, your wife by solemn covenant.

¹⁵Did not the one God make her, both flesh and spirit? And what does the one God require but godly children? Keep

watch on your spirit, and let none of you be unfaithful to the wife of your youth.

¹⁶If a man divorces or puts away his wife, says the LORD God of Israel, he overwhelms her with cruelty, says the LORD of Hosts. Keep watch on your spirit, and do not be unfaithful.

¹⁷You have wearied the LORD with your talk. You ask, How have we wearied him? By saying that all evildoers are good in the eyes of the LORD, that he is pleased with them, or by asking, Where is the God of justice?

3¹I am about to send my messenger to clear a path before me. Suddenly the Lord whom you seek will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight is here, here already, says the LORD of Hosts.

²Who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand firm when he appears? He is like a refiner's fire, like a fuller's soap;

³he will take his seat, testing and purifying; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver, and so they will be fit to bring offerings to the LORD.

⁴ Thus the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as they were in former days, in years long past.

⁵ I shall appear before you in court, quick to testify against sorcerers, adulterers, and perjurers, against those who cheat the hired labourer of his wages, who wrong the widow and the fatherless, who thrust the alien aside and do not fear me, says the LORD of Hosts.

⁶ I, the LORD, do not change, and you have not ceased to be children of Jacob.

⁷ Ever since the days of your forefathers you have been wayward and have not kept my laws. If you return to me, I shall turn back to you, says the LORD of Hosts. You ask, How can we return?

⁸ Can a human being defraud God? Yet you defraud me. You ask, How have we defrauded you? Why, over tithes and contributions.

⁹ There is a curse on you all, your entire nation, because you defraud me.

¹⁰ Bring the whole tithe into the treasury; let there be food in my house. Put me to the proof, says the LORD of

Hosts, and see if I do not open windows in the sky and pour a blessing on you as long as there is need.

¹¹I shall forbid pests to destroy the produce of your soil, and your vines will not shed their fruit, says the LORD of Hosts.

¹²All nations will count you happy, for yours will be a favoured land, says the LORD of Hosts.

¹³YOU HAVE used hard words about me, says the LORD. Yet you ask, How have we spoken against you?

¹⁴You have said, To serve God is futile. What do we gain from the LORD of Hosts by observing his rules and behaving with humble submission?

¹⁵We for our part count the arrogant happy; it is evildoers who prosper; they have put God to the proof and come to no harm.

¹⁶Then those who feared the LORD talked together, and the LORD paid heed and listened. A record was written before him of those who feared him and had respect for his name.

¹⁷They will be mine, says the LORD of Hosts, my own possession against the

day that I appoint, and I shall spare them as a man spares the son who serves him.

¹⁸Once more you will tell the good from the wicked, the servant of God from the person who does not serve him.

4¹The day comes, burning like a furnace; all the arrogant and all evildoers will be stubble, and that day when it comes will set them ablaze, leaving them neither root nor branch, says the LORD of Hosts.

²But for you who fear my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings, and you will break loose like calves released from the stall.

³On the day I take action, you will tread down the wicked, for they will be as ashes under the soles of your feet, says the LORD of Hosts.

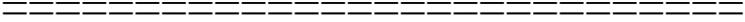
⁴Remember the law of Moses my servant, the rules and precepts which I told him to deliver to all Israel at Horeb.

⁵Look, I shall send you the prophet Elijah before the great and terrible day of the LORD comes.

⁶He will reconcile parents to their children and children to their parents,

lest I come and put the land under a ban
to destroy it.

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